

The history and impact of the dsm



The History and Impact of the DSM

As professionals in the field of marriage and family therapy, it is essential for therapists to become familiar with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition (DSM-5). In fact, therapists should be able to identify the importance of providing clients with appropriate diagnoses for the contemporary American healthcare system as well as which aspects that a systems-based therapists should be mindful of when providing diagnoses. Finally, therapists should consider how culture plays a role in society's views of those who are mentally ill, and how those stigmas may affect those who have been diagnosed with various types of mental illnesses.

Provision of Diagnosis

The provision of diagnosis is necessary for the contemporary American healthcare system for a few reasons. The first is that when therapists provide patients with accurate diagnoses, appropriate treatment options can be chosen for each client's individual needs. A second reason that diagnoses are important is that it allows therapists and other professionals to identify prevalence rates associated with planning appropriate mental health services (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). A third reason is that diagnoses allows therapists and researchers to identify patients that may aid in the participation of research studies. A final reason that diagnoses is necessary for the contemporary American healthcare system is that reliable diagnoses allows professionals to record vital health information, like mortality rates, more reliably (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Systems-Based Practitioner

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In terms of which aspects a systems-based practitioner should keep in mind while providing a diagnosis, he or she should primarily focus on looking at the whole picture of the patients rather than just one or two areas. This is because the mental illnesses that patients struggle with are rarely the result of only one contributing factor. Professionals need to consider a multitude of factors, such as environmental factors, cognitive processing, genetic risk factors, temperamental antecedents, and biomarkers, when assessing and diagnosing patients (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). By looking at all of these areas, professionals can treat the whole patient rather than just part of them.

Culture and Mental Illness

In regard to how culture perceives mental illness around the world, research demonstrates that what is defined as mental illness in one culture, may not be considered a mental illness in another culture. Professionals need to ensure that they have a strong understanding of a culture and its norms in order to correctly identify psychopathology when working with patients (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). This understanding, however, does not change how society views those diagnosed with mental illnesses.

Oftentimes, society predominantly views those that have received such a diagnosis as being non-productive. This negative stereotype is not reality. This bias predominates because there is a lack of public health perspective present in this field. With this perspective lacking, society has to rely on the claims of certain elite medical professionals and pharmaceutical companies who may not have their patients' best interests at hand.

Stigma

In order to address how culture perceives mental illness around the world and to decrease the stigma that tends to come with a mental illness diagnosis, the DSM is supposed to focus on assisting patients as well as their families in understanding patients' diagnoses. The DSM is also supposed to encourage patients and their families to feel empowered and take on active roles in the treatment process (Garcia, 2011). Although these are some of the goals of the DSM, neither one of them have been achieved. In fact, medical professionals as well as pharmaceutical companies continue to maintain the control and power in these two areas (Garcia, 2011, p. 337). As a result of this lack of incorporation of patients and their families, it is safe to say that the stigma still exists for those who have been diagnosed with chronic and severe mental illnesses.

In conclusion, the provision of diagnosis is essential for the contemporary American healthcare system because it guides treatment options, allows for the identification of prevalent rates associated with planning appropriate mental health services, allows for the identification of patients that may aid in the participation of research studies, and allows professionals to record vital health information, like mortality rates, more reliably. A systems-based practitioner should focus on providing diagnoses to patients by looking at patients' whole picture and including a multitude of possible factors, such as environmental factors, cognitive processing, genetic risk factors, temperamental antecedents, and biomarkers, that could be contributing to their mental illness. Although society may generally believe the stigma that those diagnosed with mental illnesses are non-productive, professionals in <https://assignbuster.com/the-history-and-impact-of-the-dsm/>

the field could attempt to combat this belief by advocating for an increase in public health perspective while also developing an awareness of cultural norms present within their patients' lives. By approaching this stigma in this manner, professionals are standing up to the elite medical professionals and pharmaceutical companies who continue to maintain control over the mental healthcare field.

References

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- Garcia, B., & Petrovich, A. (2011). *Strengthening the DSM: Incorporating resilience and cultural competence*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.