

Public Information and the NA Member

Carrying the NA message has been an important part of many of our members' recovery and has helped some of us to discover and develop our abilities. The NA message of recovery can reach a great many people with your support. Participating in the PI committee gives you a chance to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

What is 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.

What is the NA member's responsibility?

We need to accept responsibility for our behaviour in public when we identify ourselves as NA members. This is a form of public information. Each one of us may be seen as a representative of NA to those not familiar with our programme. The way in which we maintain the facilities we use for our meetings and functions also affects how the public views NA as a whole.

Another form of public information service occurs when requests are made for information or presentations about Narcotics Anonymous. When a request is made, a PI committee member should be contacted. If a committee member is unavailable, the request should be relayed to a group service representative (GSR) or area chairperson. We handle requests in this manner because each request deserves immediate

and appropriate attention. When you are approached with a request, remember that this is not a personal one, but a request for Narcotics Anonymous as a whole.

What is the importance of anonymity?

This is a "we" programme, and in public information the concept that "I can't, we can" is vital. Our spiritual foundation of anonymity can be seriously damaged by members acting independently.

We do not give our last names nor appear in the media as members of Narcotics Anonymous. As part of our spiritual programme of recovery, we avoid self-promotion in favour of a more humble style of service. In our experience, members who become "media stars" in relationship to their membership in NA, run the risk of placing the spiritual foundation of their recovery in jeopardy, as well as giving the public an inaccurate perspective of recovery in NA.

How do members get involved?

Every member has a place in the public information committee. PI does value and need your input, suggestions, feedback, and participation. We openly invite you to come to a PI committee meeting. Like most service committees, PI always needs willing hands and minds.

How does the work get done?

Groups often come together to form an area service committee (ASC). Public information services are provided by a sub-committee of the ASC. The PI committee receives requests for information from many different sources, such as individuals, agencies, and the media.

Some of the ways we provide information to the public include:

1. Responding to requests for speakers from churches, civic organisations, schools, or the media.
2. Developing and distributing posters, flyers, and other public service announcements to inform the public of how to reach us.
3. Learning days and workshops.
4. Mailing meeting directories, informational letters, and pamphlets to people who may come in contact with addicts.
5. Cooperate with a hospitals and institutions committee in overlapping projects.
6. Where separate phonline or office committees do not exist, a PI committee may be responsible for operating a phonline.

To get involved in any of these activities, talk to a GSR or someone from your local PI committee. We can't keep what we have unless we give it away. Public information committee service allows us to do just that.



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ISBN 9781557764188 Anglicized 7/22

WSO Catalogue Item No. AN3115

IP No. 15-AN

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