SIMPLE LANGUAGE CHANGES CAN HELP REDUCE STIGMA!

**PREFERRED TERMS FOR SELECT POPULATIONS**

**PEOPLE WITH JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT**
Instead of:
- inmates
- criminals
- convicts

**PEOPLE LIVING WITH (DIAGNOSIS)**
Instead of:
- HIV patients
- monkeypox cases
- epileptics/diabetics

**PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS**
Instead of:
- addicts
- alcoholics
- drug abusers

**PEOPLE WHO ARE UNDERSERVED BY**
Instead of:
- the underserved
- the uninsured
- hard-to-reach

**PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS/UNSTABLE HOUSING**
Instead of:
- the homeless
- transients

**PEOPLE WITH UNDOCUMENTED STATUS**
Instead of:
- illegals
- illegal aliens

**PEOPLE WITH LOWER INCOMES**
Instead of:
- the poor
- poor people
- poverty-stricken

**PEOPLE LIVING WITH A MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS**
Instead of:
- crazy people
- mentally ill

**OLDER ADULTS OR PERSONS AGED (NUMERIC AGE GROUP)**
Instead of:
- the elderly
- seniors

**PEOPLE AT AN INCREASED RISK FOR...**
Instead of:
- high-risk people
- vulnerable people
- priority populations

**PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN RURAL AREAS**
Instead of:
- rural people
- frontier people
- country people

**PEOPLE WHO ENGAGE IN TRANSACTIONAL SEX/SEX WORK**
Instead of:
- prostitutes
- prostitution

*ADAPTED FROM "PREFERRED TERMS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS" FROM CDC. CDC.GOV/HEALTHCOMMUNICATION/PREFERRED_TERMS.HTML*
### THE LANGUAGE WE USE MATTERS

Language is powerful - especially when talking about substance use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of saying this...</th>
<th>Say this...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addict, user, or junkie</td>
<td>Person with substance use disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance or drug abuser</td>
<td>Patient or client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex-addict or clean</td>
<td>Person in recovery or long-term recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug abuse</td>
<td>Substance use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addicted baby</td>
<td>Baby with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean/dirty urine drug screen</td>
<td>Tested negative/positive for substance(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunk</td>
<td>Person under the influence of alcohol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Person-first language removes stigma by emphasizing the person rather than their diagnosis. Person-first language reframes the situation by removing stigmatizing language and creating a non-judgmental environment for positive interactions between patients and providers, leading to better rapport and health outcomes.