

GSR WELCOME INFORMATION PAMPHLET

Western Cape Area of
Narcotics Anonymous[®]

FELLOWSHIP APPROVED



wcasc.na.org.za

W E L C O M E to the Western Cape Area Service Committee (WCASC)

Congratulations on your new role as
Group Service Representative (GSR)
or Alternate GSR (Alt. GSR). This information pamphlet (IP)
explains the part that you and your Group
play within the NA service structure.

24-Hour helpline: 083 900 69 62

✓ What is a quorum at WCASC? How does voting at WCASC work?

Quorum is established as the number of eligible members in attendance at WCASC to make the proceedings of that meeting valid. Currently, that number must be 50% + 1 of all Western Cape Groups that are eligible to vote (represented by their duly elected GSRs, Alternate GSR's or Group Proxy Representative).

For example: If a specific WCASC is attended by 20 GSR's, out of which only 16 are eligible to vote, any voting during this WCASC, will require 9 GSR's for a decision to be sanctioned.

✓ What is the GSR Buddy system?

Just as recovery is daunting without a sponsor, service in NA can be just as intimidating. As a result, the GSR Buddy System was established whereby more experienced GSR's can guide and assist new GSR's in performing their role and responsibilities. The Admin Office Bearers can help you find or become a GSR Buddy.

✓ Am I my Group's Leader?

No! When we ask members to serve, we don't set them apart as being somehow better than the rest of us. Leadership in NA is a service, not a class of membership. For this reason, we call our leaders trusted servants.

Our direction in service comes from a God of our understanding. Whenever we come together, we seek the presence and guidance of this loving Higher Power. This direction then guides us through all our actions. If we are to find guidance from an ultimate authority, we need to find means of hearing that guidance together. The mechanism we use is group conscience.

✓ What is Group Conscience?

Group conscience is the means by which we collectively invite the ongoing guidance of a Higher Power into our decision-making process. A group conscience is when addicts whose individual consciences have been awakened come together to consider service-related questions. This conscience is demonstrated when group members listen to one another and make compromises. Calm discussion, mutual respect, and a reliance on the group's conscience helps groups fulfil their primary purpose.

We sometimes use the vote as a rough tool for translating that spiritual guidance into clear, decisive terms. Many times a vote is not needed after a thoughtful and attentive discussion because the group's conscience becomes perfectly apparent, with the group leader asking if there any objections to the group's consensus. No matter how a group decides to conduct business - either with or without voting - taking time to openly discuss group matters is essential.

There is often a vast difference between group conscience and group opinion, as dictated by powerful personalities or popularity. Some of our most painful growing experiences have come as a result of decisions made in the name of group conscience. True spiritual principles are never in conflict; they complement each other. The spiritual conscience of a group will never contradict any of our Traditions.

One of the best ways a group can solve the various issues that may arise is to remain focused on our primary purpose of carrying the NA message of recovery to addicts who still suffer. Practicing the spiritual principles contained in the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Steps can solve most groups' problems. In other cases, the group may seek suggestions from neighbouring groups or through its GSR at ASC.

✓ Members in my Group get bored with me reading WCASC announcements. Do I have to read them?

Announcements are vital in NA as a method of communication. However, a Group can choose how best to communicate information to its members. The following are a few examples:

- Printing copies and leaving them for members to take and read in their own time.
- The Group giving the GSR authority to summarise and highlight the main areas that members need to address.
- Printing a copy and attaching this to the Group noticeboard.
- Uploading a copy to the Group's WhatsApp group.
- Forwarding copies to members via email.
- Holding an additional business meeting specifically for members to discuss announcements in a more depth manner.

✓ How can I best encourage Group and sub-committee service?

Members are often reluctant to accept responsibility in NA. There are some practical ways to challenge this perspective.

- More experienced members should be encouraged to share about the personal growth that resulted from doing NA service. Sharing on the benefits of service can often inspire others to get involved.
- Sharing responsibilities and duties, shadowing, proper handovers and service position training, can often ease newcomers into service.
- NA fellowshipping can assist members to feel more at ease and become active members of NA.
- Have fun! Members must remember that NA service can be enjoyable. Everyone should be encouraged to share the fun times they have experienced while doing NA service.

Useful References / Further Information: ■

Narcotics Anonymous has a variety of literature that offers guidance on matters relating to service in NA, such as:

- Narcotics Anonymous, The Basic Text
- It Works: How & Why
- Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions
- The Twelve Traditions of NA
- Twelve Concepts for NA Service
- A Guide to Local Services in NA
- IP#2 – the Group
- The Group Booklet
- Group Trust Servants – Roles & Responsibilities
- Group Business Meetings
- Principles and Leadership in NA Service
- Social Media & Our Guiding Principles
- Western Cape Area of NA - Policy & Procedures

A Brief Introduction to WCASC:

You Represent the Group: When you are new to being a GSR, understanding WCASC processes can be a bit intimidating. But be encouraged – experienced members in your Group and other GSR's, will be happy to assist you. The Admin Office Bearers at WCASC will advise you about the existing "Buddy System", whereby an experienced GSR will guide you through WCASC and help you with some of the duties outlined in this IP.

Taking on this responsibility will help you in your recovery. Through this process, you will meet and make valuable connections with other members doing service at area and regional level. Your service as a GSR, will form a significant part of your NA program, along with other pillars like meetings, the 12 Steps of NA, sponsor, service, higher power and literature.

