

English-Hmong Mental Health Glossary

Adapted from Hmong-English Mental Health
Terminology Glossary by Wisconsin Hmong Mental
Health Professional Group

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Eau Claire City-County
Health Department



HEALTHY

Communities

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Introduction

In the fall of 2013, Eau Claire Healthy Communities-Mental Health Action Team partnered with the Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association and the Eau Claire City-County Health Department to apply for a grant from Security Health Plan that focused on Hmong Mental Health Literacy. Funding was provided for the project “Mental Wellness: Increasing mental health literacy of Hmong Elders, Community Liaisons and Healthcare Providers in the Eau Claire Community (Hmong Mental Health Literacy Project).” The project’s multi-faceted goal was to enhance the awareness and knowledge of Mental Health language and services to consumers, interpreters and healthcare providers.

It is recognized that for many terms there is no direct translation from the English language to Hmong. Because of this, when important information can at times be lost in translation. The team partnering on this grant opportunity invited other community professionals to help develop a more uniform translation of Mental Health terminology. Thanks to the Wisconsin Hmong Mental Health Professional Group for their first and only edition of the “Hmong-English Mental Health Terminology Glossary;” our team was able to review this document as a starting point for this project.

Each term in the glossary was discussed and reviewed by a group of interpreters, nurses and a clinical psychologist. The team that reviewed the glossary found several additional terms to add to the glossary. With that, this document was created. The terms are translated into White Hmong which Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association identifies as the largest Hmong population in Eau Claire County. The group recognizes that there are a variety of ways to translate each term or phrase; some terms include multiple translations within this document. The interpreter should utilize the Hmong terms or phrases that best matches the English definition and their understanding of information being translated.

This document includes Hmong-English translation of terms that already exist in the Hmong language relating to Mental Health that providers may find helpful, as well as, some tips for interpreters and healthcare providers.

The section “Tips for Interpreters and Healthcare providers” contains mainly information received from Elders during Mental Wellness Days for Hmong Elders that was held in the spring 2014. At these sessions, Elders received Mental Wellness education including self-coping methods such as hands-on activities and exercise techniques, and information about services available in Eau Claire County. Elders shared a lot with interpreters and providers during these sessions and the group captured information to share with others that they may find helpful.

Section 1

English to Hmong Mental Health Glossary

<i>English</i>	<i>Hmong</i>
Addiction	Quav (yeeb, cawv phaib, luam yeeb)
Advocacy	Kev pab ib tug neeg los-sis sawv cev rau nws txoj kev xav tau
Alcohol use	Siv dej cawv. Haus dej cawv
Allergy	Fab; phiv; tsis haum lub cev
Alzheimer's Disease	Ib hom kab mob ua rau yus tsis nco qab zuj zus
Anger outburst/easily angered	Npau taws ceev ceev
Angry, resentful	Npau taws / khib siab
Annoys others	Ua rau lwm tus xeeb txob / meem txom
Anorexia nervosa	Kab mob ua yus tsis noj mov
Anxiety	Ntshai rwg
Anxious	Nyob tsis tswm; siab tsis tus
Argues with adults	Sib cav nrog cov laus/hlob
Asexual	Tsis nyiam poj niam los txiv neej
Attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD)	(Feem ntau yog me nyuam yaus) Ib tug neeg nyob tsis tswm thiab siab tsis npuab yam nws ua
Attitude	Cwj pwm; yam ntxwv
Autism	Kab mob ua ib tug me nyuam muaj teeb meem ua phooj ywg nrog tib neeg
Avoid mental task	Tsis yeem ua tej yam yuav siv hlwb
Balance	Nyob tus / hnyav ib yam
Betrayed	Dag ntxias; ntseev siab

