



WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
HOSPITAL INSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES

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NEW MATERIAL
FOR CONFERENCE APPROVAL
— ONLY —

INTRODUCTION

An N.A. H&I meeting is a special or introductory meeting held within a facility where a regular N.A. meeting cannot be held. N.A. meetings can be held in prisons, jails, treatment centers, rehabilitation programs, recovery houses, detoxification units, and mental hospitals. A variety of formats are used to carry the N.A. message effectively within each facility. Some institutions have rules and regulations conflicting with our Twelve Traditions. In these instances, we may effectively carry our message through H&I meetings.

H&I committees aid members or groups that wish to carry our message into institutions. Members involved in H&I work form an H&I committee. Sharing our collective experience helps us avoid problems and carry our message effectively.

N.A. groups and/or H&I committees initiate, sponsor, and conduct institutional meetings. N.A. area service H&I committees coordinate the group efforts. An N.A. Regional Service H&I committee is primarily responsible for maintaining a list of hospitals and institutions in the region. The WSC H&I sub-committee helps unify H&I functions through clarification of policy and by providing communication between committees.

When local members, groups, or H&I committees see a need for an H&I meeting, then the outlines and suggestions found in this handbook will provide the guidance needed to help carry the message.

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I. WHAT IS AN H&I MEETING?

An N.A. H&I meeting is a special or introductory meeting held within a facility to meet the needs of addicts within these institutions. H&I meetings are held when a regular N.A. meeting cannot be scheduled for whatever reason. Addicts within some facilities are often unable to attend our regular meetings. However, we encourage attendance at outside N.A. meetings.

H&I meetings are geared toward the special needs of persons living in a protected environment. The purpose of an H&I meeting is to make N.A. recovery available to the residents within these facilities. Our members who help carry the message serve to show the residents that ongoing recovery is also possible in the "real world".

The primary purpose of the group is then clear: we must take ourselves into the institution in order to effectively carry our message of recovery.

II. WHY AN H&I MEETING IS NEEDED

The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous are the guidelines which keep our fellowship alive and free. The rules and regulations of various institutions may conflict with our traditions. In these instances, we may effectively carry our message through H&I meetings. Members may also take H&I meetings into institutions in towns or places where there is a limited number of recovering addicts to support regular meetings. This type of H&I meeting should continue until the time that a regular meeting can be started.

According to the Third Tradition, there is a single requirement for membership. This principle is compromised by various facilities. For example: correctional facilities often conduct personal searches, security checks, and limit the number, and/or sex of attendees; treatment centers frequently require persons attending the meetings to have a certain amount of clean time; many recovery houses require their residents to attend the N.A. meeting. Regulations such as these place requirements other than the desire to stop using upon the group members. Due to the fact that our Third Tradition cannot be upheld, an H&I meeting becomes necessary.

Because our Seventh Tradition clearly states that each group is self-supporting, any offers of free provisions (rent-free meeting place, coffee, etc.) are in direct violation of the Seventh Tradition. In such instances where the institution cannot accept our monies due to their own regulations, and yet wish to provide addicts in their facility with the N.A. message of recovery, an H&I

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meeting can be held. Our experience has shown that these are the most common tradition violations, however, other tradition violations may occur which also bring about the need for an H&I meeting. When questions concerning possible violations arise, we suggest utilizing the service structure to settle discrepancies.

III. WHERE AN H&I MEETING IS HELD

H&I meetings can be held in prisons or jails, in treatment centers, rehabilitation programs, in recovery houses, in detoxification units, and in mental hospitals.

An H&I meeting may be held in any of these places when a regular N.A. meeting cannot be held, or where an H&I meeting better meets the needs of these facilities. In cases not defined in these listed institutions, please contact your area, region, or WSC H&I Chairperson.

- IV. The purpose of an H&I committee, how it is formed, and how it works.

The purpose of H&I committees is to aid members or groups that wish to carry our message into institutions.

Sharing our collective experience helps us to avoid problems and carry our message more effectively. We have found that it is important to have the support and commitment from group members in our areas. Several members with the willingness and desire to serve by carrying the message into hospitals and institutions can meet together to form this committee.

It is suggested that the formation of this committee and the time and place for the initial meeting be made well in advance. At this meeting a chairman should be elected from nominations provided by the area service committee (if an ASC exists). Suggested clean time for the chairman is two years. Our experience suggests that the chairman conduct committee meetings according, or similar to, this format.

