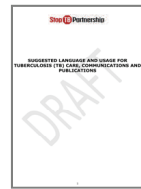# Stop the Stigma: Eliminating Stigmatizing Language

"Every Word Counts"

In the publication, Every Word Counts: Suggested Language and Usage for Tuberculosis Communications, the authors describe how judgmental terms and negative connotation of words such as 'defaulter' and 'suspect' place blame for the disease and responsibility for adverse treatment outcomes on the patient.[1]

In order to assist in implementing a change in the use of stigmatizing language, Heartland has committed to join forces with the Global TB Community, the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease, and the National Society of TB Clinicians. Heartland, with support from the Treatment Action Group, developed this quick reference tool to aid in identifying suggested replacement language as a reminder of how our words may affect others.

[1]From "Suggested language and usage for TB care, communications and publications" page 2

Where it began

Suggested language and usage for tuberculosis (TB) care, communications and publications.

Open letter: Retiring stigmatizing and criminalizing language from the global TB discourse

Language in TB services: can we change to patient-centered terminology and stop the paradigm of blaming the patients?

Civil society calls for the retirement of stigmatizing and criminalizing language from the global TB discourse.

Supported by Treatment Action Group (TAG)

Eliminating Stigmatizing Language

Non-hurtful Replacement Language

Key Terms suggested by the Stop TB Partnership

Use this…..	Not that…..
Adherence / Non-adherence	Compliance / Non-compliance
Person lost to follow up	Defaulter
TB Prevention and Care	TB Control
Person to be evaluated for TB	TB Suspect
HIV-Positive	HIV-infected

HNTC Survey Results

Language suggested by participants

Use this…..	Not that…..
TB Infection	Latent TB
Lack of housing; Under-housed; People experiencing homelessness	Homeless/Homelessness
Immigrant	Alien
Undocumented	Illegal; Illegal alien
Person with TB disease	TB case
Treatment failed	Treatment failure
Missed doses/Non-adherent	Delinquent
Contact Analysis; Contact Elicitation; Contact Identification	Investigation; Investigate
Exposed to TB	TB contact
Tuberculosis	Consumption; White Plague

Stigmatizing language and suggested replacements was identified by an HNTC survey requesting pledgers to identify language that they personally experienced or witnessed.
***This list is non-inclusive.**

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