

Language & Stigma

Nursing

Wording that describes a person's experience without reducing them to it.

Says something about the person

- A schizophrenic
- Committed suicide
- Non-compliant patient
- Attention seeking
- Substance abuser
- Suffers from depression

Says something about the experience

- A person living with schizophrenia
- Died by suicide
- Has not been able to take the medicine
- Communicating distress
- Person who uses substances
- Experiences depression

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

The alternatives are not politeness; they are more precise, more accurate, and more likely to describe something you can act on.

Educational reference. Preferred terms differ between people, communities and countries — ask the person what they use and record