

TALKING ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE WITH PATIENTS: LANGUAGE GUIDE FOR PROVIDERS

Use neutral, person-centered language when speaking with patients about substance use. Avoid stigmatizing language. See reference guide below.

AVOID STIGMATIZING LANGUAGE:

Addict, junkie, substance abuser, tecato/a

Substance abuse

Doctor shopper

Replacement/substitution therapy

You should or you shouldn't

Clean or dirty urine

How often did you slip?

USE NEUTRAL, PERSON-CENTERED LANGUAGE:

Person who uses (or injects) drugs

Substance use

Patient, participant, client

Medications for addiction treatment

Would you consider? or Can you try to avoid?

Negative or positive urine

How often did you use last week?

NYC Well is a 24/7, free, confidential hotline, available in more than 200 languages for mental health and substance use concerns, including naloxone access, treatment referrals, opioid overdose prevention program locations and syringe service programs. NYC Well provides information to both patients and providers.

Call **888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355)**.

Text **WELL** to **65173**.

Visit **nyc.gov/nycwell**.