

# WASHINGTON COUNTY H&I SUBCOMMITTEE

## PANEL MEMBER ORIENTATION OVERVIEW

H&I orientation is a period that allows N.A. members to become familiar with how H&I works so new members aren't rushed into it without any preparation for their service. Many people are apprehensive about getting involved with H&I for a variety of reasons. Please don't be put off. Everyone has something to offer.

This packet has been compiled by the Washington County Area H&I subcommittee to give a brief outline of some of the specifics that are important for you to know as a new panel member. The H&I Guidelines gives a much more in depth look at H&I work in Narcotics Anonymous if you decide you would like to learn more about this rewarding type of service. Questions about obtaining an H&I Guidelines can be answered by our literature coordinator.

Like many other areas, as part of the orientation process, you will be brought to one H&I presentations as an observer. This will give you a chance to attend a presentation and just listen and see firsthand how H&I presentation works. Also, this helps many feel more comfortable when they join the panel and begin giving presentations.

## H&I REQUIREMENTS

You are invited to carry the message of recovery through H&I Panel Presentations if:

You meet the minimum membership requirements outlined in the Washington County Area of Narcotics Anonymous Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee Guidelines.

- You are willing to make a commitment to adhere to our guidelines at all times.
- You are willing to comply with the requirements of each facility, at all times.
- You meet or exceed the minimum clean time requirements:
  - 90 days clean to attend as an observer
  - 6 months clean to speak at a facility during an H&I panel presentation
- You are willing to carry a strong and clear message of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous
- You are willing to adhere to the confidentiality of all facility residents and members of Narcotics Anonymous

**\*\*NOTE:** Facilities may have their own clean time requirements.

## PANEL PRESENTATION FORMAT

The following is the format for all H&I presentation given by this subcommittee. This format provides a structure that ensures the message of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous is carried at all presentations. For this reason, open sharing type meetings are not used in the H&I setting. In H&I we are carrying the message of recovery into the facility. At an H&I presentation we are not there to dump our troubles, but rather there to help these participants become aware of what NA has to offer and how it works in our lives. In effect, an H&I presentation is an introduction to our fellowship for those who reside in the facility.

*Welcome my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am an addict, with me is \_\_\_\_\_. (If there is a third person, Introduce and advise that they are there to observe and learn) We are members of a subcommittee of Narcotics Anonymous called Hospitals and Institutions. We are group of recovering addicts who bring a message of recovery to people who cannot get to outside meetings.*

*What we share in this meeting is our own experience, strength, and hope. This is a spiritual program not a religious one, so please don't let the word GOD offend you.*

*We would now like to open this presentation with a moment of silence followed by the serenity prayer for those who would like to join in.*

*As outside volunteers we are required to follow the rules and regulations of this facility. It is our responsibility to terminate this presentation if those rules and regulations are violated. If an attendance roster is required by this facility, please sign it.*

*We would appreciate your participation with some NA readings, could someone please read:*

*Who is an addict?*

*What is the NA Program?*

*Why are we here?*

*How it works?*

*Our format will be that each of us will share our experience, strength, and hope. We will then allow time to answer any questions you may have about Narcotics Anonymous and how it works. Close with the serenity prayer.*

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR AN H&I PRESENTATION**

The following are some general guidelines for an H&I presentation. These guidelines ensure we carry out our 5<sup>th</sup> tradition {our primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.} and do so in a manner that is clear and adheres to our literature.

### Presentation Structure

- Follow the Narcotics Anonymous H&I presentation format that are addended to these guidelines.
- Presentations should be limited to one hour.
- Each member should keep the length of their sharing within 15-20 minutes. All speakers should have an equal time to share. Sufficient time should be left for discussion and questions at the end of the H&I panel presentation.
- Announce that meeting directories and literature are available, and the local NA Hotline number is listed on the directory.

### Ensuring Recovery:

In the event that drugs or contraband is passed between clients, you are to pack it up and leave the presentation immediately. Explain that cross talk will not be tolerated during the presentation or discussion.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

It's a good idea to encourage questions concerning what we shared during the presentation or other general questions about NA. However, there are a few things you should keep in mind when doing so. Please remember NA has no opinion on outside issues. Occasionally during the question and answer period or when talking after the presentation, the residents may ask for an opinion on outside issues, for example:

- Other recovery programs or fellowships.
- The facility or treatment options, including the need to stay in treatment.
- Medication prescribed by a physician.
- Any other issues that do not pertain to recovery from addiction in the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship.

If you are in a position like mentioned above and unsure if it is appropriate to answer we recommend that you seek assistance of another member of the H&I Panel who is present or say, "As members of NA we have no opinions on outside issues."

## DO'S AND DON'TS FOR H&I PRESENTATIONS

Below are some basic DO'S and DON'TS that must be followed before, during, and after H&I presentations. Following the presentations format, the general guidelines of H&I presentations and the list of DO'S and DON'TS below will ensure an environment of recovery at H&I presentations.

