

A.A.® Guidelines **Cooperation With the Professional Community**

from G.S.O., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

A.A. Guidelines are compiled from the shared experience of A.A. members in various service areas. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference (U.S. and Canada). In keeping with our Tradition of autonomy, except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved. The purpose of these Guidelines is to assist in reaching an *informed* group conscience.

By action of the General Service Board, January 1970, the trustees' Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community (C.P.C.)—a spin off from the Public Information Committee—was developed. A similar Conference committee was formed the following year. Since that time, A.A. members in local areas have been responding to local need by establishing C.P.C. committees.

A.A. is considered by many professionals to be a valuable resource for alcoholics who want help. When there is a good working relationship between A.A. members in the community and paid alcoholism workers, the sick alcoholic is the winner—he or she gets the help needed from both.

We are not in competition with these non-A.A.s; we have our separate functions. A.A. is not in the business of education, research, medicine, counseling, treatment, prevention, or funding. We simply have a message to carry about a program of recovery for alcoholics—a program that works for hundreds of thousands who want it.

The professional can reach out to alcoholics—by education, counseling, and rehabilitative treatment—and can also be of aid through making the community aware of the millions still suffering from the progressive illness of alcoholism.

PUBLIC INFORMATION, COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY, TREATMENT AND CORRECTIONS COMMITTEES

The following descriptions of the responsibilities of P.I., C.P.C., Treatment and Corrections committees are given for purposes of clarification.

P.I.—The purpose of P.I. service work is to provide accurate A.A. information to the public when requested. P.I. committees visit schools, businesses and community meetings for this purpose. They also serve as resources for our friends in the local media, emphasizing our Traditions of anonymity, singleness of purpose and nonaffiliation, as well as offering A.A. public service announcements to radio and television stations.

C.P.C.—Members of these committees provide information about A.A. to those who have contact with alcoholics through their profession. This group includes health care professionals, educators, members of the clergy, lawyers, social workers, union leaders, and industrial managers, government officials, as well as those working in the field of alcoholism. Information is provided about where we are, what we are, what we can do, and what we cannot do.

Corrections and Treatment—The purpose of C.F. or T.F., or combined institutions committees, is to coordinate the work of individual

members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in hospitals, alcoholism treatment and rehabilitation centers, and correctional facilities.

In many areas, liaisons have been established among these committees—i.e., Corrections, Treatment, institutions and P.I. committees send a liaison to C.P.C. committee meetings. There are many instances of overlapping responsibilities. It should be clearly established that A.A. committees are not in competition with each other. Local circumstances determine who does what.

GETTING STARTED

One of the best ways to start your C.P.C. Twelfth Step work is to read the C.P.C. Workbook, which is a bounty of information gathered from A.A.'s past experience in C.P.C. work. As an example, in many areas C.P.C. committees are organized as follows:

1. Area C.P.C. chairperson and co-chairperson elected or appointed by the area committee.
2. District C.P.C. chairperson and co-chairperson elected or selected in each district.
3. The P.I., Corrections, Treatment and C.P.C. committees each assign a member to attend meetings of the other three committees, thus maintaining communication and cooperation within A.A.
4. A budget figure from area committee funds is established and approved.
5. The chairperson of an area, district or intergroup (central office) C.P.C. committee is listed with the G.S.O. in New York.

Whether you work primarily through the area and district structure, through the local central office or intergroup, or your group, it is a good idea to have overall organization. If you don't, problems of communication, duplication of effort, and outright confusion will undoubtedly arise.

C.P.C. KIT AND PAMPHLETS

The C.P.C. Kit contains information on all aspects of C.P.C. service, including the C.P.C. Workbook. The kit also includes guidelines, literature catalog, pamphlets, the DVD "A.A. Cooperation with the Professional Community" — which contains videos directed to H.R., E.A.P., Legal, Correctional and Healthcare professions — copies of *Box 4-5-9* (which may include a section on C.P.C. news) and *About A.A.*, our newsletter for professionals, along with a sign-up card. It is suggested that the basic "text" for C.P.C. committee

members is the Conference-approved pamphlet "How A.A. Members Cooperate With Professionals."

Most C.P.C. committees have found it helpful for each member to have a personal copy of the Cooperation With the Professional Community Workbook. G.S.O. furnishes a C.P.C. Kit to the area committee chairperson at no charge. Additional Kits and Workbooks may be purchased.

C.P.C. IN ACTION

One suggestion is to work with one group of professionals at a time. When a list of professionals has been compiled, members of the C.P.C. committee make initial contact (by letter, phone or face-to-face), and offer to come and talk about what A.A. is and what it is not. Sample C.P.C. letters are available electronically. E-mail cpc@aa.org. You might also offer to take a professional or student to an open A.A. meeting in your area or provide A.A. literature describing our A.A. program of recovery, stressing our eagerness to act as a resource to the recovering alcoholic. The *About A.A.* newsletter for professionals can be a great C.P.C. tool to have with you when meeting with professionals. Since this newsletter can be found online, it would be easy to select a few issues that the committee feels would be of interest to certain professionals, print them and have them copied. Some committees take a combination of: 1) issues that are targeted to the specific profession; and 2) those issues that might help the professional understand a certain aspect of A.A.

PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Area C.P.C. committees may request to be placed on the mailing list with community, state or area professional agencies. Specific suggestions and information about exhibiting at professional meetings is available from the General Service Office.

PRESENTATIONS

See the C.P.C. Workbook for suggestions on presentations you might give in your community. Most C.P.C. committee members will be informed on A.A. and its history, and are able to give an accurate and positive impression of Alcoholics Anonymous. We stress our primary purpose and Traditions of nonaffiliation, self-support and anonymity. Please keep in touch with G.S.O. so that we may share your activities with others. The DVD "A.A. Cooperation with the Professional Community" – which contains videos directed to H.R., E.A.P., Legal, Correctional and Healthcare professions – could be shown at presentations to professionals. Professionals can also view the videos on their own computers.

LITERATURE

The Conference-approved Literature and Other Service Material catalog has a section on C.P.C. specific items. There is also a section of the catalog for Special Needs, and much of the literature is also available in Spanish and French. When planning a meeting with professionals, committees carefully consider what literature to share. Some committees take a combination of literature targeted to the specific profession and literature that might help the profes-

sional understand certain aspects of A.A., along with general recovery literature oriented to the new member.

BASIC C.P.C. LITERATURE

For C.P.C. Committee Members

Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings	A.A. Membership Survey
C.P.C. Workbook	How A.A. Members Cooperate . . .
Understanding Anonymity	A Member's-Eye View of A.A.
Information on Alcoholics Anonymous	Let's Be Friendly With Our Friends

For Professionals

Understanding Anonymity If You Are a Professional . . .	A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional
Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A. Problems Other Than Alcohol	A.A. as a Resource for Drug & Alcohol Court Professionals
Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace? This Is A.A.	A.A. Membership Survey A Message to Corrections Professionals
A.A. In Your Community	Information on Alcoholics Anonymous
A.A. Fact File	Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W.
A Brief Guide to A.A.	A.A. at a Glance
The A.A. Member— Medications and Other Drugs	The A.A. Grapevine
Let's Be Friendly With Our Friends	La Viña

For the People Professionals Serve

Young People and A.A.	A.A. for the Older Alcoholic
A.A. at a Glance	A.A. for the Black and African American Alcoholic
A Message to Teenagers	A Brief Guide to A.A.
This Is A.A.	Too Young?
Is A.A. for You?	Do You Think You're Different?
A.A. for the Woman	Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?
Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.	Problems Other Than Alcohol
A.A. for the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic	
A.A. for the Native North American	

A.A. Guidelines on: C.P.C. Committees; Cooperating With Courts, D.W.I. & Similar Programs; Relationship Between A.A. and Al-Anon; For A.A. Members Employed in the Alcoholism Field; Public Information Committees; Serving Alcoholics With Special Needs.

Videos: A.A. Cooperation with the Professional Community -- which contains segments directed to H.R., E.A.P., Legal, Correctional and Healthcare professions; Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous.

Discount Packages: G.S.O. has C.P.C. Discount Packages for sale to help C.P.C. committees with quantity purchases of basic A.A. information for the public. C.P.C. discount packages are available in English, Spanish and French. For information about Discount Packages, please contact G.S.O., Grand Central Station, Box 459, New York, NY 10163, (212) 870-3400, or e-mail cpc@aa.org.

A.A. WEB SITE

G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site (www.aa.org), which is available in English, Spanish and French, has been successful as a C.P.C. tool. We have received positive comments from many professionals interested in Alcoholics Anonymous. We invite you to visit the Web site and provide information about it in your C.P.C. presentations. Look for service

material used in C.P.C. work in the tab labeled "Cooperation With the Professional Community" in the "Groups and Members" section. Helpful contents of the Web site are:

- A.A. Cooperation with the Professional Community videos directed to H.R., E.A.P., Legal, Correctional and Healthcare professions.
- The A.A. General Service Conference-approved A.A. Fact File.
- Conference-approved pamphlets and the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.
- List of Central Offices/Intergroups/Answering Services in U.S./Canada.
- List of international general service offices and intergroup/central offices.
- Anonymity letter to the media.
- Information on A.A. (service piece).
- The A.A. Guidelines.

- A letter directed to professionals, which includes an e-mail response form for requesting additional information.

- *About A.A.*, newsletter for professionals. Not only is the current issue available online, all issues since the winter of 1998 can be located at G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site. Your committee is welcome to print copies of the newsletter from the Web site and make copies for C.P.C. events. Professionals and A.A. members can sign up to receive *About A.A.* (as well as other periodicals produced at this office) via e-mail. Go to G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site at www.aa.org and click the box on the homepage labeled "A.A. Periodicals Digital Subscriptions" and follow directions.

The General Service Office contacts C.P.C. committees to act as a local resource to professionals who request additional information. A.A. experience indicates that this provides a valuable opportunity for C.P.C. committees to reach the still-suffering alcoholic through cooperation with the professional community.