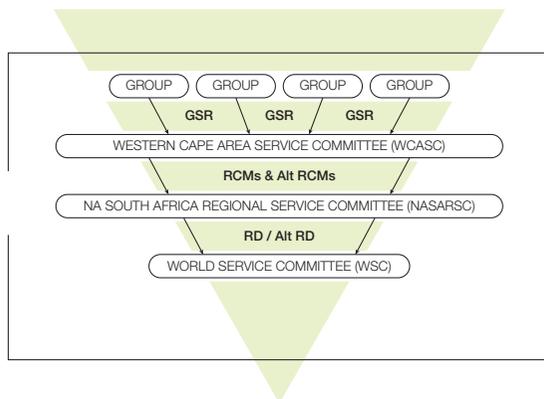
Your main responsibility is simply to represent your group at WCASC, along with other GSR's from around the province.

WCASC Serves the Groups: The Group is the most important unit in NA. As a GSR, you are the vital link between your Group and the trusted servants at WCASC, conveying important information between the two and representing your Group's Conscience (See FAQ's).

How WCASC Works:

WCASC: The purpose of WCASC is:

- To serve the needs of the Groups and,
- To support the sub-committees in the Western Cape in fulfilling their primary purpose.



Meetings are held on the first Friday of every month at 7pm at our Western Cape ASC headquarters, for a minimum of 2 hours. At these meetings, matters affecting the Western Cape NA and the NA fellowship as a whole, are discussed, debated and voted on by attending GSR's. During this process, the Groups are the only bodies with the power to make decisions. Sub-committees are represented at WCASC to provide information and options for GSR's to vote on. Therefore, WCASC can only be effective if you are pro-active as a GSR.

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Your Role & Responsibilities:

Key Responsibilities Checklist:

- Attend every WCASC meeting. To maintain your Group's right to vote you must attend a MINIMUM of two in every three meetings.
- Familiarise yourself with all the information published on the area website: wcasc.na.org.za. On the site, you will find the weekly announcements, and the monthly media pack, which contains reports from the sub-committees, region and NA World Service. In these documents, you will find items that require your Group's vote. Please read the pack thoroughly.
- Convey information to your Group by: reading the weekly announcements as well as the monthly media pack, and identifying issues that require Group Conscience decision.
- Hold a business meeting before and after each WCASC.
- Represent the Conscience of your Group at WCASC meetings.
- Recruit and train an Alternate GSR. The Alt. GSR will play a supportive role and stand in for you if you cannot attend a Group business meeting or WCASC. It is suggested that the Alt. GSR should shadow you for at least three WCASC meetings prior to your handover at the end of your term.

Pre-WCASC Business Meeting Duties:

- Encourage attendance from as many members of your Group as possible to ensure that your Group's views are best represented.
- Relay the information in the monthly media pack to attendees. Discuss anything that may interest your Group, specifically items requiring feedback / voting, so that you can obtain instructions from your Group as to how they wish you to vote / represent the Group in such matters. It is important for you to remember that without your Group's vote, your wishes will not be considered by WCASC).
- Find out if there is anything else your Group wants you to raise at the WCASC meeting, such as any issues, challenges, or motions to be tabled.
- Agree on the monthly order for literature and keyrings. This order needs to be placed with the Literature Committee by 12pm on the Wednesday before WCASC. Payment for the order must be made directly into the WCASC bank account (no cash payments will be accepted at ASC). Ideally obtain a copy of the payment to take with you to WCASC.
- Agree on any 7th tradition contribution your Group wishes to make to WCASC. Your Group's treasurer may make a recommendation to the business meeting in this regard. Payment for your Group's 7th tradition contribution must be paid directly into the WCASC bank account (no cash payments will be accepted at ASC).

Duties at each WCASC meeting:

- Get involved in discussions on issues affecting your area. When doing so, remember that you carry the Conscience of your Group and NOT your personal views.
- Represent your Group's Conscience by voting when required.
- Table any motions from your Group or raise issues that you would like to be addressed during Group sharing time.
- Ask questions – how else will you find out, if you don't ask?
- Engage with discussions on Regional and World Service issues.

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- Make notes on voting decisions made and items requiring Group feedback to discuss at your next Group business meeting.
- Collect your Group's literature order break and obtain a receipt for your Group treasurer.
- Volunteer to Buddy new GSR's where appropriate.

NOTE: In exceptional circumstances, you may represent your Group Conscience via email to the WCASC secretary. This may be appropriate for example, if your Group's location makes it impractical to attend every meeting.

Post-WCASC Business Meeting Duties:

- Report back on:
 - Motions raised
 - Announcements made
 - Issues discussed
 - Voting results
 - Requests for information
- Deliver the literature collected to your Group's literature person,
- Deliver the receipts for literature and Tradition 7 to the Group treasurer.

Your Role in the Health of the Group:

As GSR, you also play a key role in the healthy maintenance of your Group. According to Tradition Four, every Group is autonomous, but there are certain GSR duties that are invaluable within the context of the Group. These include:

- Announcing upcoming service position vacancies
- Encouraging members to do service within the Group and at sub-committee level
- Organising regular Group inventory events
- Interacting with other Group's GSR's to share ideas
- Ensuring Group adherence to the 12 Traditions of NA

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is a motion and how do I bring a motion to WCASC?

A motion is a statement of an idea that a Group, GSR, Regional Committee Member (RCM) or sub-committee member wants WCASC to put into practice.

All motions shall be written out and lodged with the WCASC secretary who will present them to WCASC as "new business". It is suggested that all motions brought to the area are founded on your Group's discussions prior to WCASC.

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