

# 1.7 GLOSSARY



Below is a handful of terms that will enable you to have an informed discussion of SUD with other people affected by the condition in the workplace.

**Addiction.** The main aspect of this term's definition is that it is a chronic and deadly disease – a healthcare condition that affects the physical and mental health of a person. It is being replaced by Substance Use Disorder (see definition).

**Affordable Care Act (ACA).** Also called “Obamacare,” this healthcare legislation required Medicaid and all insurance plans sold on the Health Insurance Exchange to provide services for SUD treatment.

**Behavioral Health.** The area of health care that is concerned with substance use and other mental health disorders.

**Benzodiazepines.** Psychoactive drugs that act as tranquilizers and muscle relaxants, sometimes used in the treatment of alcohol withdrawal.

**Buprenorphine.** A synthetic opioid used for pain relief and also used to treat opioid use disorder.

**Coping strategies.** The behavioral and psychological work that people with SUD do to handle the effects of stressful events that trigger substance use.

**Denial.** The tendency of individuals with SUD to deny or distort the realities associated with their drinking or drug use.

**Dependence.** A term often used synonymously with “addiction.”

**Fentanyl.** A powerful synthetic opioid 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine, available in legal prescription and illegal forms. Fentanyl produces sensations of euphoria and provides pain relief.

**Intervention.** A meeting between a person with SUD and his or her family and/or others



to address the problems being caused by the individual's SUD-related behavior.

**Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT).** Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) combines behavioral therapy with medications to treat SUD.

**Methadone.** Used to reduce withdrawal symptoms from opioid use.

**Methamphetamines.** A synthetic stimulant, it creates euphoria, increased physical activity, decreased appetite, faster breathing, and rapid and/or irregular heartbeat, among other symptoms.

**Naloxone.** Used to help people in the midst of an opioid (or heroin or morphine) overdose, it blocks opioid receptors in the brain.

**Opioids.** A family of drugs used to treat pain that also produce a "high." Chronic use of opioids can lead to tolerance, physical dependence, and addiction.

**Oxycodone.** An opioid produced for pain relief, Oxycodone (as well as Oxycontin and Percocet) can result in dependency and addiction.

**Peer Support Groups.** A general term referring to relationships that support patients recovering from SUD. Examples: Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), and online forums.

**Person-first language.** A way of communicating about substance use and the people it affects. Example: Rather than describe someone as an "addict", he or she would be described as a "person with a substance use disorder." Person-first language helps people understand that the disease is subordinate to the individual's identity.

**Recovery Friendly Workplace.** This refers to a growing number of organizations that embrace pro-SUD recovery policies and practices as a way of simultaneously helping employees and creating a stronger economic foundation.



**Sponsor.** A volunteer within a 12-step program (Such as AA or NA) who is available to help newer members by providing support, encouragement, and guidance to promote recovery.

**Relapse.** A term used to describe a recurrence of substance use.

**Suboxone.** A medication treatment for opioid dependence.

**Substance Use Disorder.** The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers this definition of SUD: "Substance use disorders occur when the recurrent use of alcohol and/or drugs causes clinically significant impairment, including health problems, disability, and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home."

**Taper.** A recovery method of lowering a dose of medication in smaller increments over time to help wean a person with SUD off the use of the substance.

**Trigger.** A stimulus that produces a reaction in a person with SUD that may increase his or her vulnerability to a relapse of substance use disorder.

**Withdrawal.** Symptoms that arise when use of a drug is fully stopped after dependence has been developed.