The American Psychological Association seeks comments from all interested individuals and groups – including psychologists, health care professionals, researchers, clients/patients and their families, APA governance members and the general public – on the draft Clinical Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Adults.

Comments will provide the panel that is developing the guideline with valuable input as it works to produce the final version. It is anticipated that the final version will be submitted to the Council of Representatives for approval as APA policy at its February 2017 meeting.


**APA's Clinical Practice Guideline Initiative**

APA’s Council of Representatives approved an initiative for the development of clinical practice guidelines in 2010, following recommendations from the Board of Professional Affairs, Board of Scientific Affairs, Committee for the Advancement of Professional Practice, and Board of Directors.

Clinical practice guidelines provide evidence-based recommendations for the treatment of particular disorders or conditions. Such guidelines, which are playing an increasingly prominent role in health care, translate what is known from the most recent and highest quality research into a form that practitioners can use. They also serve to identify gaps in the literature where new research is needed.

(A note on terminology: APA originally called these “clinical treatment guidelines” but switched to “clinical practice guidelines” in order to be consistent with other health care organizations. In addition, APA develops “professional practice guidelines,” which generally address how practice is conducted with particular populations or in particular settings.)

The APA Board appointed an Advisory Steering Committee (ASC), composed of nine APA member psychologists, to design and oversee the process of clinical practice guideline development. The ASC has chosen to work within the Institute of Medicine’s widely accepted standards for conducting systematic reviews of evidence and producing guidelines. The ASC is informed as well by the work of other organizations, such as Guidelines International Network, that seek to strengthen methods for guideline development.

Other tasks of the ASC include: defining the scope of the guideline and the specific questions to be addressed (as it is not feasible to consider all aspects of treatment in a single guideline), obtaining independent systematic reviews of scientific evidence, evaluating that evidence and its limitations, assessing the benefits and harms of treatment options, obtaining and assessing clinician and patient perspectives, generating guideline recommendations and drafting the full guideline document.

In addition to the PTSD guideline, two other guidelines are currently being developed: one on depression across the lifespan and another on obesity in children and adolescents. It is expected that draft versions of those guidelines will be released for public comment by mid-2017.

For information on APA’s clinical practice guidelines steering committee, visit [www.apa.org/about/offices/directorates/guidelines/clinical-practice.aspx](http://www.apa.org/about/offices/directorates/guidelines/clinical-practice.aspx).