

The inclusion of PDA in the new national guideline for autism diagnosis in Australia

Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) was acknowledged on p.50 of Autism CRC's "A National Guideline for the Assessment and Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Australia" which was released on 16 October 2018.

"Pathological (or Extreme) Demand Avoidance refers to a set of symptoms that can co-occur with ASD, and is recognised as a behavioural profile within ASD in the United Kingdom. It is typified by an avoidance of everyday demands and expectations to an extreme extent, and is driven by an anxiety-based need to be in control. Typical signs and/or symptoms include the resistance or avoidance of ordinary demands of life and the use of social strategies as part of the avoidance (e.g. distracting or giving excuses) [1, 25, 26]."

The Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) was established in 2013 and is the world's first national, cooperative research effort focused on autism. They provide the national capacity to develop and deliver evidence-based outcomes through their unique collaboration with the autism community, research organisations, industry and government. Currently, they have 53 participant organisations and other partners based around Australia and internationally, including Autism New Zealand.

The new Guideline is an important policy document that aims to create greater consistency in assessment and diagnostic practices across the country to ensure individuals on the autism spectrum and their families can receive the optimal clinical care and support. It also emphasises the importance of listening to individuals and their families about the impact of the behaviours on everyday life. It has been developed through extensive consultation with the autism and autistic communities. The document has been endorsed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHRC) so it represents optimal clinical care in Australia. Autism CRC is now in consultation with state and federal governments about how to implement the guideline into clinical practice.

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November 2018

All information above is from Autism CRC's website and Facebook videos of Professor Andrew Whitehouse, Chief Research Officer, Autism CRC

<https://www.autismcrc.com.au>

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