



Promoting Recovery from Substance Use Disorder: 5 Things Clinicians Can Do

Introduction: While medications and behavioral health counseling are important aspects of treating Substance Use Disorder (SUD), recovery from SUD goes far beyond medical treatment and includes helping patients restore their health, rebuild their connections with their family and community, and find purpose in their life. As clinicians, we can help patients achieve recovery by understanding the multiple dimensions of recovery, and supporting their connections with the recovery community. The following are intended as examples of some practical steps that clinicians and practice team members can take to help patients in their efforts to pursue recovery:

1. Promote a recovery-oriented approach to treatment of SUD: focus on wellness, and encourage patients to identify specific goals for their recovery
2. Ask patients what you can do to help support their recovery and to support their family members
3. Identify and help patients connect with support groups, recovery coaches, and community-based recovery centers in your community
4. Identify and help patients connect with, case managers, social service providers, and other services to support non-medical aspects of their recovery
5. Use person-centered, non-stigmatizing language such as “person with substance use disorder” instead of addict or alcoholic