



INCLUSIVE VOCABULARY - DISABILITY STATUS AND ABLEISM

Treating patients from diverse backgrounds calls for thoughtful consideration and precise language can help patients and their families feel more comfortable when receiving care. Diversity includes:

- Ability.
- Ethnicity.
- Race.
- Religion.
- Sexuality and gender identity.
- Socioeconomic status.

Providing a safe and welcoming environment to all our patients and their families helps us provide better, patient-centered care for everyone.

These guidelines were written by the American Psychological Association and Maysa Akbar, Ph.D., chief diversity officer of the American Psychological Association, the Associated Press, the American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Term to avoid	Suggested alternative
special needs	Someone with a disability. Someone who has a disability. Disabled person. People with intellectual disabilities. Child with congenital disability. Child with a birth impairment. Physically disabled person. Someone with a physical disability.
Description of deaf or hard-of-hearing people	
person with deafness person who is deaf	Deaf person.
hearing-impaired person person who is hearing impaired person with hearing loss	Hard-of-hearing person. Someone who is hard of hearing.
person with deafness and blindness	Deaf-blind person.
Description of blind people and people who are visually impaired	
person with blindness	Blind person. Someone who is blind.
visually challenged person sight-challenged person	Visually impaired person. Vision-impaired person. Someone who is visually impaired. Someone who is vision-impaired.
Use of pictorial metaphors, negative terms and slurs	
AIDS victim	Someone with AIDS.
brain damaged	Someone with a traumatic brain injury.
cripple invalid	Someone with a physical disability.
defective nuts crazy	Someone with a mental disorder. Someone with a mental illness. Someone living with a mental illness.
alcoholic	Someone with alcohol-use disorder.
meth addict	Someone with substance-use disorder.