HURON PERTH & AREA

ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM

Equity, Inclusion, Diversity, and Anti-Racism (EIDA-R)

A Guide for Inclusive Language

Last Updated: October 2024

HPA-OHT Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and give thanks for the land on which we gather as being the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee/People of the Long House and the Anishinaabe.

We recognize the First Peoples' continued stewardship of the land and water, and that this territory is subject to the Dish with One Spoon Wampum under which multiple nations agreed to care for the land and resources by the Great Lakes in peace.

We also acknowledge and recognize the treaties signed in regard to this land including Treaty #29 and Treaty #45 ½. Our roles and shared responsibilities as treaty people mean we are committed to moving forward in reconciliation with gratitude and respect with all First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Indigenous Peoples.

Introduction

In our increasingly interconnected and diverse world, language plays a key role in shaping our interactions, perceptions, and relationships. It is through words that we express our thoughts, share our experiences, and connect with others. However, language also has the power to exclude, and perpetuate inequities. Recognizing this duality, it is crucial that we use language thoughtfully and intentionally to foster equitable environments.

Language best practices in equity, inclusion, diversity and anti-racism are in a constant state of change. The language presented in this document is the current best practices within the present geopolitical factors that influence the work of the HPA-OHT. The OHT's EIDA-R Advisory Council will review this document on a regular basis to ensure accuracy of best language practices.

Inclusive Language Guiding Principles

Language changes over time. Language around equity is constantly evolving. It is important to recognize these changes by participating in ongoing EIDA-R education sessions. It is crucial to keep an open and empathetic mindset.

Words Matter. Certain words or the way we shape narratives can exacerbate exclusion, stigmatization, stereotyping, and other forms of harm toward people or groups we are working for and with. Understanding the context behind terms and words can minimize harms and build trust with communities marginalized by systems of oppression. This is a nuanced skill that requires ongoing learning, unlearning and engagement.

Person-first language. When writing, person-first language is our recommended first choice, unless you know that an individual or group describes themselves otherwise. (E.g., using a person who is marginalized rather than marginalized person).

Be respectful of a person or group's preferences/choices regarding vocabulary. Always ask how your subject/subjects would like to be referred to in writing. Remember that no community is homogenous - an individualized approach is best.

Anticipate a diverse audience. Make a conscious effort to reflect that diversity in written work and images.

Inclusive Language EIDA-R Resources

Source	Link and Description	Type of Resource
APA Style	**Bias-Free Language** Contains both general guidelines for writing about people without bias across a range of topics and specific guidelines that address the individual characteristics of age, disability, gender, participation in research, racial and ethnic identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and intersectionality.	Webpage with guidelines. 2023.
Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion	**Unlearning fatphobia** Understanding weight stigma, bias and discrimination based on prejudice, commonly held biases, and resulting in harassment, bullying, body shaming, negative comments, and microaggressions.	8-page educational resource. August 2023.

Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion	Religious Inclusion This guide includes resources to help create workplaces that are inclusive and accommodating of religious diversity and to support respectful holiday celebrations.	6-page educational resource. October 2023.
Canadian Public Health Association	Language Matters: Using respectful language in relation to sexual health, substance use, STBBIs and intersecting sources of stigma	17-page document. 2019.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Communicating With and About People with Disabilities	1-page resource 2024.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Preferred Terms for Select Population Groups and Communities.	Webpage
Indigenous Corporate Training	9 Terms to Avoid in Communications with Indigenous Peoples Indigenous Peoples: A Guide to Terminology – Usage tips and definitions	Blog and 35-page eBook Download
National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health	Language and Health Equity: A Curated List List of resources to support public health to develop and use inclusive health equity language.	6-page document

National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health	Let's Talk the Language of Health Equity. Resource to encourage transparent discussion and intentionality about the choice of words we use to build health equity language.	12-page resource. 2023.
Pronouns.org	What are personal pronouns and why to they matter? She/her, he/him, they/their, ze/hir	Website. 2022.
Public Health Communications Collaborative	Plain Language for Public Health In this guide, you'll find plain language principles, simple techniques that can make your communications more accessible, and resources to learn more about plain language.	9-page guide. 2023.
Rainbow Health Ontario	Neutralizing clinical language: Working with gender and sexual diversity, by Heal All Consulting sourced by RHO	5-page document, 2021.