

Watch Your Mouth: The Practical Approach to Language and Workflow Modifications to Support Positive Patient Outcomes in the Perinatal Care Continuum

Perinatal Summit - November 16, 2023

Erin Foss, RN, CARN
Program Manager/Nurse Specialist
Stratis Health



Objectives

- Define stigmatizing language that may impact care
- Discuss efficient workflow to support positive patient outcomes
- Develop customized approaches in multimodal patient-centered care

Shout It Out

- Commonly used terms that are stigmatizing
- Why is this important?
 - Don't end the relationship with the patient before it starts
 - Be aware of what you say and how you say it to build trust, respect, and rapport

Instead of...	Use...
Addict	Person with substance use disorder
Addicted baby	Baby born to mother who used drugs while pregnant Baby with signs of withdrawal from prenatal drug exposure
NOWS baby	Baby with neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome

Source: [Your Words Matter – Language Showing Compassion and Care for Women, Infants, Families, and Communities Impacted by Substance Use Disorder](#) – HIH-NIDA

Stigma and Addiction

- Patients face stigma in all areas of health care, but most of all in this one.
- Why?



Educate to Avoid Difficult Situations

Who are most important to educate?

- Patients
- OB staff
- Surgical staff
- Lactation consultants

Educate Before Birth

- Talk with your patient in detail about what to expect and encourage them to advocate for themselves.
- Ensure you and your patient have direct contact information to addiction services if needed.

Teach, Teach, Teach

- Ask to attend departmental unit meetings
- Host lunch and learns
- Provide handouts
- Include important instructions in notes/HP
- Give them contact information to provide support

Brief neurobiology of addiction and medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) treatment

Surgical Services/C-Section Team

Before, During, After a C-Section

- Continue MOUD before, during, after procedure
- Pain management post-op
 - Higher dosing to reach therapeutic level
 - Full agonist opioids
- Take home pain medication
 - Higher dosing with small # of tabs and frequent follow up

Breastfeeding

Continue the Suboxone!

- Breastfeeding is encouraged!
 - Suboxone is passed through breastmilk and is safe
 - Baby is not being cut off cold turkey and neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS) is prevented

NOWS Management

- Consider use of Eat, Sleep, Console (ESC) rather than the Finnegan Neonatal Abstinence Score (NAS)
 - ESC has focus of low-stimulation environment, skin-to-skin contact, clustered care, and breast-feeding
 - Non-pharmacological interventions

**MEET PATIENTS
WHERE THEY ARE AT**

**CARE FOR THEM THE BEST YOU
CAN WHILE YOU HAVE THEM**

Harm Reduction - Other Considerations

- Skin infections
- ID screening
- Narcan education and kit on D/C
- Keep reiterating you want to help
- Learn from your patients
- Ask them the tough questions in non-punitive way

“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”

- Maya Angelou

Resources:

- Addiction and opioid-focused ECHOs



Hennepin Healthcare



Native America Community Clinic



Stratis Health

Questions?

efoss@stratishealth.org

320-282-6553