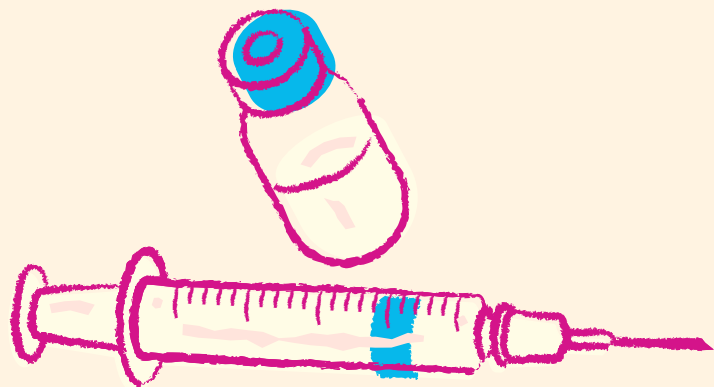


# SUBSTANCE USE Disorder

// *Dual Diagnosis*



12



# **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER / DUAL DIAGNOSIS**

Substance use disorders – the repeated misuse of alcohol and/or drugs – often occur simultaneously in individuals with mental illness, usually to cope with overwhelming symptoms. The combination of these two illnesses has its own term: dual diagnosis, or co-occurring disorders. Either disorder (substance use or mental illness) can develop first.

## **SYMPTOMS**

Because many combinations of dual diagnosis can occur, symptoms vary widely. Mental health clinics are starting to use alcohol and drug screening tools to identify people at risk. Symptoms of substance use disorder may include:

- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Engaging in risky behaviours
- Developing a high tolerance and withdrawal symptoms
- Feeling like you need a drug to be able to function

Symptoms of a mental health condition can also vary greatly. Warning signs, such as extreme mood changes, confused thinking or problems concentrating, avoiding friends and social activities and thoughts of suicide, may be reasons to seek help.