

## **PROMPT TN**

Preventing Rural Opioid Misuse through Partnerships and Training in Tennessee





## Words Matter: How We Talk about Substance Use Disorder and Addiction

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### Disclosures



• Dr. Ginley has no conflicts of interest to disclose.



## **Objectives**

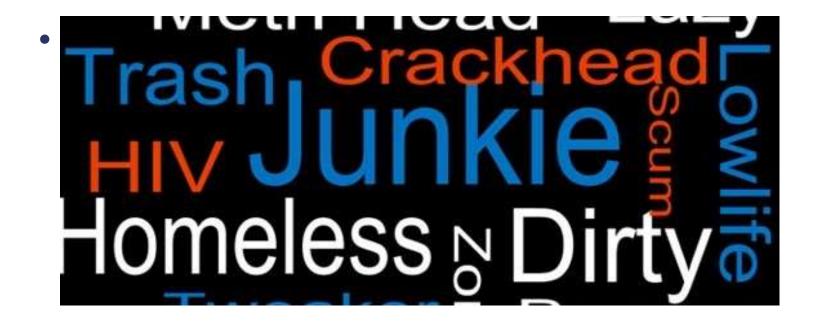


- Discuss background of stigmatizing language in substance use
- Recognize three stigmatizing assumptions related to treatment for persons with substance use disorders
- Review steps we can make to reduce use of stigmatizing language



## Stigma Through Language







# Why do we have so many stigmatizing terms

- Historical context
- Professional medical organizations
- Policy







## Stigmatizing Assumption: Ambivalence about change



- "treatment resistance"
- "drop out"



## Stigmatizing assumption: Treatment is always necessary

- "treatment nonadherence"
- Treatment focused on empathy leads to more change than treatment focused on confrontation



P reventing

R ural
Opioid
Misuse through
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# Stigmatizing assumption: Abstinence only



- "relapse"
- "falling off the wagon"



#### What can we do?



- Check our stigmatizing assumptions
- Learn new language
  - Recovery-oriented language
  - People-first language
  - Health-focused language



#### SAY THIS

Person with a substance use disorder Person in recovery Person living with an addiction Person arrested for a drug violation Chooses not to at this point Medication is a treatment tool Had a setback Maintained recovery Positive drug screen

#### NOT THAT

Addict, junkie, druggie Ex-addict Battling/suffering from an addiction Drug offender Non-compliant / bombed out Medication is a crutch Relapsed Stayed clean Dirty drug screen



from https://www.healthynh.org



### Conclusions



- Remember our history
- Check out assumptions
- Focus on recovery and health
- Put people first
- Convey hope



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