



SEIU 775
BENEFITS GROUP

Learner Handbook

SUBSTANCE MISUSE



About SEIU 775 Benefits Group

The SEIU 775 Benefits Group trains and develops professional long-term care workers to deliver high-quality care and support to older adults and people with disabilities. The SEIU 775 Benefits Group also negotiates and purchases high-quality health care benefits for long-term care workers in Washington and Montana.

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SEIU 775 BENEFITS GROUP

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Substance Misuse

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Course Overview

Description

In this course, you will learn how to identify signs of substance misuse. You will also learn how to provide support for a client who is misusing substances.

This course takes three hours to complete.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Report signs of misuse of commonly used substances.
- Demonstrate ways to support a client who is actively misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Demonstrate best practices caregivers can use to safeguard themselves when caring for a client who misuses drugs or alcohol.
- Describe available resources to help a client who misuses substances or has substance use disorder.

Course Agenda

This table shows the agenda for the course.

Agenda Item	Time (min)
Introduction and Welcome	10
Preassessment	10
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Risks in the Home Environment	
Safety Measures	
Self-Care	
Substance Misuse Support Resources	
Total 3 hrs	180

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Welcome and Course Introduction

About the Course

In this course, you will learn how to identify signs of substance misuse. You will also learn how to support a client who is misusing substances. This course takes three hours to complete.

Activity: What Is Substance Misuse?

Notes:

Substance Misuse vs. Substance Use Disorder

Substance misuse: The is the use of any substance in a way that can cause harm to people or to those around them.

Substance use disorder (SUD): A medical illness caused by the repeated misuse of a substance or substances.

Lesson 1: Commonly Used Substances and Signs of Misuse

Commonly Used Substances and Signs of Misuse



Remember

Substance misuse can affect anyone. As such, it should not be viewed as a personal failing. You likely know someone who has struggled with substance misuse. Substance misuse can negatively affect health and relationships with risk of violence and/or death.

Activity: Frequently Misused Substances

Notes:

Substance	Common Forms
Alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beer • wine • distilled spirits (e.g., whiskey, vodka, gin, rum) • malt liquor
Cannabis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marijuana • hashish • honey oil • edible cannabinoids • synthetic cannabinoids
Prescription opioid pain relievers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • codeine • hydrocodone • morphine • oxycodone • hydromorphone • fentanyl • methadone
Prescription depressants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benzodiazepines • sleep medications • barbiturates (e.g., Seconal)
Prescription stimulants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dextroamphetamines • methylphenidate • dextroamphetamine/amphetamine combination
Illegal stimulants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cocaine • crack • methamphetamine (“meth”) • synthetic cathinones (“bath salts”)
Hallucinogens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSD • peyote • psilocybin (magic mushrooms) • MDMA (ecstasy, molly) • ayahuasca • PCP • ketamine • salvia

Over-the-counter (OTC) medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dextromethorphan (cough medication) • loperamide (anti-diarrheal medication)
Nondrug substances (inhalants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paint thinners or removers • gasoline • lighter fluid • correction fluid • permanent markers • glue • spray paint • hair spray • butane lighter • whipped cream aerosol canister
Illegal narcotics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heroin • opium

How Substances Enter the Body

Ingestion	Smoking or Inhalation	Injection	Snorting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alcohol• Cannabis• Hallucinogens• Opioid pain relievers• Over-the-counter medications• Prescription pills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cannabis• Hallucinogens• Inhalants• Illegal narcotics• Illegal stimulants• Opioid pain relievers• Prescription stimulants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Illegal narcotics• Opioid pain relievers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hallucinogens• Illegal narcotics• Illegal stimulants• Opioid pain relievers

Notes:

Knowledge Check: How Is Cannabis Used?

How is cannabis used? Circle all that apply.

- a. Ingested
- b. Smoked or inhaled
- c. Injected
- d. Snorted

Knowledge Check: How Are Prescription Opioid Pain Relievers Used?

How are prescription opioid pain relievers used? Circle all that apply

- a. Ingested
- b. Smoked or inhaled
- c. Injected
- d. Snorted

Knowledge Check: How Is Alcohol Used?

