



Olfactory reference disorder (olfactory reference syndrome)

In the upcoming Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition, text revision (DSM-5-TR), olfactory reference disorder was added as an example of presentations that can be specified under an “other specified” designation in the “other specified obsessive-compulsive and related disorder” chapter.

Rationale for Change

Olfactory reference disorder was included in DSM-5 under the term “Jikoshu-kyofu,” an older term for olfactory reference disorder that is used in traditional Japanese psychiatry. However, by noting only the Japanese name for this disorder, it may incorrectly imply that the disorder is a culture-bound syndrome whereas it has been reported around the world and is not confined to Japan.

In addition, olfactory reference disorder has been added as a separate disorder to ICD-11, in the chapter on obsessive-compulsive or related disorders. Thus, adding it to DSM-5-TR using the same name as in ICD-11 harmonizes the two diagnostic frameworks.

Olfactory reference syndrome is the term primarily used in world-wide scientific literature; hence it will be helpful to DSM users to include this more familiar term in parentheses to underscore that olfactory reference syndrome is the same condition as olfactory reference disorder. Key features of the disorder are similar to the other obsessive-compulsive and related disorders. Excessive showering is not included in the ICD-11 description but is included in DSM-5-TR because it has been identified as one of the most common repetitive behaviors, and its inclusion may facilitate a correct diagnosis.

DSM is the manual used by clinicians and researchers to diagnose and classify mental disorders. The American Psychiatric Association (APA) will publish DSM-5-TR in 2022.

APA is a national medical specialty society whose more than 37,400 physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and research of mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at www.psychiatry.org. For more information, please contact APA Communications at 202-459-9732 or press@psych.org.

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