### DO'S

- **DO** clarify a facility's rules with the panel chair before attending or participating in an H&I panel presentation.
- **DO** start and finish the presentation on time.
- **DO** make it clear that NA is separate and distinct from the facility as well as other fellowships.
- **DO** try to get the residents involved that allows them to read the opening readings or ask questions at the end of the presentation.
- **DO** obey all dress codes. Exercise common sense and dress appropriately.
- **DO** keep staff aware of your whereabouts at all times.
- **DO** make fellowship approved literature and meeting schedules available to residents.

## **DON'TS**

- **DON'T** patronize adolescents by saying, "I feel like I am talking to a bunch of kids," or "When I was your age."
- **DON'T** compare your bottom to theirs or debate severity of addiction and/or its consequences.
- **DON'T** disqualify substances or de-validate the adolescent's addiction for any reason. For example; "Man, you sure are lucky you got in here before you started using real drugs and really became addicted." Remember what our literature says: Everyone is welcome regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion, or lack of religion. You are a member when you say you are."
- **DON'T** carry in any contraband items such as, cigarettes (if applicable) or weapons.
- **DON'T** use profanity.
- **DON'T** give out your address or phone number to any residents under any circumstances. You may only give out the NA Hotline number if asked.

- **DON'T** contradict information given by the facility or guardian of the adolescent. For example; if the client is required to attend meetings of other fellowships, religious organization, etc., do not contradict this by directing them to only attend NA meetings and follow only the NA program. Remember NA has no opinions on outside issues and we are there to represent NA as a whole.
- **DON'T** glorify your past. This includes reminiscing the “good old days” or how/what you “got away with doing while in active addiction or recovery.”
- **DON'T** tell “war stories” or emphasize certain substances, methods of ingestion, and ways and means of maintaining active addiction. Like any of us, adolescents already know what it was like. Although telling war stories or using specific drug related language may seem like a way to get their attention or help them to listen more attentively, in fact Just as it is with any other addict it is counterproductive and blurs the message being carried. We must avoid the sharing of “drug logs” and redirect a conversation of this nature. It is our responsibility to maintain an atmosphere of recovery by carrying the message not the mess.
- **DON'T** Bring Cell phone into Facility
- **DON'T** Bring in food or drinks
- **DON'T** Wear clothing that represents any other organization than NA

## **PERSONAL COMMITMENTS**

NEVER DO AN H&I PRESENTATION ALONE!! This is for the protection of you and the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

### **PLEASE DO NOT VOLUNTEER FOR AN H&I PRESENTATION IF:**

- You are not sure you want to attend.
- You are not sure you will be able to attend.

- You are on mood or mind-altering medication that impairs your ability to share recovery, even if prescribed by a physician.

If for any reason you are unable to make your commitment you MUST:

- Find a replacement from the current H&I phone list.
- Notify the Panel Chair of the change before the meeting is carried out.
- Notify the Panel Chair if Guest speaker was used and orientated.

## **ADOLESCENTS**

NOTE: When adolescents are referred to in this orientation packet, we are referring to anyone under legal age. Due to the government statutes regarding adolescents, we need to be especially aware of the facility rules and regulations as they relate to our interaction to these prospective members. For example, some facilities require a staff member to be present during presentations. Also keep in mind that most facilities now prohibit touching of any kind between clients as well and between clients and visitors.

Adolescents are prospective members and should be treated with respect. When sharing at an H&I presentation, we need to remember to an adolescent, the stress experience due to peer pressure or the relationship with their parents and/or teachers may be just as much of a crisis as the loss of a job, a marriage, or a house may be to others. In NA, we learn to deal with our feeling and emotions and share with others how we have been able to work through them by utilizing the 12 steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

While some people maintain that adolescent respond better to people closer to their own age, the bulk of our experience suggests that the age of the person at an adolescent H&I presentation is secondary to their ability to carry a strong and clear message of hope and recovery through Narcotics Anonymous. Adolescents seem to respond more to the message rather than the messenger. In addition to the DO'S and DON'TS listed previously we feel the following should be included with regards to adolescents.

REMEMBER at all times that you have a responsibility to the facility, to the residents and to NA when participating in an H&I panel presentation. If you are diligent in observing the above suggestions, follow the 12 Traditions, and adhere to the WCANA H&I Subcommittee guidelines, you will uphold your responsibility to all three without fail. ANYONE WHO FAILS TO ADHERE TO THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF A FACILITY AND/OR THE WCANA H&I GUIDELINES IS SUBJECT TO BEING REMOVED FROM THIS SUBCOMMITTEE.

In addition, if you witness any of these guidelines, suggestions, or facility rules, and regulations being dismissed or violated, the panel chair needs to be advised as soon as possible. Not reporting a violation to the panel chair could result in the termination of the panel altogether. If you are unsure if a violation occurred, or if you have questions regarding the guidelines, suggestions or facility rules and regulations do not hesitate to ask the panel chair or the H&I Chair. It is important that you are well informed and comfortable being of service with the WCANA H&I Subcommittee.