

LANGUAGE GUIDE



This guide has been created to assist you to use person-centred language as an ASHM workshop presenter or facilitator.

As health professionals, we are responsible for creating clinical environments free from stigma and discrimination. Stigma and discrimination make clients less likely to access healthcare services and contribute to delays in diagnosis and treatment and loss to follow up. Using inclusive language is particularly important when discussing HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health medicine.

ASHM supports inclusivity and works to address systemic barriers for groups seeking healthcare. As an ASHM workshop presenter or facilitator, please use the below guide to avoid use of potentially stigmatising language during your course.

*When we change what we say,
we can change what we do, and remove barriers.*

✓ USE THIS	∅ INSTEAD OF THIS
Person living with hepatitis C	Infectious Transmitter Infected
Person living with hepatitis B	Infectious Transmitter Infected
Person living with HIV	Infectious Transmitter Infected
Person with AIDS	Full blown AIDS
Treatment has not been effective	Treatment failure
Adherence to treatment	Non-compliant Non-adherence Failed to take medication
Key populations at higher risk	High risk groups
Substance use Non-prescribed use	Abuse Misuse Problem use

✓ USE THIS	∅ INSTEAD OF THIS
Person who uses/injects drugs	Drug user Drug abuser
Person with a dependence on drugs	Addict Junkie Druggie Alcoholic Abuser
Person experiencing drug dependence	Suffering from addiction Has a drug habit
Person who is no longer using drugs	Clean Sober Drug-free
Person with a lived experience of drug use	Ex-addict Former addict Used to be a...
Person with co-occurring needs	Lacks insight In denial Resistant Unmotivated Not engaged Non-compliant Chaotic
Service does not cater for the individual	Drug seeking Manipulative Splitting
Currently using drugs	Using again Fallen off the wagon Had a setback
No longer using drugs	Stayed clean Maintained recovery Sober
Recreational drug use	Illicit drug use Illegal drug use
Positive/negative urine drug screen	Dirty/clean urine
Used syringe	Dirty needle Dirties
Sterile syringe	Clean needle
Injecting equipment	Needles

✓ USE THIS	∅ INSTEAD OF THIS
<p>Higher weight Larger bodied Persons living in a larger body</p>	<p>Fat person Fattie Unhealthy weight Weight problem Overweight</p>
<p>Person with a diagnosis of a mental illness</p>	<p>Mentally ill Suffering from a mental illness Afflicted with a mental illness</p>
<p>Person with a disability</p>	<p>Disabled Disability Differently – abled Handicapped</p>
<p>Person who has been incarcerated</p>	<p>Prisoner Offender</p>
<p>Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples First nation peoples Indigenous</p>	<p>Aboriginals Aborigines Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders ATSI</p>
<p>Sex Worker</p>	<p>Prostitute Hooker Whore</p>
<p>Transgender person</p>	<p>Tranny Transgendered Transsexual</p>
<p>Transition</p>	<p>Sex change Pre-op/ post-op</p>
<p>Condomless sex</p>	<p>Unprotected sex</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation Same-sex attraction Sexual identity</p>	<p>Sexual preference Gay lifestyle Homosexual lifestyle</p>
<p>Multiple partner</p>	<p>Promiscuous</p>
<p>Overseas born</p>	<p>Immigrant Migrant Refugee Asylum seeker</p>
<p>Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities</p>	<p>Ethnics Foreigners</p>

LGBTQI+ Language

The language we use when managing patients who identify as LGBTQI+ can have a large impact on how comfortable they feel navigating the health space. Language and subtle stigma can be a very real barrier and deterrent to accessing care. There are currently several comprehensive resources available, which health professionals can access to ensure appropriate language is consistently used.

ASHM suggests the following resources:

- [National LGBTI Health Alliance – Inclusive Language Guide](#)
- [ACON – A Language Guide: Trans and Gender Diverse Inclusion](#)
- [QLife – QLife Guides Glossary](#)

For more information on systemic barriers to accessing healthcare for people at risk of or with hepatitis B, hepatitis C or HIV, as well as stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings, please visit

removingbarriers.ashm.org.au

This guide acknowledges and references the following sources:

- NAPWHA, *Language and style guide*, National Association of people living with HIV/AIDS, NSW, 2008
- NUAA, *Language Matters*, NSW Users and AIDS Association, NSW, 2017
- UQ, *UQ Guide to Using Inclusive Language*, The University of Queensland Australia, QLD
- LGBTI, *Inclusive Language Guide: Respecting People of Intersex, Trans and Gender Diverse Experience*, National LGBTI Health Alliance, NSW, 2015
- ADF, *The Power of Words Guide*, Alcohol and Drug Foundation, 2019