Format for the Chairman (H&I Committee)

1. Moment of silence for the still suffering addict
2. Serenity Prayer
3. Election of officers
(first meeting: chairman, vice-chairman)
4. Previous minutes
5. Old business
6. New business

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7. Collection and attendance sheet
8. Lord's Prayer

POINTS TO REMEMBER

I. Chairman

- A. Keep order in the meeting
- B. Keep discussion as short as possible
- C. Keep discussion on the topic
- D. Insure that the traditions are upheld (whenever possible)
- E. Maintain a link of communications between the H&I committee and the Area Service Committee.
- F. Assure accounting of funds and literature.

II. Vice-Chairman

- A. Take minutes during the meeting
- B. Help chairman keep proceedings orderly
- C. Act as chairman in case of chairman's absence

III. Committee Member

- A. Help chairman maintain order
- B. Strive to uphold the Twelve Traditions in H&I work

The following points are also helpful to the committee.

Meetings should run as smoothly as possible, so that the business at hand can be taken care of. The primary purpose of the H&I committee is to carry the message to addicts who can't attend regular N.A. meetings. We need to maintain unity within the committee, and keep things as simple as possible.

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H&I Committee and How It Works

Our experience has shown regularly scheduled committee meetings allow members involved in H&I work to coordinate their efforts. This committee can provide direction and assistance to new H&I meetings by furnishing starter kits, literature, lists of speakers (or panel members), and suggested formats.

V. HOW THE SERVICE STRUCTURE AIDS THE H&I COMMITTEE

N.A. groups and/or H&I committees initiate, sponsor and conduct institutional meetings by implementing the experience of our fellowship.

The N.A. area service H&I committee co-ordinates the group efforts to carry the message into facilities, organizes and implements H&I guidelines and initiates institutional meetings where it is not possible for an N.A. group to sponsor such meetings.

An N.A. regional service H&I sub-committee is primarily responsible for clerical duties. They maintain a list of any and all hospitals and institutions in the region which have contact with addicts. These regional H&I sub-committees may inform such facilities of N.A., provide them with local contacts and communicate fellowship experience in H&I efforts among the groups and areas.

Our world service conference H&I sub-committee helps unify fellowship-wide H&I functions through clarification of policy and by providing communication between H&I committees.



VI. CHOOSING THE APPROPRIATE FORMAT

A variety of formats are used in order to carry the message effectively under differing circumstances found within each facility. Panel presentations offer several expressions of recovery experience on a particular topic. Speaker meetings can be moving and inspirational. Question and answer meetings address the specific needs of patients and inmates. Whatever style of meeting is preferred, a general format is helpful.

General Format for N.A. Institution Meeting

Read this before the meeting starts:

We ask you to try and have an open mind and listen to what is being presented here today. If you have any questions or comments please hold them until after the meeting and someone will be glad to help you in any way they can. We thank you for your cooperation.

Starting the meeting:

Hello everyone. I want to welcome you to the _____ institutional meeting of Narcotics Anonymous. My name is _____
Would you help me open the meeting with the Serenity Prayer?

Read from the N.A. White Book: (try to get residents involved by asking them to read)

1. Who is an addict?
2. What is the N.A. program?
3. Why are we here?
4. How it works
5. Read the Twelve Traditions
6. Pass out keys tags or chips when appropriate (i.e. long term institutions)

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Having chosen which style of meeting to use we suggest proceeding as follows for each:

Speaker Meeting

- A. Introduce the speaker.
- B. After the speaker is done, open the meeting for comments or questions if desired.
- C. Close the meeting with the LORD'S PRAYER

Discussion Meeting

- A. Introduce the topic
- B. Proceed with the discussion
- C. Close with the LORD'S PRAYER

Panel Presentation

- A. Explain how the panel works (each member is going to give their personal experience on a certain subject or topic)
- B. Introduce the panel members
- C. After the panel members are finished, open the meeting for comments, questions, or discussion if desired.
- D. Close with the LORD'S PRAYER

For panel presentation it is suggested that the panel consists of three or four members who each speak for approximately fifteen or twenty minutes.

For all H&I meetings, try to make sure that some members are available after the meeting to talk with the residents.

