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Secretary of the House of Delegates

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American Pharmacists Association
House of Delegates – March 15, 2021

NEW BUSINESS

(To be submitted and introduced by Delegates only)

Introduced by: Aimee Dawson (APhA-APPM Delegate)

02-8-2021
(Date)

Delegation on behalf of the APhA-APPM Diabetes Management SIG
(Organization)

Subject: People First Language

Motion: To adopt the following new policy statements:

APhA encourages the use of people first language in all written and oral forms of communication.

Background:

People first language, or person first language, was first adopted and embraced by organizations that support people with disabilities. In the healthcare setting, it has been recognized that person-first language should expand to all patients with any medical condition, not just conditions categorized as disabilities. People first language is a communication style that ensures appropriate and respectful language is used.¹ The language recognizes the person first, not their condition. For example, patients should be referred to as “a person with....” or “a person who has...”. In the health-care setting, everyone should strive to use people-first language when speaking about patients. This is as simple as using the term “patients with diabetes” instead of “diabetic patients” or “a person living with HIV” instead of “an HIV patient”. Language matters and this is an important tool to help efforts to limit discrimination, generalizations, and

stereotypes.² In 2017, we saw the expansion of this idea and its use in healthcare when the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE) and the American Diabetes Association (ADA) developed a joint task force to discuss language in diabetes care and education.³ This task force published a report with their recommendations including the use of person first language.³ APhA should stand with the CDC, AADE/ADA, and the numerous other organizations that support the use of people first language.¹⁻³

Although it is usually best to use people first language when referring to another person, individuals may wish to use identity-first language when referring to themselves or ask others to use this language when speaking about them.^{4,5} Identity-first language is when the disability or condition will come first. For example, a person with autism may choose to refer to themselves as “an autistic person.” People that use identity-first language for themselves state that this is a choice of empowerment.^{4,5} People or organizations who prefer identify first language often state that are proud of their disability or condition and would like to be identified as such.^{4,5}

Overall, when referring to another person, people first language should always be used unless that person has indicated that they prefer identify-first language.

Sources:

1. Office of the Director, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities -CDC. Communicating With and About People with Disabilities. https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/pdf/disabilityposter_photos.pdf Accessed: October 10, 2019.
2. Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities. People First Language. <https://tcdd.texas.gov/resources/people-first-language/> Accessed: October 10, 2019.
3. Dickinson JK, Guzman SJ, Maryniuk MD, et al. The Use of Language in Diabetes Care and Education. *Diabetes Care*. 2017;40(12):1790-1799.
4. Molly Callahan. ‘Autistic Person’ or ‘Person with Autism’: Is there a right way to identify people? July 12, 2018. <https://news.northeastern.edu/2018/07/12/unpacking-the-debate-over-person-first-vs-identity-first-language-in-the-autism-community/> Accessed: October 10, 2019.

5. The pitfalls of political correctness: euphemisms excoriated [article online]. Braille Monitor, March 2009. Available from <https://nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/bm/bm09/bm0903/bm090308.htm>. Accessed November 7, 2019.

Current APhA Policy & Bylaws:

No current existing APhA Policy statements or bylaws related to this topic.

****Phone numbers will only be used by the New Business Review Committee in case there are questions for the delegate who submitted the New Business Item Content.**

New Business Items are due to the Speaker of the House by **February 10, 2021** (30 days prior to the start of the first House session). Consideration of urgent items can be presented with a suspension of the House Rules at the session where New Business will be acted upon. Please submit New Business Items to the Speaker of the House via email at hod@aphanet.org.