

April 2018

NOTE: These are Advisory Actions only.
Details are contained in full Conference committee reports.

CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

The following recommendations were approved by the 68th General Service Conference:

Floor Actions

It was recommended that:

1. The text on page 18 of the pamphlet “Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous” that currently reads:

Please check your local telephone directory or newspaper for the number of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Be revised to read:

Alcoholics Anonymous can be found on the Internet at aa.org and in most telephone directories by looking for “Alcoholics Anonymous.” Additionally, online meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are in places where there is no meeting nearby.

2. Area Service Highlights be published in their entirety in both the printed Conference *Final Report* and the anonymity-protected digital version.

Agenda

It was recommended that:

3. The theme for the 2019 General Service Conference be: “Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages.”

4. The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2019 General Service Conference:

Yesterday’s World – Our Legacies Begin
Today’s World – Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service
Tomorrow’s World – Courage to be Vigilant

5. The following be the workshop topic for the 2019 General Service Conference: “Clarity of Purpose – Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings”

Archives*

It was recommended that:

6. The proposed new publication, *Our Great Responsibility: A Selection of Bill W.’s General Service Conference Talks, 1951 – 1970* be approved with minor editorial changes.

* Members serve on this committee as a secondary committee.

Cooperation with the Professional Community

It was recommended that:

7. The text on page 9 of the pamphlet "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional" which currently reads:

Sharing experience as peers is the unique service Alcoholics Anonymous offers. In most instances, health care professionals find A.A. members not only willing but eager to introduce newcomers to the A.A. program.

Be revised to read:

Sharing experience as peers is the unique service Alcoholics Anonymous offers. With no membership requirements beyond the desire to stop drinking, members are on an equal footing. What's important is getting the help that is needed, and in most instances, health care professionals find A.A. members not only willing but eager to introduce newcomers to the A.A. program.

8. The text on page 10 of the pamphlet "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional" which currently reads:

A.A. is listed in most telephone directories or local newspapers, and a phone call is all that is needed for help.

Be revised to read:

Alcoholics Anonymous can be found on the Internet at aa.org and in most telephone directories by looking for "Alcoholics Anonymous." Additionally, online A.A. meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are in places where there are no meetings nearby.

9. A new section be added beginning on page 16 of the pamphlet "Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous," between the sections "Why Would the Clergy be Concerned with A.A.?" and "Do Any of the Clergy Belong to A.A.?" with text as follows:

What If You Are a Chaplain in the Military?

Like other members of the clergy, military chaplains are often the "safest" people a problem drinker can approach. Chaplains can help direct alcoholics to available A.A. meetings, either on or near the base. Additionally, if no meetings are available, chaplains may be able to connect interested alcoholics with other A.A. materials, such as books and pamphlets or A.A.'s magazines, Grapevine and La Viña. Online meetings are also available for those members of the military who may be deployed, and chaplains can help get them connected electronically through correspondence groups. (A.A.'s General Service Office can provide information on such resources.)

10. Text be added to the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional..." on page 4, first paragraph, to read (additions in **bold**):

Meetings: At the heart of the program are its meetings, which are conducted autonomously by A.A. groups in cities and towns throughout the world, **even in jails, institutions and on military bases.**

11. Text be added to the pamphlet “If You Are a Professional...” on page 4, last section, to read (additions in **bold**):

Referrals from Judicial, Health Care, **Military**, or other Professionals

Today numerous A.A. members come to us from judicial, health care, **military** or other professionals.

12. Text be added to the pamphlet “If You Are a Professional...” in the last full paragraph on page 5, to read (additions in **bold**):

Or you can contact the General Service Office (G.S.O.) of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information. G.S.O.’s A.A. website aa.org can aid in finding local resources. **Additionally, online A.A. meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are in places where there are no meetings nearby.**

13. A.A. World Services, Inc. develop a company page on LinkedIn with the following goals in mind:

- To offer another digital resource, in addition to aa.org, where professionals can find accurate information about A.A.
- To broaden the reach of the About A.A. newsletter for professionals
- To offer a platform where our professional friends may recommend us
- To raise awareness of exhibits staffed by local C.P.C. committees at national and local professional conferences
- To expand the network of our professional friends and perhaps deepen the pool of Class A Trustee candidates
- By our presence on LinkedIn, to reinforce the continuing relevance and efficacy of A.A. to professionals

Corrections

No recommendations.

Finance

It was recommended that:

14. The Conference-approved maximum annual contribution from an individual A.A. member to the General Service Board be increased from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

Grapevine

It was recommended that:

15. AA Grapevine, Inc. allow sales of Grapevine and La Viña books, single-issue magazines (as available), and other products to non-AA entities, such as (but not limited to) hospitals, treatment centers and book stores. [Note: As a current practice, AA Grapevine, Inc. does not seek outside sales for magazine subscriptions.]