How is alcohol used? Circle all that apply

- a. Ingested
- b. Smoked or inhaled
- c. Injected
- d. Snorted

Appropriate Use Vs. Misuse

Substance	Appropriate Use	Misuse
Alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men: one to two drinks per day • Women: one drink per day • Age 65 and older: one drink per day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used by minors • Used in excess • Used by individual with SUD • Combined with medications
Illegal Substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any use
Inhalants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used for intended purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to get high
Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taken as directed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taken to get high • Taken in ways that are not directed
Prescription Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taken as prescribed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used by someone without a prescription • Taken at a different dosage than prescribed • Mixed with alcohol or other substances (polydrug use)

Activity: Appropriate Use vs. Misuse

Instructions: Read through each scenario. Think about whether the client is using substances appropriately. If you believe they may be misusing them, note the appropriate use of the substance.

Mariann's Scenario: Mariann, a client with a history of chronic back pain, is experiencing more intense back pain than usual. She decides to take a pain pill an hour earlier than prescribed. Is Mariann using her pain pills appropriately? If not, what is the appropriate use?

Notes:

Mahmud's Scenario: Mahmud has a beer with dinner several nights a week. Is Mahmud using alcohol appropriately? What are ways that alcohol can be misused?

Notes:

Activity: Why?

Why do you think someone might start using or misusing substances?

Notes:

Why People Use and Misuse Substances

Notes:

Progression of Misuse to Substance Use Disorder

Repeated substance misuse can develop into substance use disorder (SUD). Developing SUD is not intentional. Rather, changes in the brain can lead some people to develop SUD.

Experimentation



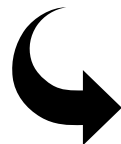
Tolerance



Dependence



Loss of good feeling



Uncontrollable cravings



Remember

SUD and addiction are considered chronic diseases and often require long-term, specialized treatment. Historically, SUD was associated with stigma, but it is now diagnosed and treated like cancer, heart disease, or diabetes.

Knowledge Check: Progression to Substance Use Disorder

Instructions: Read the scenario. Then, place the following signs in order (1–5) based on the predictable progression of substance use disorder.

You are caring for a new client, Daniel, and you are concerned that he is misusing his pain medication.

- _____ Daniel feels sick and anxious without his pain medication. When Daniel takes a lower dosage of his pain medication, he feels sick.
- _____ Daniel obsesses about when he can take more pain medication and how he can obtain more.
- _____ Daniel starts to take extra pain medication to help ease his chronic back pain.
- _____ Daniel needs larger doses to feel the effects of his pain medication.
- _____ Daniel takes larger, more frequent doses and continues to misuse despite the pain and stress his medication use is causing his family.

Substance Misuse Consequences

Substance misuse can have social and health-related effects.



- Relationships
- Employment
- Violence



- Mental Illness
- Stroke
- Overdose
- Heart and lung disease
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Hepatitis



Remember

Even if an individual misuses substances but is not diagnosed with SUD, they can still have increased social and health risks.

Knowledge Check: Substance Misuse Consequences

Instructions: Circle all the possible consequences of substance misuse.

- a. Loss of employment
- b. Hepatitis
- c. Stroke
- d. Hearing loss

Observing Signs of Substance Misuse



Remember

Other conditions can cause similar signs as substance misuse, so do not make assumptions. When you report signs of possible substance misuse, just report the facts of what you see and hear.

Physical	Behavioral
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Burns or needle marks• Changes in physical appearance• Impaired coordination• Bloodshot, dilated, or constricted pupils• Tremors• Runny nose or sniffing• Sudden weight gain, weight loss, or bloating• Unusual odors• Flushed skin• Dark glasses worn at inappropriate times	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unexplained change in personality• Sudden mood swings• Lying, deceiving, manipulating, getting into trouble• Using substances in physically hazardous situations• Secretive or suspicious behaviors• Changes in appetite or sleep patterns• Unusual hyperactivity, agitation, or giddiness• Lack of motivation, fearful, anxious, or paranoid• Prescriptions from multiple providers• Drug paraphernalia in the home

Knowledge Check: Physical and Behavioral Signs

Instructions: Determine if the sign is physical or behavioral.

Anxiety and paranoia

- a. Physical
- b. Behavioral

Burned fingers or lips

- a. Physical
- b. Behavioral

Lying and manipulating

- a. Physical
- b. Behavioral

Reporting Signs of Substance Misuse



Remember

Report any signs of substance misuse to your supervisor or the case manager. Early reporting can lead to more effective treatment.

