

## Substance Use/Abuse/Dependence

### Did you know?

Accurately reporting alcohol or drug usage in the medical record requires careful documentation attention to 3 specific areas:

1. Choose the right **Category** of substance usage:

- **USE** (i.e. – having a glass of wine or using hydrocodone as prescribed)
- **ABUSE** (i.e. – being drunk or taking any substance other than as prescribed such as injecting narcotics or snorting cocaine)
- **DEPENDENCE** (i.e. - being physically or psychologically addicted to any substance)

\***Note:** “alcoholism” = alcohol **dependence**

\***Note:** weighting = **Dependence > Abuse > Use**

2. Please document both the **Category** AND any **additional manifestations**

Ex: **Alcoholism with current intoxication**

Ex: Cocaine **abuse with hallucinations** (meaning the patient is not physically addicted)

Ex: Heroin **addiction with withdrawal**

3. Please link the patient’s current medical problem to the substance use/abuse/dependence **if it caused or contributed to that problem**

Ex: Wrist fracture after fall **due to** alcohol intoxication

Ex: Cirrhosis **due to** alcoholism

Ex: Endocarditis **due to** IV narcotic abuse