16. AA Grapevine, Inc. continue to seek opportunities to expand bulk sales. [Note: AA Grapevine, Inc. currently offers volume discounts and will respond to requests, rather than solicit sales from outside entities.]
17. AA Grapevine, Inc. provide notification to A.A. World Services' list of non-A.A. entities to let them know that they can now purchase AA Grapevine and La Viña books, single-issue magazines (as available) and other products.
18. La Viña be published at its current frequency of six times per year as a service to the Fellowship, with perfect binding, at 68 pages, and in full color.
19. The revised pamphlet "AA Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print" be approved and the title changed to "AA Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print and Other Media."

International Conventions/Regional Forums*

It was recommended that:

20. The following two cities, expressed here in alphabetical order, be considered as possible sites for the International Convention in 2030: Indianapolis, Indiana; St. Louis, Missouri.
21. Up to 21 non-A.A. speakers be invited to attend the 2020 International Convention at A.A.'s expense.

* Members serve on this committee as a secondary committee.

Literature

It was recommended that:

22. The revised pamphlet "A.A. for the Woman," retitled "Experience, Strength and Hope: Women in A.A.," be approved.
23. The revised pamphlet "A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic," retitled "Experience, Strength and Hope: LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.," be approved with minor edits provided by Publishing regarding use of gender specific language.
24. The revised pamphlet "Inside A.A.: Understanding the Fellowship and its Services" be approved.
25. The draft pamphlet "Experience, Strength and Hope: A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues – and their sponsors" be approved.
26. The trustees' Literature Committee revise the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" to include a section on anonymity, and bring back a progress report or draft text to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.
27. The title of the pamphlet "G.S.R. General Service Representative: May Be the Most Important Job in A.A." be changed to "G.S.R. General Service Representative: Your Group's Link to A.A. as a Whole."

28. The following text (originally included in the 1998 edition of *Living Sober*) be added to *Living Sober* following the section titled “Note to Medical Professionals”:

We recognize that alcoholics are not immune to other diseases. Some of us have had to cope with depressions that can be suicidal; schizophrenia that sometimes requires hospitalization; bipolar disorder, and other mental and biological illnesses. Also among us are diabetics, epileptics, members with heart trouble, cancer, allergies, hypertension, and many other serious physical conditions.

Because of the difficulties that many alcoholics have with drugs, some members have taken the position that no one in A.A. should take any medication. While this position has undoubtedly prevented relapses for some, it has meant disaster for others.

A.A. members and many of their physicians have described situations in which depressed patients have been told by A.A.s to throw away the pills, only to have depression return with all its difficulties, sometimes resulting in suicide. We have heard, too, from members with other conditions, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, epilepsy and others requiring medication, that well-meaning A.A. friends discourage them from taking any prescribed medication. Unfortunately, by following a layperson’s advice, the sufferers find that their conditions can return with all their previous intensity. On top of that, they feel guilty because they are convinced that “A.A. is against pills.”

It becomes clear that just as it is wrong to enable or support any alcoholic to become readdicted to any drug, it’s equally wrong to deprive any alcoholic of medication, which can alleviate or control other disabling physical and/or emotional problems.

29. The trustees’ Literature Committee undertake a comprehensive update to the video “Your General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure” to reflect a contemporary presentation of the General Service and AA Grapevine offices as well as a current portrayal of the General Service Structure, and bring back a progress report or draft updated video to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.
30. The pamphlet “The God Word” (currently published by the General Service Board of A.A., Great Britain) be adopted by A.A. World Services, Inc. with minor editorial changes.
31. The trustees’ Literature Committee develop a pamphlet based on A.A.’s Three Legacies, with emphasis on the history of the Three Legacies, how they work together and including personal stories of members’ experiences with the Three Legacies, and bring back a progress report or draft pamphlet to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.
32. The trustees’ Literature Committee develop a pamphlet for Spanish-speaking women alcoholics by gathering sharing from Spanish-speaking women in A.A., and bring back a progress report or draft pamphlet to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

Policy/Admissions

It was recommended that:

33. Valley Kalaiyappa, general secretary of the General Service Board of A.A. India, be admitted to the 68th General Service Conference as an observer.

34. The "Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings" be approved.
35. Two consultants, Andréa Pellegrino and Chris DeSantis, from the firm Impact Collaborative, be admitted to the 68th General Service Conference on Thursday, April 26 and Friday, April 27, 2018 as observers. [Note: This was a special request from the chair of the General Service Board for approval of two representatives from the firm contracted to conduct a communications audit initiated by the General Service Board.]