Binge-eating	Noj ceev ceev thiab noj ntau ntau
Bipolar Disorder	Ib sij chim, ib sij zoo siab
Bi-sexual	Ib tug neeg nyiam poj niam thiab txiv neej huv si
Blames others	Liam lwm tus
Body language	Tus yam ntxwv / yeeb yam ntawm lub cev
Borderline personality	Coj yam ntxwv tsis tus. Tus neeg coj tsis tus.
Breaking and entering	Tsoo thiab nkag luag tsev.
Bulimia nervosa	Kab mob yus tus kheej noj ntau ntau ces ntuav vim yus tsis xav rog
Bullied	Tus neeg raug kev ua phem / hem, los ntawm lwm tus neeg
Bully	Tus neeg ua phem, hem, los-sis ua lwm tus ntshai
Bullying	Kev ua phem, hem, los-sis ua lwm tus ntshai
Care plan/treatment plan	Ntaub ntawv qhia hais tias yuav pab ib tug neeg thiab nrhiav kev pab li cas
Careless mistakes	Ua yuam kev vim tsis xyuam xim.
Change in friends	Hloov phooj ywg
Chills or hot flashes	No ntxiag los yog kub ntxiag
Client	tus neeg uas tuaj nrhiav kev pab
Cognitive functioning	Paub xav / paub tab
Cognitive-Behavioral therapy (TF-CBT)	Kev kho hlwb thiab yam ntxwv
Comfortable	Khab seeb
Communication	Kev sib pauv lus / xav tswv yim
Concentration	Siab npuab; kev tswj txoj kev xav
Conduct disorder	Coj tsis tus, ua tej yam txhaum cai
Confidence	Muaj peev xwm; khab seeb

Cons, lies	Dag
Consequences	Kev rau txim; qhov tshwm sim los
Consumer	Cov neeg siv cov kev pab uas muaj rau lawv
Content	Zoo siab
Coping	Tswj siab; coj li cas, pab tus kheej li cas
Coping strategies	Cov kev tswj siab; coj li cas; pab yus tus kheej li cas
Cruelty to animals	Kev lim hiam rau tej tsiaj
Cruelty to people	Ua phem lim hiam rau lwm tus neeg
Crying spells	Nyuaj siab, tu siab, kho siab cia li quaj
Dangerous	Teeb meem; kheev muaj teeb meem
Defiant	Tsis mloog lus; tawv ncauj, tsis ua raws li hais
Deliberate destruction of property	Txhob txwm tsoo rhuav khoom vaj tse
Delusion	Ntseeg tej yam tsis muaj tseeb los-sis tsis muaj tshwm sim
Dementia	Kab mob uas ua yus lub hlwb pib tsis nco qab zuj zus
Depression	Nyuaj siab; tu siab; ntxhov siab los-sis si
Describe	Piav qhia; piav; qhia
Developmentally disabled	Hlwb khiav qeeb / puas hlwb
Difficulty breathing	Ua pa nyuaj / ua tsis taus pa
Difficulty making decisions	Txiav txim siab nyuaj ntuj
Difficulty playing quietly	Ua si ntsiag to tsis tau
Difficulty remaining seated	Zaum tsis taus, nyob tsis tswm
Difficulty sleeping	Pw tsis tsaug zog; tsis tuaj dab ntub
Difficulty sustaining attention tasks or play	Tswj tsis tau yus tus kheej rau txoj hauj lwm los yog kev ua si; nyob tsis tswm

Disability	Xiam-oob-qhab; xiam cev
Discipline	Qhuab ntuas, kev qhuab qhia, kev tswj
Disorganized	Tsis tij lim / cia pawg pes lug / sw sw
Dissociative identity	Coj ntau tus yam ntxwv
Domestic violence	Kev sib ceg sib ntaus hauv vaj hauv tsev
Drug use	Siv yeeb siv tshuaj
Dysphoria	Ib tug neeg tsis zoo siab li
Easily annoyed	Hnyav saib yooj yim
Easily angered/angry outburst	Npau taws ceev ceev
Easily distracted	Ras yooj yim
Elder abuse	Kev ua phem rau cov neeg laus (describe what the situation is)
Emotion	Kev xav hauv lub siab
Emotional health	Kev xav, kev noj qab nyob zoo ntawm txoj kev xav
Emotionally Exhausted	Qaug zog rau kev xav
Empowerment	Kev txhawb siab, txhawb zog, txhawb peev xwm
Energy	Kev nquag, kev tuaj zog
Equal	Sib npaug
Evidenced based practice (EBP)	Kev kho yam siv cov txheej theem uas twb raug tshawb fawb los lawm es yeej muaj tiag los-sis yeej pab tau
Excessive exercising	Ua exercise heev dhau; ua si heev dhau
Excessive spending	Siv nyiaj luam thuam
Exercise	Kev qoj ib ce, khiav, taug kev, exercise
Externalize	Ib tug neeg qhia txog txhua yam nws xav, tsis zais lus
Face your fear	Ua siab khov kho txhob ntshai; lees koj txoj kev ntshai, tiv koj tej kev ntshai

