

Language and Stigma

Do Say	Don't say	Why
A person is 'living with' or 'has a diagnosis of' mental illness	'mental patient', 'nutter', 'lunatic', 'psycho', 'schizo', 'deranged', 'mad'	Certain language sensationalises mental illness and reinforces stigma.
A person is 'being treated for' or 'someone with' a mental illness	'victim', 'suffering from', or 'affected with' a mental illness	Terminology that suggests a lack of quality of life for people with mental illness.
A person has a 'diagnosis of' or 'is being treated for' schizophrenia	A person is 'a schizophrenic', 'an anorexic'	Labelling a person by their mental illness.
The person's behaviour was unusual or erratic	'crazed', 'deranged', 'mad', 'psychotic'	Descriptions of behaviour that imply existence of mental illness or are inaccurate.
Antidepressants, psychiatrists or psychologists, mental health hospital	'happy pills', 'shrinks', 'mental institution'	Colloquialisms about treatment can undermine people's willingness to seek help.