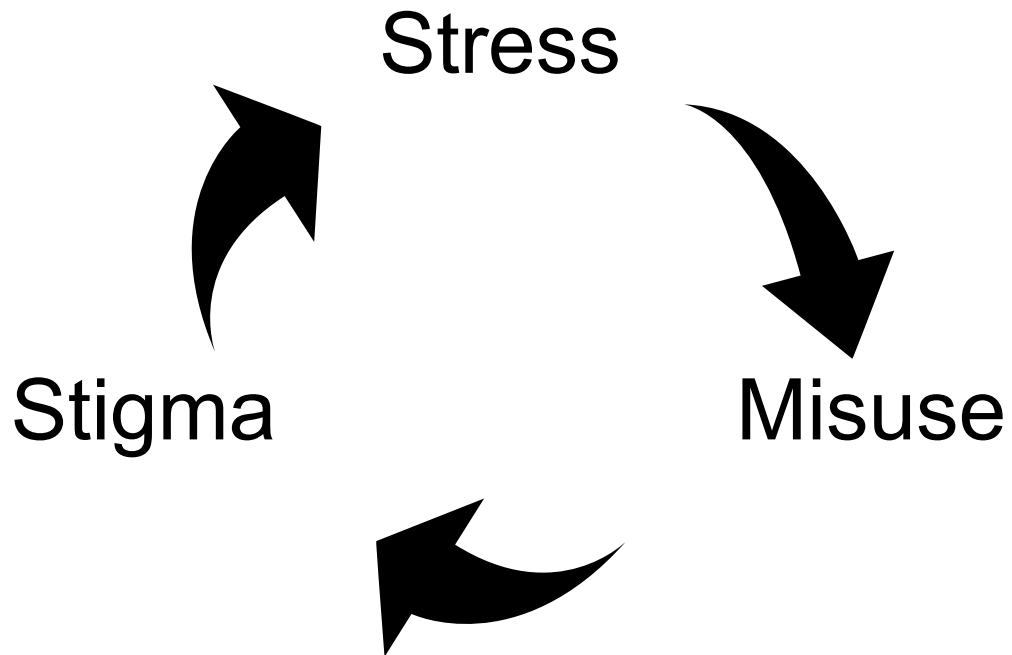
Knowledge Check: Reporting Signs of Substance Misuse

You are working with a client, Sharifa. You notice she is experiencing mood swings and is being secretive. This morning, you found powder in a small bag on the table. What should you report to the case manager or your supervisor?

- a. Sharifa is misusing substances.
- b. Report your observations and what you found.
- c. Sharifa is using cocaine and maybe heroin.
- d. Do not report anything.

Lesson 2: Support for a Client Who Misuses Substances

Vicious Cycle: Stress, Stigma, and Misuse



Notes:

Using Nonjudgmental Language

Words to Avoid	Words to Use
Addict, abuser, junkie	Person with substance use disorder, person in active addiction
Alcoholic	Person with alcohol use disorder
Drug problem, drug habit	Substance use disorder
Drug abuse	Drug misuse, harmful use, risky use
Drug abuser	Person with substance use disorder
Clean	Abstinent, not actively using
Dirty	Actively using
Former addict/alcoholic, reformed addict/alcoholic	Person in recovery, person in long-term recovery
Opioid replacement, methadone maintenance	Medication-assisted treatment

Instructions: Read the scenario and discuss the question with a partner or small group.

Horacio's Scenario: You work with a client, Horacio, who developed substance use disorder. He started misusing pain medication after a serious back injury several years ago. When discussing the client with the case manager, the case manager describes Horacio as an “addict” who has a “drug problem.” What terms are less stigmatizing?

Notes:

Vidya's Scenario: Vidya, the client you work with, drinks alcohol heavily every night before bed. What terms could you use when reporting your concerns to the care team?

Notes:

Knowledge Check: Identifying Stigma

Instructions: Read the question. Then, raise your hand to indicate your answer.

What are examples of stigma with substance misuse?

- a. Imani is often called an alcoholic by her family members.
- b. Mario is called dirty when he actively uses substances.
- c. Mrs. Jackson is a client with substance misuse disorder.
- d. Soriah is a client in recovery.

Activity: Stress-Relieving Activities

Notes:

Positive Supports

Do	Do Not
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do show concern.• Do ask for permission.• Do stay with them.• Do make sure they do not drive.• Do encourage them to lie down.• Do check on them.• Do ensure someone stays with them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not be negative.• Do not accuse, judge, or preach.• Do not argue.• Do not give any medications.• Do not give coffee.• Do not give food or drink.• Do not try to keep them awake.

Knowledge Check: Positive Support

Instructions: Read the scenario. Then, raise your hand to indicate your answer.

You are working with a client, Brigitte, who is misusing substances. What are two ways you can support her?

- a. Give Brigitte aspirin to prevent a hangover.
- b. Stay with Brigitte if she is intoxicated.
- c. Stay calm and nonjudgmental.
- d. Try to convince her to stop misusing.

