

Talking about Addiction

Terms to Reduce Stigma and Negative Bias



Say This.	Not That.	Why?
<p>Person with substance use disorder</p> <p>Person with opioid use disorder (OUD) or person with opioid addiction [when substance in use is opioids]</p> <p>Patient</p> <p>Person with alcohol use disorder</p> <p>Person who misuses alcohol/engages in unhealthy/hazardous alcohol use</p>	<p>Addict</p> <p>User</p> <p>Substance or Drug Abuser</p> <p>Junkie</p> <p>Alcoholic</p> <p>Drunk</p>	<p>Person-first language</p> <p>The change shows that a person “has” a problem, rather than “is” the problem.</p> <p>The terms avoid elicit negative associations, punitive attitudes, and individual blame.</p>
<p>Person in recovery or long-term recovery</p> <p>Person who previously used drugs</p>	<p>Former addict</p> <p>Reformed addict</p>	
<p>Substance use disorder</p> <p>Drug addiction</p>	<p>Habit</p>	<p>Inaccurately implies that a person is choosing to use substances or can choose to stop.</p> <p>“Habit” may undermine the seriousness of the disease.</p>
<p>For illicit drugs: Use</p> <p>For prescription medications: Misuse;</p> <p>Used other than prescribed</p>	<p>Abuse</p>	<p>The term “abuse” was found to have a high association with negative judgments and punishment.</p>
<p>Opioid agonist therapy</p> <p>Medication treatment for OUD</p> <p>Pharmacotherapy</p>	<p>Opioid substitution replacement therapy</p>	<p>Legitimate use of prescription medications is limited to their use as prescribed by the person to whom they are prescribed. Consumption outside these parameters is misuse.</p> <p>It is a misconception that medications merely “substitute” one drug or “one addiction” for another.</p>
<p>For toxicology screen results: Testing negative</p> <p>For non-toxicology purposes: In remission or recovery; Abstinent from drugs; Not drinking or taking drugs; Not currently or actively using drugs</p>	<p>Clean</p>	<p>Use clinically accurate, non-stigmatizing terminology the same way it would be used for other medical conditions.</p> <p>Set an example with your own language when treating patients who might use stigmatizing slang.</p> <p>Use of such terms may evoke negative and punitive implicit cognitions.</p>
<p>For toxicology screen results: Testing positive</p> <p>For non-toxicology purposes: Person who uses drugs</p>	<p>Dirty</p>	<p>Use clinically accurate, non-stigmatizing terminology the same way it would be used for other medical conditions.</p> <p>May decrease patients’ sense of hope and self-efficacy for change.</p>
<p>Baby born to mother who used drugs while pregnant</p> <p>Baby with signs of withdrawal from prenatal drug exposure</p> <p>Baby with neonatal opioid withdrawal/neonatal abstinence syndrome</p> <p>Newborn exposed to substances</p>	<p>Addicted baby</p>	<p>Babies cannot be born with addiction because addiction is a behavioral disorder—they are simply born manifesting a withdrawal syndrome.</p> <p>Use clinically accurate, non-stigmatizing terminology the same way it would be used for other medical conditions.</p> <p>Using person-first language can reduce stigma.</p>

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