Facial expression	Yeeb yam ntawm ntsej muag
Failure	Poob; ua tsis tau
Family system	Ib tse neeg thiab seb nws khiav li cas
Fatigue	Nkees ib ce; tsaug ib ce; qaug zog
Fear of having a heart attack or dying	Ntshai tsam plawv nres los yog tuag
Fear of loss of control or going crazy	Ntshai tsam tswj tsis tau los yog vwm
Fearful and worry	Ntshai thiab txhawj
Feel driven or on the go	Nyob tsis taus yuav tsum tau ua
Feeling expression	Kev yus qhia txog yus txoj kev xav
Fidget a lot	Nyob tsis tswm
Flashback	Ua yog toog rov qab pom
Focus	Xav ntsoov, xav rawv
Forced sexual activity	Yuam mos deev
Forgetful	Pheej tsis tshua nco qab
Frequent pain	Pheej mob tas li
Frequent truancy	Pheej tsis tshua mus ... <i>(example)</i>
Friendship problems	Muaj teeb meem txog kev cog phooj ywg
Gambling to escape problems	Twv txiaj yuam pov kom tsis txhob nco qab teeb meem
Gay	Txiv neej nyiam txiv neej
Grief	Kev quaj ntsuag; kev tshua
Guilt	Txhaum, txaj muag
Hallucination	Hnov suab, hnov tsw, los yog pom tej yam tsis muaj tshwm sim

Happy	Zoo siab
Hate Crime	Kev ua phem vim ntxub lwm pab lwm pawg
Headache	Dias taub hau, mob taub hau
History of suicidal attempts	Muaj keeb kwm sim txo txoj sia
Homicidal thoughts	Xav txog tua lwm tus
Homicide	Tua yam tsis tas xav
Homosexual	Poj niam nyiam txiv neej / txiv neej nyiam poj niam
Hot flashes or chills	No ntxiag los yog kub ntxiag
Identity	Qhia txog tus kheej
Impulsive	Tsis xav ua, cia li ua lawm
Inattentive	Tsis cuab pob ntseg, tsis mloog
Inattentive to details	Tsis cuab ntsej rau cov lus piav
Intent	Txhob txwm; tab meeg ua
Internalize	Ib tug neeg khaws lus cia nruab siab tsis tham
Interpreter	Tus neeg txhais lus
Interrupts	Pheej cuam tshuam
Intersex	Tsis yog poj niam tsis yog txiv neej
Irritability	Xeeb txob, chim taus
Jealous	Khib
Lack of interest or motivation	Siab tsis xib; tsis muaj siab ua; tsis xav ua
Least restrictive treatment	Txoj kev pab uas yus raug khoo tsawg tshaj plaws
Lesbian	Poj niam nyiam poj niam
Lies, cons	Dag

