

**FELLOWSHIP INPUT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
MATERIAL ON LOCAL SERVICES IN
A GUIDE TO SERVICE IN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS**

This report has been prepared by the WSC Policy Committee in conjunction with the preparation of an edited version of the *Guide to Service*. Since the editing removed material from the *Guide* on NA world services, leaving only the chapters on local NA services, the edited handbook has been retitled *A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous*.

In considering whether and how to allow the *Guide to Local Services* to be distributed for fellowship approval, it may be useful to know how extensively the local service material in the original *Guide to Service* was reviewed within the fellowship and the degree to which fellowship input influenced the development of the *Guide's* local service materials—and that is what this report describes. Using conference records and reports, archival correspondence, and minutes from the committee responsible for creating the *Guide to Service*, we have reconstructed an account of the opportunities made available to the World Service Conference, to world service leadership, and to the NA Fellowship at large to input and impact the *Guide to Service* as it went through its various incarnations.

We hope this report proves useful to you. Should you have any questions or comments concerning it, we invite you to write us in care of the World Service Office, PO Box 9999, Van Nuys CA 91409 USA. Thank you for allowing us to be of service.

WSC Policy Committee, October 1995

Early WSC action on service manual revision and initiation of the *Guide to Service* project, 1975-1987

The original Narcotics Anonymous service manual was called *The NA Tree*. The first edition (c. 1975) lay the groundwork for the convening of the first meeting of our World Service Conference in 1976. The second edition (c. 1977) made minor revisions to the manual's text. The third edition (1979), titled just *The NA Service Manual* and known as the "blue manual" because of the color of its cover, was developed by the new WSC Literature Committee and was approved by the newly independent World Service Conference. A fourth edition (known as the "green manual"), developed by the WSC Policy Committee, was proposed in 1982 to the World Service Conference; however, only the sections applying to local services were adopted. That material was added to the 1979 manual's description of world services, as amended by the conference in the succeeding years, to form *A Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure* in 1983. At the same time, the WSC Policy Committee was given responsibility to "rewrite the service structure." The Policy Committee, however, could not resolve certain internal conflicts that arose in the rewriting process and returned to the conference in 1984 with a recommendation that the service-manual project be passed along to a separate, select committee. The World Service Conference accepted Policy's recommendation, creating the WSC Select Committee on the Service Structure (referred to later in this report sometimes as "Select," sometimes simply as "the committee"). That committee released a first draft of its *Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous* in March 1985 with a request for input.

1987

The Select Committee released its second draft of the *Guide to Service* in May 1987 and set a 1 December 1987 deadline for input. By this time the committee had been engaged in discussions for several years on service issues affecting the fellowship, yet these discussions were not reflected in the 1987 draft. The Select Committee reported on these discussions in the September 1987 *Fellowship Report* and offered a proposal for reorganizing the service structure. Select asserted that there was a need for comprehensive change in world services, and notified readers that the fundamental concepts underlying the proposal for structural change would be discussed at a WSC "quarterly" workshop scheduled for October 1987 in Denver, Colorado, USA.

At its November 1987 meeting, the Select Committee began factoring input on the *Guide* into the handbook's first five chapters (member, group, group conscience, area, region). Input on the committee's September proposal was generally positive, but little was received on the world services section.

January 1988

By January, the Select Committee had conducted open input sessions at two WSC "quarterlies" and had given considerable time in encouraging the fellowship to input the 1987 draft of *A Guide to Service*. The committee let the fellowship know it had received a substantial amount of input prior to the 1 December 1987 cut-off date. It observed that comments on subjects the fellowship was especially familiar with—such as NA groups, areas, and regions—were generally well founded, comprehensive, and specific.

Select explained that the division of fellowship opinion on certain basic issues made it difficult to proceed in building parts of the *Guide*. The committee asked the following two questions in its report:

- What are the rights and responsibilities of groups and members?
- What are the rights and responsibilities of trusted servants, service boards, and committees?

The committee said it believed the Twelve Traditions did not provide sufficiently clear direction on these and similar issues, and that the committee needed guidance from the World Service Conference on these basic questions before it could go ahead with its work.

Select informed the fellowship that it would be meeting in March 1988 to formulate questions and issues that it would present for discussion at the 1988 World Service Conference.

February 1988

Members of the Select Committee participated in a service workshop in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. Participants discussed, among many subjects, the question of whether there was a need for additional service principles to supplement the Twelve Traditions. Some participants believed the Twelve Traditions provided sufficient guidance in NA service matters. Those who believed more direction was needed than what the traditions provided went on to examine areas where additional service principles would help.

March 1988

The Select Committee reported that it believed NA needed a foundation of service principles, consistent with but supplementary to our Twelve Traditions, that could guide specific service efforts. The committee included in its list of fellowship discussion points the purpose, function, and responsibility of trusted servants and the service structure.

Select noted that it would be recommending a change in the committee's name at the 1988 WSC to better reflect the committee's purpose within the fellowship. Select also thanked those who had contributed input on the 1987 draft of the *Guide*.

WSC '88

World Service Conference participants came to WSC '88 aware of the issues facing *A Guide to Service* and prepared to provide direction. Because of conference and committee concerns, the WSC entered into a committee of the whole. Participants discussed issues in Select's reports, members' concerns, and possible recommendations to the committee. The conference also voiced its desire for more regular communication with the committee. Following the committee of the whole, the conference took the following actions:

- It directed the World Service Board of Trustees (WSB) to explore service principles.
- It changed the name of the WSC Select Committee on the Service Structure to the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service (NAS).

Post-conference

At the World Service Conference, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service had been given clear directions regarding the committee's communication responsibilities. The committee responded by requesting conceptual input from the fellowship on the service principles and other issues it had reported upon earlier. The World Service Office received this input and forwarded it to all NAS committee members. Those members were responsible for reading all of the input prior to each meeting and preparing themselves to discuss each piece.

Summer 1988

In July 1988, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service reported on its plan to publish parts of its work on the service principles as the committee moved along, especially those parts that were new and different or which the committee knew might be of special concern to NA members. The idea was to allow the fellowship the opportunity to voice its thoughts while the work was still in progress so that the committee could make adjustments to the draft prior to its next release.

The committee discussed at great length the heavy, sometimes conflicting responsibilities of many area committees: Service needs sometimes overwhelmed group needs. The committee planned to begin talking with local service committees over the coming months to resolve such concerns in the way it described groups, areas, and regional committees in the *Guide*.

Fall/Winter 1988

In the fall of 1988, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service began developing the local service section of the *Guide to Service*. The committee hosted a local services workshop that coincided with its September 1988 meeting at World Service Office headquarters, at that time located in Van Nuys, Los Angeles, California, USA. The committee invited regional and area trusted servants from seven regions to attend. Those trusted servants represented urban as well as rural service territories and included a variety of area and regional committee experience. To help generate new ideas and broaden discussion, the committee prepared a questionnaire and sent it to each invited member prior to the meeting.

The workshop addressed many service issues including decision making, funding, and the function of areas and regions. Each member shared personal service experience and opinions on what needed to be included in the *Guide*. This input added to the substantial input the committee had received already on its written communications and workshop presentations.

The Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service included a brief outline of the "Principles for Service" in the December 1988 *Fellowship Report*. The committee also stated that the full draft of the Principles for Service was being prepared and would be forwarded to the WSB for the trustees to review at their board's February 1989 meeting.

January 1989

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service had discussed and agreed upon the general concepts to be addressed in the *Guide to Service*, but the committee realized it would need help in actually composing the text of the *Guide*. It was for that reason the committee began using the staff-team approach to prepare its 1989 drafts of the *Guide to Service* and Principles for Service. Using old drafts, input, and committee discussions, staff assigned to work with the committee began rewriting the local services chapters of the *Guide*.

Spring 1989

The World Service Office mailed the first draft of the Twelve Principles for NA Service to conference participants in April 1989, days before the opening of the 1989 World Service Conference.

WSC '89

During the conference, several issues were discussed regarding the *Guide* and the Twelve Principles for NA Service. The conference entered into a committee of the whole, primarily to address world and national issues that would have an impact on the development of the *Guide*. The conference also offered input on local service issues for the *Guide*. It was a long but very effective WSC session. The conference explored fellowship concerns and provided a lot of input to the NAS committee.

June–November 1989

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service sent out *Guide to Service* draft material and discussion questions in preparation for a world service leadership meeting scheduled to review work being done on the *Guide* and the Twelve Principles. That meeting was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA, in July 1989. Attending were some local NA members along with members of the World Service Board of Trustees, the WSO Board of Directors, the WSC Administrative Committee, chairpersons and vice chairs of the WSC standing committees, and WSO senior and coordinating staff members. Although meeting participants talked a great deal about the Twelve Principles, they also discussed each part of the *Guide*. Toward the close of the meeting, the trusted servants asked to be kept involved in the development of the Twelve Principles and the *Guide to Service*. Participant input and observations broadened the committee's perspective, prompting significant revisions in the *Guide* and Twelve Principles.

Although those who attended the Albuquerque meeting thought it was valuable, there were other NA members who saw the meeting as having been closed to input from the mass of the fellowship. Those members objected to the event having occurred without advance fellowship notification, voicing their concern at the November 1989 world services meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. They also asked that more of the committee's work be distributed and that the fellowship have more opportunities to impact the development of the *Guide to Service*.

December 1989

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service met later in November 1989 to discuss the concerns expressed at the November world services meeting. In response to the request for a more open review process, NAS decided to release drafts of the group, area, and regional chapters of the *Guide*. Along with the drafts, a cover letter and study notes were included in the 5 December 1989 fellowship mailing. The committee decided to release committee minutes to the fellowship. In addition, the committee scheduled another meeting to take place in Albuquerque in January 1990 and extended an open invitation to the fellowship to attend.

In the December 1989 *Fellowship Report*, NAS assured readers that it would not be presenting its work for approval at the 1990 World Service Conference. The committee would only be making its first formal presentation of the *Guide* at that time, beginning what it hoped would be an ongoing fellowship dialogue on the work.

January 1990

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service conducted a second meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico. World service leaders attended this meeting along with local trusted servants. This meeting provided NAS with a considerable amount of input on the *Guide*. The committee mailed the minutes from this meeting to conference participants.

February 1990

A small work group of the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service met to collate input into what would be the Spring 1990 draft of the *Guide to Service*.

March 1990

The committee released the Spring 1990 draft of the *Guide to Service* that March. That draft contained each chapter of the *Guide*, except the chapter on world services. The draft was mailed to WSC participants and regional committees on 23 March 1990, and was made available for purchase as an inventory item through the WSO at a cost of \$5.00 per copy. The committee understood that most of the fellowship would be unfamiliar with the *Guide*, so it inserted into each copy a listing of multi-regional workshops planned for the coming summer and fall throughout the United States of America. The committee designed those workshops to help members become familiar with the *Guide* and provide input. It also hoped that local trusted servants who attended could be trained to conduct *Guide* educational and input workshops in their own NA communities.

WSC '90

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service presented a fourteen-page report to the conference. The report explained the structural differences proposed in the *Guide* and the rationale for those changes. The report also contained material regarding the division of regions, state assemblies, conference delegate recognition, and metropolitan services. The completion and approval plan contained in the report described a three-year fellowship review-and-approval process for the *Guide to Service* and the renamed Twelve Concepts for NA Service. The committee encouraged the fellowship to thoroughly review the Twelve Concepts and the *Guide*, and again gave conference participants a schedule of summer and fall multi-regional fellowship workshops. After the NAS report, the conference adopted a motion allowing NAS to continue working until the *Guide* was completed and distributed.

