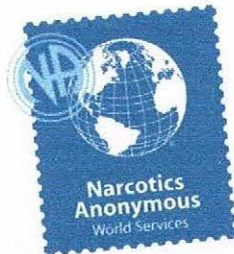


# 2014 NAWS Annual Report



## Public Relations Statement

### Why Public Relations Is Important to the NA Member

The Narcotics Anonymous message is "that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live." Our relations with the public enable us to share this message broadly so that those who might benefit from our program of recovery can find us. We perform public relations service to increase the awareness and credibility of the NA program. We share our message openly with the public at large, with prospective members, and with professionals. Maintaining an open, attractive attitude in these efforts helps us to create and improve relationships with those outside the fellowship. Establishing and maintaining a commitment to these relationships can help us to further our primary purpose.

The spiritual principles of our steps, traditions, and concepts guide us in pursuing our public relations aims and our efforts to enhance NA's public image and reputation. These principles apply to our community and service efforts as well as to the personal behavior and attitude of individual NA members.

### Informing Professionals and the Public

Narcotics Anonymous is a global, community-based organization with a multilingual and multicultural membership. NA was founded in 1953, and our membership growth was minimal during our initial 20 years as an organization. Since the publication of our Basic Text in 1983, the number of members and meetings has increased dramatically. Today\*, NA members hold more than 63,000 meetings weekly in 132 countries. We offer recovery from the effects of addiction through working a twelve-step program, including regular attendance at group meetings. The group atmosphere provides help from peers and offers an ongoing support network for addicts who wish to pursue and maintain a drug-free lifestyle.

Our name, Narcotics Anonymous, is not meant to imply a focus on any particular drug; NA's approach makes no distinction between drugs, including alcohol. Membership is free, and we have no affiliation with any organizations outside of NA including governments, religions, law enforcement groups, or medical and psychiatric associations.

Through all of our service efforts and our cooperation with others seeking to help addicts, we strive to reach a day when every addict in the world has an opportunity to experience our message of recovery in his or her own language and culture.

\*As of May 2014.

## Public Relations

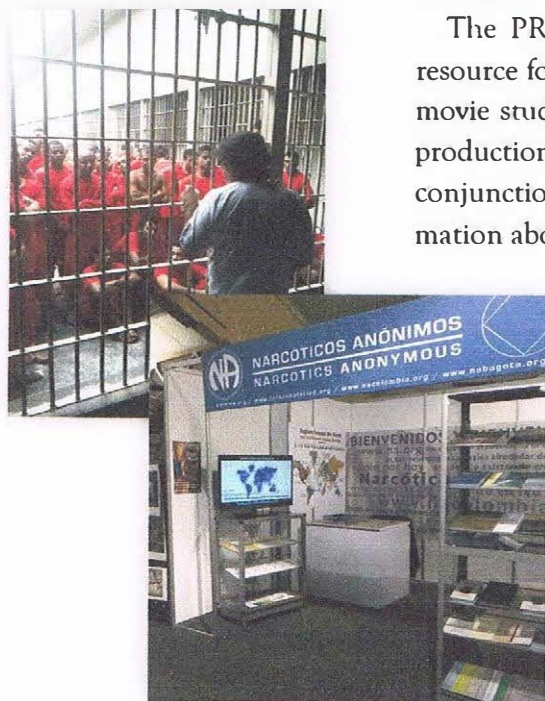
Effective public relations is a vital aspect of our efforts to realize the part of our Fellowship's vision that "NA is seen as a viable program of recovery." When NA is perceived as an accessible, stable, and effective recovery option, there are more opportunities for addicts seeking recovery to find NA and hear our message.

The work of the NAWS Public Relations Team encompasses all facets of the public relations function. Day-to-day activities entail responding to emails and telephone requests about hospitals and institution issues, drug court questions and concerns, and PR committee requests and inquiries. The team facilitates quarterly web meetings with worldwide H&I, PR, and inmate step-writing committees. The *Reaching Out* Workgroup also meets via web meeting each quarter to assist in creating this newsletter for addicts who are incarcerated or of H&I service.

At NA Fellowship events and learning days such as Western States Learning Days, Florida Service Symposium, Multi-Zonal Service Symposium, zonal forums, conventions, etc., the PR team may participate on behalf of NAWS in workshops focused on H&I- and PR-related topics, community PR presentations, and PR roundtables.

The PR Team also coordinates media relations, serving as a resource for journalists who contact NAWS and for television and movie studios that have NA scenes in episodic or feature movie productions. Additionally, we work with various media outlets in conjunction with the World Convention of NA to provide information about the convention and NA.