Loneliness	Kho siab
Loses temper	Tswj tsis tau siab ntev, npau taus
Loss of enjoyment in usual activities	Tsis muaj kev txaus siab rau tej yam niaj zaus ua
Loss of interest in sex	Tsis muaj siab nrog txij nkawm pw ua kev hlub
Low self-esteem	Muab tus kheej saib qis
Mad	Chim siab
Manipulative	Haub dag ntxias
Memory	Kev nco qab; nco tau
Mental health	Kev kaj siab ntawm kev xav / Kev noj qab nyob zoo ntawm kev xav
Mental illness	Kev puas siab puas ntsws
Mental Wellness	Kev kaj siab ntawm kev xav / Kev noj qab nyob zoo ntawm kev xav
Molestation	Kov ib tug neeg yam tsis tau kev tso cai
Molester	Tus neeg uas kov lwm leej lwm tus yam tsis tau kev tso cai
Mood affect	Yeeb yam coj li siab xav
Moody	Pliag zoo pliag phem; coj tsis tus
Motor activity	Kev siv tes taw ua
Murder-suicide	Kev tua lwm tus nrog rau yus tus kheej
Muscle tension	Tej leeg nruj
Narrative therapy	Txoj kev pab uas qhia yus zaj dab neeg thiab txoj kev xav yam yus yog lwm tus
Neglect	Las mees / tsis quav ntsej
Nightmares related to past trauma	Muaj npau suav phem txog yav tag
Non-verbal communication	Kev sib pauv tswv yim yam tsis hais lus
Numbness or tingling sensations	Loog los yog caus yaum

Obesity	Kev rog
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	Kev xav nruj nraim yuav ua thiaj tsis ntshai / txhawj
Often angry	Nquag npau taws
Often bullies, threatens	Pheej zes, hem lwm tus
Often interrupts people	Nquag cuam tshuam lwmtus
Often loses things	Nquag ua khoom poob; hnov qauj
Often starts fights	Pheej thab sib ntaus
On the go or feeling driven	Nyob tsis taus yuav tsum tau ua
Oppositional defiant disorder	Neeg tawv ncauj tsis yuav cai
Optimistic, feeling	Xav tau qhov zoo; muaj siab, cia siab, xav tias yeej ua tau xwb
Over eating and weight gain	Noj ntau thiab rog zuj zus
Panic attack	Ntshai ceev ceev
Paranoia	Ntshai tej yam tsis muaj tseeb tas mus li
Parental curfew	Pheej mus dhau caij nyoog niam txiv tso cai
Peer	Cov nyob ib ncig ntawm yus uas muaj ib yam zoo sib xws (example: hnuv nyoog, tib tug kab mob)
Peer Support	Cov nyob ib ncig ntawm yus uas muaj ib yam zoo sib xws pab txhawb nqa
Perpetrator	Tus neeg ua phem
Personality disorder	Coj yeeb yam tsis tus
Pessimism	Ib tug neeg tsis pom qhov zoo li
Physically aggressive towards others	Siv dag zog ua phem rau lwm tus / nyiam sib thab, sib ntaus nrog lwm tus
Physically exhausted	Ib ce tsaug tsis muaj zog
Poor appetite and weight loss	Tsis qab los thiab yuag

Poor communication	Tsis tshua txawj sib coj sib hais
Poor motivation	Tsis muaj siab; tsis mob siab ua
Poor self-care	Tsis xav tu lub cev; tsis nyiam huv
Post-traumatic stress	Ceeb, ntshai txog tej yam tshwm sim yav tag los
Prevention	Kev npaj kho; kev tiv thaiv
Privacy	Tej yam tseem ceeb ntawm koj tus kheej uas koj tsis pub neeg paub
Pro-active	Nrhiav kev pab ua ntej muaj teeb meem
Protect your family	Pov hwm koj tsev neeg
Psychiatrist	Ib tug kws kho hlwb
Psychologist	Ib tug neeg kawm txog neeg txoj kev xav thiab kev coj
Psychotherapy	Kev nplij / kev hais lus kho ib tug neeg lub siab los-sis nws lub hlwb thiab txoj kev xav
Psychotic disorder	Ib tug kab mob ua rau neeg lub hlwb tsis zoo
Racing heart beat	Plawv khiav ceev
Racing thoughts	Xav ntau ntau
Rape	Yuam deev
Recurrent and distressful thoughts of past trauma	Pheej tshwm sim thiab rov nco txog kev ntshai yav tag los
Regret	Khuv xim, xav txog lig
Regular use of laxative	Nquag siv tshuaj zawv plab
Rejected, feeling	Xav tias lwm tus tsis nyiam los-sis lees paub
Relax	Txo siab ntsws; xoob ib ce, tso siab
Relieved	Dim ntawm txoj kev ntshov siab
Resentful, angry	Npau taws / khib siab
Rest	So

