



# Rocky Mountain Forum:

## Panels Workshop

*November 12, 2005*

*Prepared by Don T RDA Colorado Region*



# The Rocky Mountain Forum

- We are a problem discussion and solution clearinghouse for the Narcotics Anonymous regions located in Colorado, Montana, Utah and Wyoming.
- We meet annually during the month of June, rotating through our member regions. During our annual June meeting we will hold discussion groups, workshops and actively share in member regional needs. We will also generate a priority list of member activities for the coming year.
- On the odd years, there is an additional meeting in December, focusing on the Conference Agenda Report of the upcoming NA World Service Conference, with NA World Board Member participation.
- We offer the following for addicts, groups, areas and regions within the Rocky Mountain Forum boundaries:
  1. suggestions for solutions to NA problems given to this body
  2. addicts for Outreach if at all possible / if needed
  3. information (meeting lists, world registration help, literature, computer contacts, resource contacts and computer links), contacts with interested, experienced and service-oriented addicts (resource people)
- We are action-based with web and postal contacts. We are here to serve the addicts within the boundaries of the Rocky Mountain Forum through the spiritual principles of unity and love.

# Introductions

- Don T CO Region RDA – RMF Web Servant
- Steve H Upper Rocky Mountain RD
- Monte H UT Region RD – RMF Treasurer
- Michael S UT Region RDA
- Linda L – RMF Chair
- Brenda E – RMF Secretary

# Preliminaries:

## Acronyms used in this presentation

- H&I = Hospitals and Institutions
- PI = Public Information
- ASC = Area Service Committee
- RSC = Regional Service Committee
- WSC = World Service Committee
- WSO = World Service Office
- NAWS = NA World Services
- IP = Informational Pamphlet
- WB = World Board
- RMF = Rocky Mountain Forum
- GSR = Group Service Representative
- RD = Regional Delegate
- RDA = Regional Delegate Alternate
- GTLS = Guide To Local Service

# Preliminaries:

## A Quick Survey

- How many in attendance have 90 days or more of clean time?
- How many in attendance have a sponsor?
- How many in attendance sponsor others?
- How many in attendance are grateful for the life they have found as a result of Narcotics Anonymous?
- How many in attendance first heard about Narcotics Anonymous in a treatment facility or while incarcerated?
- How many in attendance actively participate in H&I and PI activities in your local Area?
- How many in attendance choose not to participate because they are afraid they have nothing to offer?
- How many in attendance choose not to participate because they do not know how to get involved?
- How many in attendance choose not to participate because they think that there are already enough members doing service?
- How many choose not to participate because all that Area guideline stuff intimidates them?

# Preliminaries:

## Our Service Structure

- In order to better understand what panels are, we need to talk briefly about our service structure.
- Groups hold regularly scheduled Narcotics Anonymous meetings and send Group Service Representatives to the Area Service Committees
- It is at the Area Service Committee where are groups come together and decide how to use our financial and human resources to carry our message to the addict who still suffers.
- It is through the collective conscience of the members of the Area Service Committee, that we organize and facilitate panels for the perceived needs of our individual communities.

# Preliminaries:

## Area Service Committee

- The Area Service Committee is where panels are organized, usually under the H&I and PI sub-committees. Some areas that lack the human resources to fill two sub-committees, choose to combine the services of H&I and PI in a single sub-committee. The Area Service Committee is usually the single point of accountability for providing these services and oversees the activities of the sub-committees.
- The ASC is responsible not only to develop and maintain subcommittees in each field of service but also to coordinate the work of each of those subcommittees with the work of the others. For these reasons, all area committee participants need to become as informed as they can possibly be about subcommittee activities.

*From the Guide to Local service pg. 52*

# Preliminaries:

## Regional Service Committee

- While regions do not ordinarily provide direct services in the manner of the Area Service Committees, many RSCs have resource positions created for H&I and PI. "Regional resource persons make it their job to know the manuals and bulletins on their resource subjects backwards and forwards. Though by no means "authorities" or "directors," they take the time to keep in regular touch with the chairpersons of area or metro subcommittees in their resource fields and, if asked, help untangle local service problems. Resource persons can do this individually or by hosting frequent, informal sharing sessions for local subcommittee chairpersons. If an area committee does not have an H&I, PI, or phone line subcommittee, it can contact the resource person in that field of service for help in forming one. Finally, regional resource persons serve as intermediaries in their fields of service between area or metro subcommittees and state, provincial, or national government agencies." Guide to Local Service pg 90.



# Preliminaries:

## Hospitals and Institutions

- The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I meetings, except for those in long-term facilities, are intended to introduce those addicts in attendance to the basics of the NA program.
- In order to form a clear understanding of an H&I meeting, it is important to learn about our service structure. An H&I meeting is generally a service provided by an area service committee's H&I subcommittee. These meetings occur in hospitals, treatment centers, correctional facilities, and adolescent institutions. Rather than being an NA group, it is vital that an H&I meeting always be held under the direction of an H&I subcommittee.

*From IP 20 Hospitals and Institutions Service and the NA Member*

# Preliminaries: Public Information

- The role of the PI committee is to ensure that clear and accurate information about NA is available to the public. The demand for information about our fellowship is greater than ever. Being part of a committee that brings suffering addicts to our fellowship is a reward that cannot be expressed, only experienced.

*from IP 15 PI and the NA Member*

- Our primary purpose as a fellowship is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. PI is a vital part of "carrying the message." This type of service calls upon us to communicate and participate in areas of the community in which, as using addicts, we were once unwelcome. Courage and humility are necessary ingredients in our recovery when approaching the public about our fellowship.