The World Convention itself includes a PR strategy that includes NAWS-hosted panels that bring together professionals and NA members. The PR Team coordinates sign-up for institutions to participate on the NA World Unity Day call that takes place as part of the closing meeting on the Sunday of the convention. WCNA is also the event at which NAWS distributes the Membership Survey. The form is distributed at the Friday evening main meeting, and is also made available online. Once the surveys are completed, the PR Team works with a contracted statistician who tabulates survey results to create an updated Membership Survey.







The PR Team contributes to the World Board's strategic planning process by reviewing external trends in medicine, addiction treatment, and criminal justice, including drug courts and government attitudes toward addiction and recovery. This information is forwarded to the Board for inclusion in their planning process. In essence, these external trends help shape NAWS' PR approaches and actions in each conference cycle. Based on the strategic plan, there may be approaches that require creating and/or updating literature, including pieces that may be used in PR service. *In Times of Illness* was one such WSC-approved project plan in which the PR Team worked with the Board workgroup to revise this booklet for Fellowship approval.

National and international professional conferences offer NAWS opportunities to share information and NA literature samples with professionals who help addicts seeking recovery. Participating in professional events also helps us create mutually beneficial relationships with attendees and add to our network of "friends of NA," nonaddict professionals who see the benefit of NA for their clients and patients. Additionally, the PR Team helps to orchestrate professional roundtable discussions to help professionals gain a better understanding of NA and to inform NAWS about their perceptions of NA. Some of these PR efforts of the past year are outlined below.

- American Society of Addiction Medicine's yearly conference is attended by many addiction physicians and professionals. With a trend in the US toward medication to treat addiction, a group of these physicians formed a subset, "Like-Minded Docs," whose aim is to educate their peers about the benefits of twelve-step recovery.

- The National Association of Drug Court Professionals' yearly conference is attended by NAWS to inform and educate judges and drug court professionals about NA.
- The International Association of Addiction Medicine held its 2014 conference in Japan, which helped introduce NA to Vietnamese physicians and to addiction social workers from China and Hong Kong. It also allowed NAWS to strengthen its relationship with the World Health Organization.
- The World Federation of Therapeutic Communities held a conference in Bali, Indonesia, and NAWS had several meetings with the general who oversees the country. His aim was to implement NA recovery meetings in 108 government-run aftercare programs. The Indonesian NA community is now growing and attracting new members.
- The African Zone is a newly emerging zonal forum on the African continent. Uganda and Nigeria are two countries that are trying to grow their NA communities through PR efforts, and NAWS has provided support and assistance to their efforts.

Public relations activity is focused on developing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships. Through these actions, goals can be realized. Sometimes it takes a while, so regular follow-up and continual action are essential parts of our PR efforts. In the upcoming year, NAWS is looking forward to:

- Meeting with government officials in Hanoi, Vietnam, in November 2015;
- Providing an informational session about the program of NA and recovery at the Addiction Social Worker Conference in China,



- Implementing the Unity Day call at WCNA 36 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and supporting the WCNA professional panel, whose guests include Brazilian federal physicians;
- Working with zonal trusted servants in Brazil to create a PR strategy for the zone;
- Attending the International Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations in Malaysia;
- Continuing dialogue with the United States Office of National Drug Control Policy; and
- Interfacing with the European Delegates Meeting Workgroup focused on PR/PI efforts to present information about NA at the European Union.



## **Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc.**

### **Approved World Board Minutes**

**19-22 March 2014**

#### **Thursday 20 March**

##### **2014 WSC Sessions**

Various staff members joined the meeting to participate in the mock WSC sessions small group brainstorming discussions. This session will focus on how to create, plan and develop foundational steps for the direction for the 5 breakout sessions on Needs of NA, Reasons We Come Together, Reasons We Come Together, Options for the Future and Where do we go from here.

WSC outline handed out. The goal is to generate a neutral benefit and ownership to everyone. Creating together; planning and forming foundational steps which will help the direction.

The board concluded their mock WSC brainstorming session for the day.

##### **Conference Participant Bulletin Board**

No objection to staff continuing to work with a Board member on responses for Bulletin Board.

The World Board chair made a few announcements before ending the meeting at 5:45pm on Thursday, March 20, 2014.

#### **Friday 21 March**

##### **WB Team Building Session**

The World Board began meeting in a facilitated team building exercise.

##### **Public Relations**

##### **2013 Membership Survey Results**

This meeting is typically when the details of the updated Membership Survey pamphlet are provided to begin creation of the first draft which is then presented at the conference.

