





Opioid Misuse

Terms to Know

Some Helpful Words & Phrases

Problematic pattern of opioid use that causes significant impairments at work, school, or home, among other criteria	Opioid Use Disorder
Use of a substance without a prescription, or in a different way than prescribed	Misuse
Severe end of the SUD spectrum, characterized by inability to control the impulse to use a substance	Addiction
Needing to take more of the medication over time for the same pain relief	Tolerance
Experiencing symptoms of withdrawal when the medication is stopped	Physical Dependence
An electronic database that tracks controlled substance prescriptions in a state	PDMP

 Evidence-based Affirmative Language	 Stigmatizing Language*
Person with opioid use disorder	Addict, junkie
Substance use	Substance abuse
Time with/without use	Dirty/clean
Using medication not as prescribed	Drug-seeking behavior

* While patients and those with lived experience often use these terms in casual conversation, providers should aim to use evidence-based affirmative language at all times.



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