Restless and edgy	Nyob tsis tus
Restlessness or feeling keyed up	Nyob tsis tswm
Restraints	kev tswj los-sis tiv thaiv
Runaway behavior	Muaj tus cwj pwm khiav tsis los tsev
Runs, climbs excessively	Khiav, nce ub nce no tas li
Sacrifice	Xum muab tso tseg, xum xiam
Sad	Tu siab
Sadness	Mluas; tu siab
Schizophrenia	Ib tug kab mob hauv lub hlwb uas ua rau tus neeg tsis paub qhov tseeb / qhov cuav
Secretive	Zais siab
Self-care	Kev tu yus tus kheej
Self-induced vomiting	Ua yus tus kheej kom ntuav
Self-mutilation	Txhob txwm tsim txom, hlais tus kheej
Separation anxiety	Ntshai ncaim neeg los-sis ntshai ncaim tej yam khoom ua rau yus khab seeb
Serious fire setting	Nyam zes taws
Sexual abuse	Kev quab yuam deev los-sis ua phem rau ib tug tib neeg
Sexual assault	Ex: muab yus lub cev rau luag pom yam tsis raug ntsej nraug muag los-sis kor lwm leej lwm tus yam tsis tau kev tso cai
Shame	Kev txaj muag
Shoplifting or stealing	Ua tub sab los-sis nyiag khoom
Sleeping too much	Pw heev dhau
Smoking cigarettes	Haus luam yeeb
Smoking marijuana	Haus maj
smoking methamphetamine/ ecstasy	Tshuaj nees

smoking pot	Haus xas
Socioeconomic status	Txoj kev muaj nyiaj txiag thiab hwj chim
Soiling, wetting	Zis lav, quav lav, los zis ntub
Solutions	Txoj kev taug los-sis xaiv / nrhiav lus teb rau tej teeb meem
Soul	Tus ntsuj plig
Special	Tshwj xeeb muaj nqis; txawv tshaj
Speech	Hais lus / piav
Spirit	Ntsuj plig xyw
Spiteful, vindictive	Txaus chim, xav pauj kua zaub ntsuab
Startled very easily	Ceeb yooj yim
Stealing or shoplifting	Ua tub sab los-sis nyiaj khoom
Stolen with victim present	Nyiaj kiag ntawm tus tswv qhov muag
Stolen without victim present	Nyiaj thaum tus tswv tsis nyob
Stranger anxiety	Xaiv neeg
Stress	Muaj ntau yam ua rau yus nyuaj siab
Struggle	Nyuaj, Ua tsis tau li siab xav
Suicidal ideation	Kev xav txog txov yus txoj sia
Suicidal plan	Muaj hom phiaj los txov yus txoj sia
Suicidal thoughts	Xav txog txoj kev txov yus txoj sia
Support	Txhawb nqa / sib pab
Support Group	Ib pab pawg neeg sib txhawb zog muaj kev nyuaj siab los-sis muaj ib lub hom phiaj
Support System	Txhua yam thiab txhua tus uas pab txhawb yus

Survivor	Tus dim kev tsim txom; ploj tuag
Swear or name calling during argument	Cem lus phem thaum sib cav
Talk excessively	Tham heev, tham ntau ntau
Talk too fast	Hais lus nrawm / ceev
Temper Tantrum	Koj tus menyuum puas phem... <i>explain symptoms</i>
Thought content	Qhov yus xav txog
Tightness in chest	Hnov lub hauv siab ceev ceev
Tire easily	Nkees sai heev; zog ntaug yooj yim
Tobacco use	Haus luam yeeb
Transgender	Poj niam hloov lub cev mus ua txiv neej / txiv neej hloov lub cev mus ua poj niam
Trapped, feeling	Xav tsis muaj lwm txoj kev
Trauma	Ib yam ua rau yus raug ntshai los-sis poob siab
Trauma informed care	Kev nug hais tias "dab tsi tau tshwm sim rau koj?"
Traumatized	Raug ntshai
Treatment plan/care plan	Ntaub ntawv qhia hais tias yuav pab ib tug neeg thiab nrhiav kev pab li cas
Trouble concentrating	Siab tsis npuab
Trouble listening	Teeb meem mloog; mloog tsis tau zoo
Under-achievement	Kawm tsis tshua tau zoo; poob qab
Unique	Nyias zoo nyias; tsis sib xws
Unstable	Ywj fab ywj fwj
Value changes	Kev hloov ntawm yus tus kheej xws li kev coj, kev ntseeg, kev noj
Values	Yam muaj nuj nqis rau koj