##### **Survey report summarized**

- Survey e-blasted to our members as well as included in the NA Way
- AA has more younger members, Spanish speakers in the U.S. and Doctors
- When different language groups want the survey, it's usually the PR committees that take the English survey and translate and/or adapt for their own use
- Survey idea; to create survey as a mobile app

Items in blue require a decision

Items in Purple are discussion only



After we talk through the proposed projects for the cycle, we will discuss the 2014–2016 NA World Services budget, which will be voted on Friday.

Election results are announced at the end of this session.

## Advance Distribution of CPRs

Once again the Human Resource Panel will be distributing information about candidates in advance of the Conference. This worked well at WSC 2012, the first time the HRP distributed that information in advance, and conference participants appreciated having more time to review Candidate Profile Reports (CPRs).

What we need to emphasize again, as we did in 2012, is that the information you receive about candidates is confidential. Please respect the anonymity and privacy of the candidates and do not share or distribute this information. As the HRP Report on page 32 of this *Conference Report* explains, “such distribution, especially over the Internet, could create long term problems for the nominees.”

The HRP will collect these CPRs by the close of this session.

## Public Relations

In this session we will have a PowerPoint presentation which will feature several aspects of our public relations efforts. We will illustrate local NA community PR efforts from video PSAs to carrying a helpline banner in a parade. We will highlight collaborative PR undertakings and governmental relationships. Members have become increasingly energetic in their efforts to make the public—professionals and potential members—aware that NA offers addicts an opportunity to experience freedom from active addiction. Member efforts are helping NA thrive in communities around the world.

## WCNA 35—Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

There were two professional PR workshop panels at WCNA 35. One was geared toward criminal justice. These professionals offered their perspectives and passion for helping addicts who are incarcerated both in finding recovery “on the inside” and in their re-entry to society. Members in the standing-room-only session were able to interact with these professionals—asking questions and articulating their challenges. The second panel was focused on treatment. These four professionals were from Pennsylvania and represented various treatment philosophies. One of the panelists was the Secretary of Addiction Services for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Unity Day call at the WCNA closing meeting on Sunday broke all records. There were 101 institutions on the call, which included 10,000 addict inmates who heard the NA message of recovery and joined our worldwide Fellowship in a recovery celebration. Several inmates thanked their administrations for the privilege and opportunity to participate. Other firsts for that call were the participation of a juvenile detention facility in Connecticut and a correctional institution in the United Kingdom. We had anticipated our first federal penitentiary participating; however, due to a situation within the institution that morning, they were unable to join.

## NAWS Professional Events

Fortunately, we were able to attend a few professional events in this cycle; yet, these efforts seem to need to increase for NA to be considered a viable, stable, and credible program of recovery. Professionals who refer addicts are human beings and may succumb to the “out-of-sight, out-of-mind” attitude. They may not consider NA as viable when there other twelve-step fellowships present at conferences, along with a host of pharmaceutical companies, but NA is absent. When we are unable to participate in professional conferences, NA misses the

opportunity to interact with and inform professionals that we are an abstinence-based community resource for addicts. The NAWS staff who attended the 2013 National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) conference in Washington, DC, heard words of gratitude from judges who sought information about NA. Drug courts continue to emerge, and many of the professionals who work with these addicts genuinely want to help them find NA and to maintain their recovery.

We attended two conferences of the International Society of Addiction Medicine (ISAM) during this past conference cycle. In Geneva, Switzerland, in 2012, we had the opportunity to meet with pharmaceutical company representatives who offer medication to treat addiction. They were unaware of NA and NA meetings in Germany, and recognized that addicts who no longer take these medications need a place to continue their recovery. They thought physicians and community members in Germany needed to know about NA as a community resource.

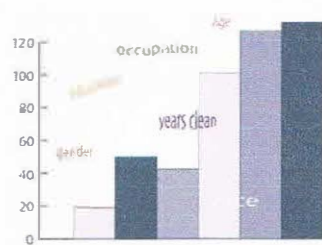
The 2013 ISAM conference was held in Malaysia. As a result of our interactions there, professors from the University of Malaysia requested presentations about NA, and offered NA meeting space at the university. Additionally, we met the chairperson for ISAM 2014, who asked NAWS to conduct a workshop at that event, and requested an NA meeting be held onsite during the conference to show professionals what happens in a meeting.

