Center for Community Engagement at Chestnut Health Systems

RECOVERY LANGUAGE

Say	Instead of
Person who uses drugs	Drug abuser
Person with a substance use disorder	Addict or junkie
Person with an alcohol use disorder	Alcoholic
Person with a mental illness	Mentally ill
Person arrested for a drug violation	Drug offender
Person in recovery	Ex-addict
Resumed or experienced a recurrence	Lapse/relapse
Maintained recovery	Stayed clean
Substance use	Substance misuse/abuse
Living with an addiction	Suffering from/battling addiction
Positive/negative drug screen	Clean/dirty drug screen

National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2023, December 20). Words matter – terms to use and avoid when talking about addiction. National Institute of Health. https://nida.nih.gov/nidamed-medical-health-professionals/health-professions-education/words-matter-terms-to-use-avoid-when-talking-about-addiction

Recovery Research Institute. (2022, August 15). Addictionary®. https://www.recoveryanswers.org/addiction-ary/

The Center for Community Engagement is funded in full or in part through a State Opioid Response Grant (TI085769) to the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.