# Public Information Panels

- An area PI subcommittee is the point of responsibility for organizing and facilitating panel presentations
- The basic difference in function is that H&I panels present the program primarily to addicts and the PI committee makes its presentation primarily to non-addicts.
- Presentations are often provided to churches, parole officers, judges, counselors, nurses, doctors, and schools, among others, for information purposes.
- Much of the goodwill that exists between NA and the community at large is based on the relationships that we develop and maintain as NA members. We can improve these relationships by taking care to treat others with courtesy and respect. This is especially important when we represent the fellowship to professionals and members of other organizations who may spread their good or bad impressions of us to others.
- "When we participate in a public information event, we are responsible for our behavior. If we are rude, use profanity, or show a lack of respect for a facility or for other organizations, we bring into question the effectiveness of our recovery program."  
*from Basic Public Information Guide*
- Be aware of the composition of your audience. If you are addressing non-addicts, as is usually the case, remember that some NA language commonly used and understood by members of the fellowship in our meetings is not typical outside those meetings. Too much "program talk" or emphasis on the finer details of our recovery program is simply a foreign language to non-addicts and therefore should be avoided.
- While some personal disclosure is encouraged, the focus must remain on a clear NA message. What is important is not who we are as individuals but how we became clean addicts through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of NA.

# Meeting with Professionals

- Meetings with professionals in our communities should be organized and facilitated through the local Area Service Committee
- Informal and often unstructured
- Allow professionals to interact with members of our fellowship and address their concerns and views of our fellowship in general
- Allow for the free exchange of information about what we can offer to their clients

# Hospitals and Institutions Panels

- An area H&I subcommittee is the center for planning and organization.
- The H&I committee will organize a team of NA members, called a panel, to go into these institutions and introduce the basics of the NA program to addicts in those institutions.
- "In our experience it is best for members to have three months clean before attending an H&I meeting, and six months clean before speaking at one."  
*from H&I Service Bulletin # 2- WHO IS BEST SUITED TO CARRY THE MESSAGE IN AN H&I SETTING?*
- Treatment panels are conducted for patients at addiction treatment centers, mental health facilities, and therapeutic communities.
- Correctional panels are held for inmates at jails, prisons, and forensic hospitals.

# What is a Panel

- Our 5<sup>th</sup> tradition: Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
- Panels are organized and facilitated by the local Area Service Committee and are one of the means our groups and their members demonstrate application of our 5<sup>th</sup> tradition.
- A panel is 2 or more addicts carrying the message that an addict, any addict, can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live.
- An opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to a new way of living
- Our attractions are: it works, it's free, and we are available to the addict that still suffers.
- Presentation panels, show visible evidence that our program works in the lives of our members
- Panels are often the first exposure that an addict or professional has with our fellowship

# What is a Panel Member

- Every member of NA has a role in helping us carry the message to the still-suffering addict. We need to project a positive image of NA so that these individuals feel comfortable directing addicts seeking recovery to our meetings.
- A member of our fellowship who has the desire to serve
- Suggested clean time requirements vary based on the availability of willing members in the local area
- Local Area Service Committees set the requirements for training panel members. Many ASCs hold regular orientations and allow for observations of actual panels before sending a new panel member into the "fire"
- An example: Mile High Area Guidelines for H&I Panel member:  
**Panel Member:** Suggested clean time requirement of six months. Requires completion of H&I Orientation. Responsibilities of the position include:
  - Observes at least one H&I facility meeting before sharing
  - Obtains and maintains proper clearances as required by the facility
  - Is responsible to the Panel Leader or Panel Coordinator
  - Informs the Panel Coordinator or Panel Leader, well in advance, if unable to fulfill their commitment and assists in finding a replacement
  - Is able to share a message of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous
  - Becomes familiar with the policies of the Subcommittee and the rules of the facility being served.

# What Can I Do?

- Volunteer to become an active part of your local Area H&I and PI subcommittees
- Become an active participant in the formation of your group's conscience about how to carry our message to the addict who still suffers
- Read the available literature
- Pass on to your sponsees your experience, strength and hope about your service experience in these settings
- Ask your sponsor to share their experience, strength and hope about their service experience in these settings
- Encourage your fellow members to give of their time to carry the message in these settings
- Keep an open mind and become willing to be a part of our fellowship's effort to attract addicts to our way of life
- Remember what we do is more of an attraction than what we say!



# Why Should I?

- Personal sharing by the members of the RMF in attendance.

# Summary

- Now we know that the time has come when that tired old lie, "Once an addict, always an addict," will no longer be tolerated by either society or the addict himself. We do recover.

*From NA White Booklet, Narcotics Anonymous page 6*

- While panels are organized and facilitated through our local service structure, that effort relies on the individual addict to step up and help carry our message
- Being accessible through our panels, helps attract the still suffering addict to our way of life. Through our panels we can provide the evidence that Narcotics Anonymous does offer a viable alternative to the life of active addiction

# Resources For More Information!

- H&I Handbook
- A Guide to Public Information
- A Guide to Local Service
- **IP 15** PI and the NA member
- **IP 20** Hospitals and Institutions Service and the NA Member
- NA: A Resource in Your Community
- **NA White Booklet**, *Narcotics Anonymous*
- Basic Public Information Guide:  
<http://www.na.org/pi/pibasic.htm>
- Basic Hospitals and Institutions Guide:  
<http://www.na.org/h-i/hi-guidetoc99.htm>
- **H&I Service Bulletin # 2- WHO IS BEST SUITED TO CARRY THE MESSAGE IN AN H&I SETTING?**  
<http://www.na.org/h-i/hi-bull2r99.htm>
- **Networking With Professionals:**  
<http://www.na.org/pi/networking.htm>
- Regional Committee Resource Trusted Servants
- THE ADDICT SITTING NEXT TO YOU!

# Questions?????

