Novant Health is committed to ending the stigma. By choosing clinically accurate, person-first words, we hope people can more easily access treatment, reach recovery and live healthier lives.

How Novant Health is changing the way we discuss substance use disorder

People fighting substance use disorder are frequently blamed and punished for their condition instead of being offered help or treatment. Millions hide their condition out of fear of being labeled or put in jail.

About 20 million Americans suffer from substance use disorder. Unfortunately, only 1 in 10 people receives treatment to support his or her recovery. On average, 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

Novant Health is committed to ending the stigma. By choosing clinically accurate, person-first words, we hope people can more easily access treatment, reach recovery and live healthier lives.

Words matter: Say this, not that

Substance use or misuse
- Person in recovery
- People with alcohol or drug problems or dependencies
- Medication-assisted treatment or medication-assisted recovery
- Medication or treatment adherence
- Positive or negative drug screen
- Return to use
- Recovery management

Substance abuse
- Former addict
- Alcoholics and addicts
- Opioid replacement or methadone clinic
- Medication or treatment compliance
- Clear or dirty drug screen
- Lapse or relapse
- Relapse prevention