

IT IS ALL ABOUT LANGUAGE!

DIABETES AND DEPRESSION



Disclaimer: The quotes do not necessarily reflect the views of the people in the photos



THE GOVERNMENT OF MAKUENI COUNTY
www.makueni.go.ke



In Deus Nos fides

AFRICA MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH
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Why is language important for persons with diabetes and depression?

1. It helps to dispel stereotypes, myths and misconceptions
2. Positive words can reduce feelings of anxiety, shame, guilt and resentment
3. It helps to see people with diabetes and depression in a more positive way
4. Encourages conversations about the conditions in a non-judgmental way
5. It builds confidence and encourages self-care
6. It helps identify and treat mental health problems
7. It promotes dignity, human rights and a sense of belonging for all

“Keep reassuring people that diabetes and depression are manageable conditions and we should encourage everyone to use polite language that doesn’t intimidate anyone”

Community leader



What is diabetes?

It is a long-term condition which can be managed effectively. Key symptoms are:

- Frequent urination
- Feeling more thirsty than usual
- Feeling more hungry than usual

If you want further information please talk to the nearest community health volunteer. He or she will help or refer you to have your blood sugar level tested to check whether or not you have diabetes.

What is depression?

People with diabetes are much more likely to develop symptoms of depression compared to people without diabetes. Key symptoms for several days during the last two weeks are:

- Little interest or pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
- Feeling down, very sad or hopeless

If you want further information please talk to the nearest community health worker who will refer you to someone trained to check whether or not you have depression.



DOS AND DON'TS IN LANGUAGE CONVERSATIONS

Diabetes

*Person living/with diabetes/client
BUT NOT Diabetic patient/diabetic
/person known to have diabetes/
person of sugar/sick of sweetness/
person with 'salt disease'/patient/
a bee*

*Those in need of diabetes care
BUT NOT sufferer/victim/fighter
/disease of this person*

*Support or encouragement
BUT NOT non-compliant/does not
look after themselves*

Depression

*DO SAY HE HAS:
depressive symptoms
/a mental health problem*

*DON'T SAY HE IS:
mad/foolish/forgetful/unkept/
troublesome/ arrogant/uncouth/
confused/suffering/ zombie*

*DO SAY SHE HAS:
depression/a mental
health problem*

*DON'T SAY SHE HAS:
lost her network/bizarre behavior/demons/
lost touch with the world/a loose nut/
a bad brain that moves everywhere/
a disturbed mind/ a mind that is
not functioning*

We hope this leaflet is useful for everyone – persons with diabetes, depression, and their families, the community and all health care providers.