

Person-first language is proven to reduce stigma and improve treatment.

- It's not about being sensitive, or polite, or politically correct.
- It's about access to quality treatment and care.
- Person-first language doesn't define a person based on any medical disorder she may have.
- It's nonjudgmental, it's neutral, and the diagnosis is purely clinical.

The Office of National Drug Control Policy recommends these terms and phrases as a starting point. By using person-first language like this, we can make great progress toward reducing the deadly stigma associated with addiction.

Words to avoid	Words to use
Addict	Person with substance use disorder
Alcoholic	Person with alcohol use disorder
Drug problem, drug habit	Substance use disorder
Drug abuse	Drug misuse, harmful use
Drug abuser	Person with substance use disorder
Clean	Abstinent, not actively using
Dirty	Actively using
A clean drug screen	Testing negative for substance use
A dirty drug screen	Testing positive for substance use
Former/reformed addict/alcoholic	Person in recovery, person in long-term recovery
Opioid replacement, methadone maintenance	Medication assisted treatment



Taken from an excellent resource, www.shatterproof.org