

## **Words Matter: Improving Conversations about Substance Use**

### **Sample Conversation Scripts**

<b>Person Receiving Care</b>	<b>Care Team Member</b>
1) "I'm out of town. I can't come in for my pill count."	"No problem - just give me the name of the closest pharmacy and I will fax them a sheet to fill out once they count your pills."
2) "I don't like being treated like a criminal."	"I am sorry you feel like we're treating you like a criminal; that's not our intention. Our providers are following the Maine law and are required to routinely monitor anyone on controlled substances."
3) "Why are you stuck on my use of (substance x)? You'd use too if you had my life."	"You've got a good point and that's important. There is a bigger picture here, and maybe I haven't been paying enough attention to that. It's not as simple as your use of (substance x). I agree with you, we shouldn't put any blame here."

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### **Sample Questions Using Motivational Interviewing Technique**

#### **Problem Recognition**

- What difficulties have you had in relation to your drug use?
- How has your use of (substance x) stopped you from doing what you want to do?

#### **Concern**

- What is there about your use of (substance x) that you or other people might see as reasons for concern?
- In what ways does your use of (substance x) concern you?

#### **Intention to Change**

- On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important, and 10 is extremely important, how important is it to you to change your substance use? Why are you at a [indicated #] and not a [lower #]?
- If you were 100 percent successful and things worked out exactly as you would like, what would be different?

#### **Optimism**

- If you decide to make a change, what are the thoughts you believe will help you do it?
- What encourages you that you can change if you want to?

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