

Your Words Matter

What we say and how we say it makes a difference to our patients with substance use disorder.

One way that we can lead is by using clinically appropriate and medically accurate terminology that recognizes SUD as a chronic illness from which people can and do recover, not a moral failing.

Using the right language isn't just about reducing stigma – even though that's important. It also has a real and direct impact on whether people with substance use disorder get the treatment they need. Understanding this, organizations including the American Society of Addiction Medicine have mounted efforts to promote the use of non-stigmatizing language.

As we continue to be advocates in recovery, be a model for others by signing the SUD Innovations Grant "Words Matter" Pledge. It's an important step toward our goal of creating a stigma-free environment and one more way that we can show our commitment to treatment and recovery for patients with substance use disorder.

As a member of the _____ community, I believe that the language I use about substance use disorder is important. Using the right language helps decrease stigma that can prevent patients from seeking care. I pledge to treat all people with a substance use disorder with dignity and respect. I believe that words matter and I pledge to talk about addiction as a chronic illness, not a moral failing. I pledge to be a leader in reducing stigma and promoting recovery from this disease.

Full Name:

Department/Title:

Signature:

Date:
