



Psychological Testing in the Service of Disability Determination

Including Validity Testing, for Social Security Administration Disability Determinations Committee on Psychological Testing, Board on the Health of Select Populations, Institute of Medicine

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The United States Social Security Administration (SSA) administers two disability programs: Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), for disabled individuals, and their dependent family members, who have worked and contributed to the Social Security trust funds, and Supplemental Security Income (SSSI), which is a means-tested program based on income and financial assets for adults aged 65 years or older and disabled adults and children. Both programs require that claimants have a disability and meet specific medical criteria in order to qualify for benefits. SSA establishes the presence of a medically-determined impairment in individuals with mental disorders other than intellectual disability through the use of standard diagnostic criteria, which include symptoms and signs. These impairments are established largely on reports of signs and symptoms of impairment and functional limitation.

Psychological Testing in the Service of Disability Determination considers the use of psychological tests in evaluating disability claims submitted to the SSA. This report critically reviews selected psychological tests, including symptom validity tests, that could contribute to SSA disability determinations. The report discusses the possible uses of such tests and their contribution to disability determinations. *Psychological Testing in the Service of Disability Determination* discusses testing norms, qualifications for administration of tests, administration of tests, and reporting results. The recommendations of this report will help SSA improve the consistency and accuracy of disability determination in certain cases.

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