

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

Title: Non-Stigmatizing Verbiage
Introduced by: David Whalen, MD, for the Kent County Delegation
Original Author: Sandy Dettmann, MD, DABAM, FASAM
Referred To:
House Action:

Whereas, we are in the midst of the largest manmade epidemic in the history of the United States, and

Whereas, drug overdose is the most common cause of death in Americans under the age of 50, and

Whereas, addiction is a medical disease with effective, evidence-based medical treatment available, and

Whereas, persons who suffer from the disease of addiction are frequently referred to as "drug addicts," and

Whereas, the verbiage "drug addict" conjures up a somewhat negative image in the minds of most people, and

Whereas, in reality, addiction is an "equal opportunity destroyer;" therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS encourages the use of clinically accurate, non-stigmatizing, person first terminology when referring to persons with the disease of addiction and shall incorporate such terminology in future communications and publications, as well as update existing policies during the normal process of updating the MSMS Policy Manual; and be it further

RESOLVED: That MSMS believes an individual with the disease of addiction should be accurately referred to as a "person with the disease of addiction" instead of "drug addict" or other stigmatizing verbiage.

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: Resolutions only requesting new or revised MSMS or AMA policy - \$500

Relevant MSMS Policy:

Communication, Documentation, and Professionalism

MSMS endeavors to educate physicians and other health care providers about the importance of careful and accurate verbal discussions and written documentation of care provided.

MSMS encourages physicians to demonstrate and maintain high ethical standards to avoid inadvertently discrediting other physicians or other health care providers; thereby, leading by example so that resident physicians and medical students can learn in a supportive environment while providing excellent care for our mutual patients.

Relevant AMA Policy:

Destigmatizing the Language of Addiction H-95.917

Our AMA will use clinically accurate, non-stigmatizing terminology (substance use disorder, substance misuse, recovery, negative/positive urine screen) in all future resolutions, reports, and educational materials regarding substance use and addiction and discourage the use of stigmatizing terms including substance abuse, alcoholism, clean and dirty.

Destigmatizing the Language of Addiction D-95.966

Our AMA and relevant stakeholders will create educational materials on the importance of appropriate use of clinically accurate, non-stigmatizing terminology and encourage use among all physicians and U.S. healthcare facilities.