
LANGUAGE MATTERS

THE DENVER PRINCIPLES

The Denver Principles are the defining manifesto of People with AIDS' (PWA) fight for self-empowerment against a seemingly inflexible healthcare industry. The PWA movement is largely credited with helping the US Food and drug Administration (FDA) overhaul how medicines are tested and approved as well as ensuring that women are a part of the testing procedures. The patient bill of rights also empowered people living with other diseases to network and organize as well.



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HIV COMMUNICATION: USING PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO REDUCE STIGMA

STIGMATIZING	PREFERRED LANGUAGE
HIV / AIDS	HIV and AIDS, HIV or AIDS
HIV infected person, HIV or AIDS patient, AIDS or HIV carrier Positives or HIVers	PLWHIV, PWA, PWHA, PHIV, PLHIV (Person Living With HIV or AIDS). Avoid using "infected" when referring to a person. Use People First Language, which emphasizes the person not their diagnosis.
Died of AIDS, to die of AIDS	Died of AIDS-related illness, complications or end-stage HIV, stage 3 HIV
AIDS Virus	HIV (AIDS is a diagnosis not a virus and cannot be transmitted)
Full Blown AIDS	AIDS ("Did I miss your half-blown AIDS?") There are no degrees of AIDS
HIV virus	This is redundant, just use HIV
Zero new infections	Zero new HIV acquisitions/transmissions
HIV infections, HIV infected person	Person living with HIV or person diagnosed with AIDS
Consumer	Client, Patient, Member of HIV community
Coinfection	Coinfection – dual diagnosed or triply diagnosed
Number of infections	Number of HIV diagnosed acquisitions, people diagnosed with HIV
Became infected	Contracted, acquired, diagnosed with
HIV-exposed infant	Infant exposed to HIV
Serodiscordant couple	Serodifferent, "magnetic", mixed status couple
Mother to child transmission	Verticle transmission, perinatally diagnosed
Victim, Innocent Victim; Sufferer, Contaminated, Infected	PWA, PWHA, PHIV, PLHIV, person living with HIV
AIDS Orphan	Children orphaned by loss of parents, guardians who died of AIDS related complications
AIDS Test	HIV Test – AIDS is a diagnosis, and we do not have a medical test for AIDS. AIDS is not something you can see under a microscope
Catch, Contract, Transmit AIDS, Catch HIV	AIDS is a diagnosis – NOT a virus, contract HIV
Compliant, Non-compliant	Adherent, Non-adherent
Prostitute, Prostitution	Sex worker, transactional sex, sale of sexual services
Promiscuous	Having more than one sexual partner Promiscuous is a value judgement – AVOID
Unprotected Sex	Condemless sex (with/without PrEP) (undetectable VL)
Death Sentence, Fatal or Life-threatening condition	Chronic / Serious / Manageable health issue or condition
"Tainted" or "Dirty" needles or blood	Blood containing HIV, shares needles
"Clean"	"Clean" suggests PLWHAs are dirty – AVOID
"A drug that prevents HIV infection"	A drug that reduces the risk of contracting HIV
End HIV, End AIDS	End HIV (Be specific. Are we ending HIV or AIDS?)
MSM, Gay	Same gender loving
Disclosure	To share or tell
Transmission	Contract or Acquire
Getting Infected	HIV transmission; Contracting HIV



People-First Language aims to avoid perceived and subconscious dehumanization when discussing people with disabilities and is sometimes referred to as a type of disability etiquette. It is more appropriate to use terminology which describes individuals as being diagnosed with an illness or disorder. The speaker articulates the idea of a disability as a secondary attribute, not a characteristic of a person.

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