Public Information

It was recommended that:

36. The video PSA "Changes" be approved with the following revision: That the line "That's where A.A. came to my rescue" be replaced with "A.A. offered a solution."
37. In addition to the work of local committees, the video PSA, "Changes" be centrally distributed, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$42,000 and that the information gathered from the process be forwarded to the 2019 Conference Public Information Committee for their review.
38. The Young People's Video submission be approved.
39. The pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity," with expanded content on Traditions Eleven and Twelve, be approved.
40. The trustees' Committee on Public Information develop language reflecting that A.A.'s anonymity Traditions are not a cloak protecting criminal or inappropriate behavior and that calling the proper authorities does not go against any A.A. Traditions. A progress report or draft language is requested to be brought back to the 2019 Conference Committee on Public Information.
41. The updated pamphlet "A Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous" be approved.
42. A progress report including website analytics and the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A.W.S. YouTube account be brought back to the 2019 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Report and Charter

It was recommended that:

43. The following text be added to the Glossary of Service Terms in the A.A. Service Manual:

A panel is a numerical designation that refers to a group of delegates elected to begin serving at the General Service Conference in a particular year. Each panel is numbered for the Conference at which the Area's delegate will first serve. The two-year cycle frequently applies to area committee officers and committee members, as well.

44. Text boxes visually displaying the member positions on each of the three corporate boards be added to Chapter Ten of the A.A. Service Manual in the section on A.A. World Services, Inc.
45. In the section "AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD" of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, a footnote be added to the portion of the Resolution attached as part of the Original Conference Charter and the Current Conference Charter with the following text:

Bill uses the term "registered." A.A.W.S. neither monitors nor oversees the activities or practices of any A.A. group. Groups are listed solely for purposes of accurate communications.
46. Text be added to the A.A. Service Manual in the section "Trademarks, Logos, and Copyrights" reflecting the A.A.W.S. copyright statement on "The Blue People" graphic.
47. The General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. Board and the AA Grapevine Board review *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* and forward necessary updates to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter biennially, only in printing years.
48. Following publication of the 2018-2020 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, the A.A.W.S. Publishing Department undertake a thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual with a preliminary draft or progress report to be sent to the 2019 Conference Committee on Report and Charter.
49. Any Committee Considerations be published in their entirety in both the printed Conference *Final Report* and the anonymity-protected digital version.

Treatment and Accessibilities

It was recommended that:

50. The title of the pamphlet "Accessibility for All Alcoholics" be changed to "Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers."
51. The proposed changes by the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities to the pamphlet "Accessibility for All Alcoholics" be approved with additional revisions.
52. The Scope of the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities be expanded as follows (additions in **bold**):

The purpose of a Treatment and Accessibilities committee is to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in a wide variety of treatment settings, and to set up means of "bridging the gap" from the treatment setting to the A.A. **Fellowship. In addition, the committee supports the work of individual A.A. members and groups serving those who experience barriers to accessing the A.A. message and participating in A.A.'s Three Legacies – Recovery, Unity, and Service. Finally, the committee supports the work of individual A.A. members and groups striving to ensure that A.A. members who live in underserved or remote communities — communities difficult to reach because of geography, language or culture — have access to the A.A. message.**

The committee will review all aspects of service to A.A. groups/meetings in non-correctional in-patient and out-patient treatment settings, as well as to **A.A.s who experience access barriers**, and make recommendations for changes and/or improvements.

Trustees

It was recommended that:

53. The following slate of trustees of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meetings of the members of the General Service Board in April 2018, following presentation at the 2018 General Service Conference for disapproval if any:

Class A Trustees

Leslie S. Backus, B.A.
Hon. Christine Carpenter
Michele Grinberg, J.D.
Hon. Ivan L.R. Lemelle
Peter Luongo, Ph.D., LCSW-C
Nancy McCarthy
David M. Morris, C.P.A.

Class B Trustees

Thomas Ardolf
Cathy Beckham
Carole Boerner
Beau Bush
Mark Everett
Yolanda Flores
Kathryn Fowler
Scott Huyghebaert
Jan Lembke
David Noll
Newton Pritchett
Richard Purtell
Ginger Rhoades Bell
Cate Wittig

54. The following slate of officers of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2018, following presentation at the 2018 General Service Conference for disapproval if any:

Chairperson
First Vice-Chairperson
Second Vice-Chairperson
Treasurer
Secretary
Assistant Treasurer
Assistant Secretary

Michele Grinberg, J.D.
Leslie S. Backus, B.A.
Carole Boerner
David M. Morris, C.P.A.
Thomas Ardolf
Bob Slotterback
Eva Sanchez*

*Will be replaced at G.S.O. rotation in 2018.

55. The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board in April 2018, following presentation at the 2018 General Service Conference for disapproval if any:

Tom Ardolf
Deborah Attix
Cathy Beckham
Beau Bush

David Noll
Eva Sanchez*
Greg Tobin
Carolyn Walsh

*Will be replaced at G.S.O. rotation in 2018.

56. The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the AA Grapevine Corporate Board in April 2018, following presentation at the 2018 General Service Conference for disapproval if any:

Carole Boerner
Ami Brophy
Josh Eggleston
Mark Everett
Ino Fernandez

Tommi Hanley
Nancy McCarthy
Ginger Rhoades Bell
Cate Wittig

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