Delivering an Effective Message When Communicating with Patients

Be a Recovery Advocate!

Knowledge Domain__________________

If you want to connect with your patients and help them along the road to recovery, the way you talk about addiction matters. That means working together, as a staff, to promote a non-stigmatizing environment. Here are a few tips for talking about substance use disorder or other mental health disorders:

- Use medical terminology.
- Use person-first language.
- Avoid stigmatizing terms.
- Humanize the condition.
- Use reliable sources.
- Be respectful.

Recommended Group Activity____________

Identify and discuss the language commonly used to describe addiction or patients with substance use disorder (below) — then develop alternatives that promote recovery. Suggested terms for discussion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Refused</th>
<th>Resisted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client believes...</td>
<td>Paranoid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>Noncompliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmotivated</td>
<td>Suffering from...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low functioning</td>
<td>Clean/dirty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did You Know

The terms “abuse” and “abuser” imply someone has willingly done something wrong. Research shows that this belief can lead to an increase in stigma and reduce the quality of care people with a substance use disorder receive. In particular, the stigma surrounding the use of medication assisted treatment is arguably more harmful than the general stigma about addiction.

To Learn More_________________________

Revising The Language of Addiction
http://bit.ly/2ZghQ8N

Recovery Oriented Language Guide

Abstinence-Based Treatment Works

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