Verbal communication	Kev sib txuas lus; tham ncauj lus
Very little need to sleep	Tsis xav tsaug zog; tsis muaj dab ntub
Victim	Tus neeg raug tsim txom
Vindictive, spiteful	Txaus chim, xav pauj kua zaub ntsuab
Violence	Kev ua phem, siv dag siv zog
Wetting, soiling	Zis lav, quav lav, los zis ntub
Worry and fearful	Ntshai thiab txhawj
Worry too much	Txhawj heev

Section 2

Hmong to English Mental Health Terminology

Non Hmong-speaking providers may find this helpful as it provides a perspective into Hmong Culture.

Hmong Phrase	Direct English Translation	Meaning
Nyuab Siab	Difficult Liver	stressed, overwhelmed
Tu Siab	Broken liver	sad, grieving, guilty feeling
Kho Siab	Heart murmuring	lonely, sad, hopeless, missing loved one
Lwj Siab	Rotten liver	feeling miserable
Chim Siab	Upset liver	tense, unhappy
Puas Siab	Destroy liver	loss of enjoyment, mistrust
Dai Siab	Hang liver	life not complete, forlorn
Ntxhov Siab	Mix liver	anxious, distressed, worried
Poob Siab	Drop liver	feeling fearful, severely anxious
Mob Siab	Pain liver	jealous, worried
Siab yuj plaws	Flying liver	mixed feeling, mixed thinking
Siab fab fo	Busy liver	fidgety, restless, wandering
Siab Luv	Short liver	short temper
Siab Phem	Bad liver	bad hearted, behavior toward another person
Siab Dub	Dark liver	cold hearted
Siab lim hiam	Abusive liver	cruel, dishonest, cold blood
Siab tsis tus	Unstable liver	mood swings, happy, sad, mad

Section 3

Tips for Healthcare Providers and Interpreters

Healthcare Providers:

- Hmong people are very polite; they often say “yes” even when they do not understand.
- Often times, because there is no direct translation, interpreters need to explain the term they used to interpret. For example: for “temper-tantrum” the direct translation is “Is your child naughty?” then the interpreter would have to explain symptoms of a temper tantrum for the patient to fully understand the term.
- Common stressors for Hmong Elders include: family dynamics and relationships, financial hardships, difficulty adjusting to life after moving to America and leaving loved ones behind.
- Hmong Elders report that getting exercise in the winter is difficult due to safety concerns of cold and ice.
- Transportation is often a challenge for some Hmong people as they do not know how to drive, read bus or street signs, nor afford public transportation options.
- Life struggles are often family burdens rather than individual burdens. Many Elders think and worry about things going on in their children and grandchildren’s lives. Elders may often care for their grandchildren while their children are working.
- Families often experience discipline struggles. In the old country it was more acceptable to slap or spank whereas in America other techniques need to be used.
- Keep in mind the extra time it takes to interpret and adjust accordingly your expectations of what will be accomplished in a given amount of time.
- Hmong persons may express feelings indirectly, embedded in story and metaphor. For example, the image of the orphan may be used to express isolation, alienation, loss of identity.

Interpreters:

- Often times the patient/client tells a story when giving an answer to a question. Sometimes the stories contain important information so it is critical to share this with the provider even if you do not think they want to know that “extra” information.
- As you know with the Hmong language, there is more than one way to say several terms/phrases, ensure that you know the correct English definition of what you are translating to help reduce things that may get lost in translation. If there are multiple ways to translate the same information, use whichever translation is more comfortable for you and the patient/client, just be aware of the correct English term.