Chairman

Your efforts to enlist other members to participate in the meeting is part of your willingness to serve as chairman. Contacts

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with the group secretary sponsoring the meeting can provide members who are willing to help. Good knowledge of other available members in the community is of further help. The chairman should insure that someone can stay after the meetings to answer questions, and that the residents are aware of this. Above all else, faith in one's Higher Power will provide the strength necessary to fulfill this task.

Suggested Topics For H&I Meetings

1. First Step (or any other)
2. HOW (honesty, openmindedness, willingness)
3. Personal stories (stressing important areas of addiction and recovery)
4. N.A. White Book (any chapter from the book)
5. Taking action
6. N.A. Pamphlets
7. Our Book (basic text of N.A.)
8. Rehab High (what to do after leaving the rehab feeling good)
9. H.A.L.T.S. (Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired, Serious)
10. Using the phone (before taking that first fix, pill, toke, drink)

These are just a few ideas to be discussed. Anything that you feel a need to share within your experience from a positive point of view would be fine.

Just keep in mind that

Our Gratitude Speaks
When We Care
And When We Share
With Others
The N.A. Way

VII HOW TO START AN H&I MEETING

Experience has shown that the initial contact should be made with the most receptive staff member within the facility, who can then direct the committee chairman to the appropriate person. Once personal contact is made, all necessary information about the Program can be provided.

In planning the meeting, our H&I committees should take into consideration the facility's restrictions and requirements. These will be provided by the facility representative upon request. The requirements will help determine what type of format will be used, the frequency of the meetings, and the time allotted by the facility. The meeting may now carry the N.A. message of recovery to the residents.

Members should be committed to serve, and have a strong N.A. oriented recovery. A minimum of six months total abstinence is suggested. All participants should be aware of their responsibilities to meet requirements of the facility and to maintain an atmosphere of N.A. recovery.

Literature may be supplied by the sponsoring group and/or H&I committee. The facility may also purchase N.A. literature for its' residents, through the service structure. When members attend and literature is made available the meeting will fulfill our primary purpose.

VIII H&I FUNDING

Support from N.A. groups sponsoring H&I meetings is vital. Cans or baskets may be set up at the local groups to collect money for H&I literature on a regular basis. Facilities may also purchase literature through our service structure. Area service H&I Committees should use funds for support of it's H&I meetings. Fund raising activities may also be used to provide support for the committee. Remembering that our primary purpose is to carry the message to the still suffering addict, H&I funds should never linger in any one place, but remain active by providing literature and aiding efforts throughout our H&I service structure.

IX PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Upon finishing this handbook, we realized that some pertinent information had been left unshared. Personal experience has shown us that some things work and others don't. We would like to share these with you now so that you may learn from the experience of others.

_____ Key tags are a good way to recognize clean time, however, put yourself in the place of the person incarcerated. Key tags without keys are a constant reminder of confinement. A chip that could be kept in the pocket may be a much better token of recovery.

_____ Since inmates or residents, along with administration, may be skeptical, it should be kept in mind that the members going into the institution for H&I work should be members with a solid message of recovery, and should be able to conduct themselves appropriately based on regulations of the facility.

_____ One of the jobs of an H&I committee is to protect our status of non-affiliation in accordance with our sixth tradition. We as a committee should explain our traditions to administrators in an attempt to prevent difficulties from arising once an H&I meeting is established.

_____ Once we have made a commitment to a facility, we feel it is our responsibility to not only be there but to start and end the meeting on time.

_____ We have learned from experience that sharing our own stories with the facility's administration upon our initial contact establishes better trust and communication with the facility's staff.

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_____ It is helpful to provide administrators with the phone number of a contact person (i.e. sponsoring group secretary or H&I committee chairperson).

_____ It is helpful to stamp all N.A. literature in the institution with the local HOT LINE number.

_____ It is suggested that you not take a person into an H&I meeting who is on parole or probation (unless they have specific permission from parole/probation officer and the institution). Also, don't take a person who has outstanding warrants.

_____ Use your personal judgement when giving your address to residents.

_____ Taking mail or notes into or out of the institution for a resident may cause difficulties for the group.

We have learned through painful experience that the ideas expressed in this handbook seem to be the ones that work for us. Our guidelines are merely suggestions. As with every other part of our ongoing program of recovery, more will be revealed.