What Is an Overdose?

An overdose occurs when the substance level is too high for the body to process. The specific signs of an overdose depend on the type and amount of the substance taken.



Reminder

Accidental overdose is a serious problem in the United States. Overdose deaths outnumber deaths caused by firearms, car accidents, homicides, or HIV/AIDS.

Signs of an Overdose

- Dilated pupils
- Agitation and confusion
- Rapid heart rate and high blood pressure
- Shallow breathing/difficulty breathing
- Weak pulse
- Cold, clammy skin
- Psychosis, delirium, or hallucinations
- Blue-tinged skin
- Convulsions/seizures
- Extreme lethargy
- High body temperature
- Unconsciousness

Video: Recognizing Signs of an Overdose

Notes:

Discussion: What Did You See?

Notes:

Discussion: How Would You Respond?

Notes:

Video: Overdose Response

Notes:

Discussion: Overdose Response

Notes:

Responding to Signs of an Overdose

- **Call 9-1-1 immediately.**
- Protect the client's airway.
- Report the substance to responders, if possible.
- Report the incident to the case manager or your supervisor.

Notes:

Blackouts, Hangovers, and Comedown

Condition	Signs	Support
Blackout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgetfulness, repetitive conversation • Unconcerned about others • Distracted easily • Large quantity of alcohol consumed in a short period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure they are in a safe place. • Encourage the client to eat and drink water if they feel OK. • If the client needs to vomit, help them get to the toilet. • Encourage the client to rest. • Report the event to your supervisor or the case manager.
Hangover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache and dizziness • Nausea • Fatigue • Sensitivity to light and sound • Rapid heartbeat • Depression, anxiety, and irritability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage rest. • Avoid acetaminophen (Tylenol). • Report the event to your supervisor or the case manager.
Comedown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches • Nausea • Low energy • Sleepiness or insomnia • Loss of appetite • Severe depression • Anxiety • Exhaustion or lack of energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage rest. • Encourage activities to distract. • Offer water and healthy food. • Report the event to your supervisor or the case manager.

Activity: Substance Misuse Scenarios

Instructions: Read the scenarios and discuss your answers in your small group.

Jocelyn's Scenario: Jocelyn woke up with a headache, feeling nauseated. She tells you she had several alcoholic drinks last night. What might be causing Jocelyn's symptoms? How can you support Jocelyn?

Notes:

Oda's Scenario: Oda, a client you work with, is drinking vodka heavily throughout the afternoon. She asks you to order takeout and you note that this is the third time she has asked you. She seems to not remember that you already placed the food order. When the food arrives, Oda exclaims, "You ordered food!" What might be causing Oda's behavior? How can you support Oda?

Notes:

Ludvik's Scenario: Ludvik took extra pain pills for knee pain over the past few days. Today, he took his prescribed dose. Ludvik tells you he is feeling anxious and depressed. You notice he has no appetite and is not as energetic as usual. What might be causing Ludvik's symptoms? How can you support Ludvik?

Notes:

Withdrawal

Withdrawal symptoms occur when a person stops or reduces taking drugs or alcohol after using them regularly for a long time or after taking high doses.

Notes:

Withdrawal Response



Remember

If you notice any of the following symptoms, **call 9-1-1 immediately:**

- Seizures
- Hallucinations
- Signs of a heart attack
- Signs of a stroke

Supporting a Client in Recovery

Components to promote recovery:

- Maintain good health.
- Have stability in the home.
- Participate in meaningful activities.
- Create community.

Notes:

Suicide Warning Signs and Risks

Individuals who misuse substances are at a higher risk for suicide. The depression and anxiety caused by withdrawal and comedown can increase the possibility of suicidal thoughts.

Verbal Expressions	Behavior and Observations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talking about wanting to die or killing themselves• Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live• Talking about feeling trapped or being in unbearable pain• Talking about being a burden to others• Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs• Acting anxious or agitated• Behaving recklessly• Sleeping too little or too much• Withdrawing or feeling isolated• Looking for a way to kill themselves, such as searching online or buying a gun• Displaying extreme mood swings• Losing interest in things or losing the ability to experience pleasure• Giving away valuables

Responding to Suicide Warning Signs



Remember

Call 9-1-1 if the client is a danger to themselves or others. You can use the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. You can call, text, or chat 988 and follow their guidance. You can also call SAMHSA's National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) , which connects you with 988.

Lesson 3: Caregiver Safeguards

Caregiver Safeguards



Remember

The risks in the home environment of a client who misuses substances will depend on the severity of substance misuse.

Safety Risks in the Home

Behavioral Risks

- Chaotic, unpredictable lifestyle
- Wide mood swings
- Poor personal hygiene
- Lack of clear boundaries
- Lying, stealing, and violence
- Bouts of violence or aggression
- Criminal behavior
- Frequently blacking out or losing consciousness

Environmental Risks

- Other people misusing substances in the home
- Criminal behavior in the home
- Exposure to illegal substances
- Presence of drug paraphernalia, including razor blades, used needles, and syringes
- Residue of drugs on surfaces (tables, floor, etc.)
- Fire from unattended pipes, cigarettes, or rags with inhalants

Activity: Identify Risks

Instructions: In your small group, discuss each scenario and identify the behavioral and environmental risks.

Darnell's Scenario: Darnell's behavior is becoming unpredictable, with emotional, sometimes violent outbursts. You regularly find used needles in his bathroom.

Notes:

Iveta's Scenario: Iveta lives with three roommates who regularly use illegal drugs in the house. Iveta often lies about losing medication and requests refills for her pain medication more frequently than prescribed.

Notes:

Safety Strategies

- Create a plan.
- Maintain healthy boundaries.
- Protect yourself.
- Call for help.



Remember

Know when you need to call for help. You can contact your supervisor or the case manager, but you should call 9-1-1 if you feel threatened or witness a crime.

Activity: Using Safety Strategies

Instructions: Based on the scenarios in the last activities, what strategies can you use with each client to ensure your safety?

Darnell	Iveta

Self-Care Practices

Notes:



Remember

It is not your responsibility to solve or fix any substance misuse. Instead, take time to participate in activities that are fun and fulfilling. Self-care can help you remain calm, make good decisions, and reduce stress.

Course Key Terms

Key Terms	Definitions
Addiction	A chronic relapsing disease. This disease is characterized by behaviors that include impaired control over the use of addictive substances, compulsive use, continued use despite harm, and cravings.
Binge drinking	Heavy alcohol use in a short time frame. Drinking four (women) or five (men) or more standard alcoholic drinks on the same occasion on at least one day in the past 30 days.
Blackout; <i>also</i> alcohol-induced amnesia	A loss of memory caused by a rapid increase in blood alcohol levels.
Overdose	A level of substance toxicity in the body that overwhelms normal function.
Polydrug use	When a person uses more than one type of substance at the same time or at different times.
Psychoactive	A type of substance that affects the mind.
Recovery	When a person with substance use disorder completes treatment for the disease and does not misuse substances.
Relapse	A return to drug use after an attempt to stop.
Stigma	Disapproval based on specific circumstances, qualities, or behaviors.
Substance	A psychoactive compound with the potential to cause health and social problems.
Substance abuse	See <i>substance misuse</i> .
Substance misuse	The use of any substance in a way that can cause harm to people or to those around them.
Substance use disorder	A medical illness caused by repeated misuse of a substance or substances.

Key Terms	Definitions
Tolerance	The need to increase use of alcohol or a drug to gain the same effect.
Withdrawal	Negative physical and mental side effects that a person experiences when they stop using substances.

Appendix A

Substance Misuse Support Resources

Resource	Contact Information
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	Website: https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline Toll Free Phone Number: 1-800-662-HELP (4257) This resource provides referrals and support for individuals and families who suffer with mental and/or substance use disorders, 24/7, 365 days a year.
National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)	Website: https://www.drugabuse.gov/ NIDA is an excellent source of information on substance misuse, substance use disorders, and addiction.
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)	Website: https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/about-niaaa The NIAAA website contains information about the support and research available on alcohol use and human health and well-being.
Medicare Interactive: Treatment for Alcoholism and Substance Use Disorder	Website: https://www.medicareinteractive.org/get-answers/medicare-covered-services/mental-health-services/treatment-for-alcoholism-and-substance-abuse This website provides a review of Medicare funded treatment for alcoholism and substance use disorder treatment.
Apple Health Treatment for Substance Use Disorder	Website: https://www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/behavioral-health-recovery/substance-use-treatment#how-do-i-get This website provides a review of how to get treatment for alcohol and substance use disorder using Apple Health (Medicaid).

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	<p>Website: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/res-vatreatmentprograms.asp</p> <p>This website contains referral options that are available to veterans who seek treatment for substance use disorders.</p>
Take Back Your Meds	<p>Website: http://www.takebackyourmeds.org/</p> <p>This website provides an interactive map of where in Washington state to safely dispose of prescription medications that are no longer needed.</p>

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