In this cycle we also attended the 2012 World Federation of Therapeutic Communities (WFTC) conference in Bali, Indonesia. At the request of the general who oversees Indonesia and his director of rehabilitation, four meetings were held with NA staff. These meetings centered on NA meetings in their aftercare programs in government-sponsored therapeutic communities. A year later, in 2013, addicts were able to attend NA meetings as a part of their aftercare program.

In October 2013, NAWS staff attended the International Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations (IFNGO) conference in Macau, a republic of China. The two United Nations delegates at the conference spoke of the effectiveness of NA in helping addicts recover. By the end of the conference, Macau's director of rehabilitation was holding meetings to implement NA in their therapeutic communities' aftercare programs in Macau.

From each and every conference attended, there are interactions with professionals who learn more about NA and who are willing to send their addict clients and patients to NA. NAWS' efforts may mirror the outcomes of local NA members who exhibit at health fairs and provide presentations. These efforts help the still-suffering addict find recovery in NA.

### 2013 Membership Survey



We will be highlighting the 2013 Membership Survey in the WSC PR session. We received a total of 16,750 responses, which is 4% fewer

responses than the 2011 survey. From surveys distributed at WCNA 35, we received 7,082 responses and 9,663 online/mail/fax responses were collected. The predominant difference was a decrease with online/mail/fax responses. We thank members who did take the time to complete the survey and ask everyone to encourage NA friends, partners, and sponsees to participate in the 2015 survey.

We noticed that, although in NA we believe we can only keep what we have by giving it away, 87% of respondents have a sponsor while only 57% said they sponsor others. Fifty-two percent cited treatment/ counseling agency as the greatest influence to attend their first NA meeting. This seems to reinforce continuation of PR committees' work of informing agencies and professionals who can refer addicts to NA. ●plates have returned to



the "main drug used" status, which seems to mirror the trend of increasing opiate use in the US. The question regarding members currently taking medications. (a new question added to the survey in 2011) yielded a "yes" response from 53% (8,583) of survey respondents; of those, 59% report taking medications for health issues. We have provided a snapshot of the Membership Survey results in this report; the entire survey data will be shown at the WSC.

## PR Roundtables

In March 2013, NAWS hosted a medical roundtable in New York City, New York. Nine physicians attended, along with a PhD candidate from Germany who was a guest of a New York University physician. These doctors were from the University of Minnesota and from Harvard, Virginia Commonwealth, Boston, New York, and Columbia Universities. Since the group held various perceptions of NA, the roundtable opened with a presentation about NA. Information about Iran brought many queries from physicians.

The roundtable moved to the question of how twelve-step programs work to help addicts change their behavior and thinking. Common points included working the twelve steps, sponsorship, collective action within NA meetings, unconditional love and acceptance, and spirituality and a relationship with a Higher Power. Some participants mentioned there are prominent physicians who perceive twelve-step programs as harmful religious cults which should never be mentioned by the medical community. However, one physician disagreed, stating that there is tangible, basic science in the twelve steps.

The afternoon discussion questions were "Where does the resistance lie within the medical community to use twelve-step programs to support a patient's ongoing recovery? Specifically, what is the resistance toward NA as an avenue to support a patient's recovery in the community?" We are familiar with a couple of the comments, such as the perception that people can buy drugs

at NA meetings and "thirteenth-stepping" makes meetings unsafe. What we have also heard and stated is that medical practices are based in evidence, and NA needs more research and evidence. Again, finance is a factor as pharmacological treatment of addiction is currently a \$1.4 billion industry. Additional obstacles include an addict's unpleasant temperament in early recovery, the stigma of being an addict, and healthcare professionals' fear of being manipulated by addicts for medication. In the wrap-up of this question, the largest hurdle discussed was lack of research to demonstrate NA's effectiveness, and the participants recommended that NA needs to consider taking action in this area to move forward. Even though these physicians ran the gamut from those who subscribe to pharmacological treatment to those who support abstinence, all physicians in attendance eagerly stated that they would attend a second roundtable and all offered to assist NA in its aims.

## Planning Our Future: Where Do We Go from Here?

The last of our Planning Our Future sessions focuses on the consolidated results of our session from this morning and how we can move forward with these ideas over the course of the cycle ahead. We'll begin by presenting a synthesis of the options for a worldwide service body.

As we explain in the introduction to this report, this series of sessions is intended to frame some options, not make final decisions. We are trying a sort of experiment with co-creation in the hopes that this will provide us with a model we can use at future conferences to develop an idea together. By the end of the conference, we hope to leave with a set of options that we can develop together over the course of the next conference cycle. We will need to agree on the next steps together. How can we—the delegates and the Board—collaborate to move forward with these ideas, and not recreate the wheel every two years?