The 1990 conference approved *The Group Booklet*, presented by the WSC Literature Committee, to replace the *Group Starter Kit*. The booklet had been adapted from the group chapter of the Spring 1990 *Guide to Service*. The portions that did not reflect contemporary thought and practice had been deleted or adapted.

Post-conference

Following the 1990 conference, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service revisited its work on local services for the *Guide to Service*. To gather information on service delivery in large metropolitan settings, NAS sent a report and questionnaire to several large USA regions. The report identified two regions as examples where multiple areas in a city had caused confusion between areas and regions. Problems arose, the report said, when trying to determine whether the area or region was responsible for service delivery. The report also briefly explained how Detroit, Chicago, and Boston had developed alternative service structures to deal with NA service needs in their metropolitan settings. In response to the questionnaire and report, some regions began submitting minutes from their business meetings to the committee especially to relate their experience with metropolitan service issues.

June 1990

As the committee continued its work on local services, it met in June to discuss metropolitan services. NAS studied variations of the regional model, struggling over defining the line between regional and area service responsibilities. The committee hoped its work would receive widespread fellowship attention and looked forward to the fellowship's input.

In order to provide a clear presentation of the committee meetings' discussions and issues, NAS decided to begin releasing summary reports of its meetings instead of minutes, though minutes continued to be available to any NA member upon request.

To encourage fellowship discussion and input, the committee developed and mailed a draft report entitled "Metropolitan Services and the State Assembly." It also encouraged those interested in hosting local workshops on the *Guide* to contact the committee. First priority would be given to multi-regional events. Even when it would be impossible for an NAS member to attend a workshop, the

committee offered to provide *Guide* resource material and study notes to workshop organizers to help in planning for the event.

Summer–Fall 1990

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service spent much of the summer and early fall of 1990 meeting with the fellowship. Committee members participated in multi-regional workshops in Philadelphia, Seattle, Columbus, Kansas City, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. The input workshops generated sixty-six pages of written fellowship input to the group, area, and regional chapters of the *Guide to Service*.

NAS members also took part in the July 1990 world services meeting in Arlington, Virginia, USA. That meeting provided the committee with two open forums. The first forum asked for general comments on the *Guide*; the second produced specific input on the delivery of services in metropolitan areas. Forum participants also discussed the regional service chapter of the *Guide*.

October–December 1990

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service discussed the input from the multi-regional workshops at its October 1990 meeting. NAS also worked on the regional services chapter, including regional assemblies and regional subcommittees.

In November 1990, the committee factored the input generated since the release of the Spring 1990 draft of the *Guide* into the Twelve Concepts for NA Service. NAS also notified the fellowship of a 1 July 1991 deadline on input for *A Guide to Service*.

In December 1990, the committee met and continued discussions on providing services in a metropolitan setting, and began planning metropolitan services workshops.

January 1991

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service reviewed the draft of the Twelve Concepts in preparation for its March 1991 release, factoring input and previous committee discussions into the text. Later that month, two committee members attended a workshop in Sacramento, California, USA where they made presentations on the revised drafts of the concepts and the regional service committee chapter of the *Guide*.

Spring 1991

Most of the work of the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service focused on the input and review of the Twelve Concepts during this period. The committee released the final review form of the Twelve Concepts to the fellowship on 24 March 1991 and notified conference participants of the 1 September 1991 deadline for fellowship input.

World Service Conference 1991

No motions impacting the *Guide* were adopted at the 1991 World Service Conference. There were, however, several failed motions regarding the committee and its work. These motions included efforts to turn the project over to the World Service Board of Trustees and/or the WSC Policy Committee, and to return to the 1987 draft of the *Guide*.

Post-conference

Shortly after the 1991 conference, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service completed the Spring 1991 draft of the *Guide*. This draft included the revised concepts (four pages longer) and study notes. The committee also updated the *Guide's* cover, table of contents, and index.

In June 1991, the World Service Board of Trustees and the WSO Board of Directors made a final essay-by-essay review of the *Twelve Concepts for NA Service* booklet.

NAS reported that, with the exception of discussions about metropolitan services, it would be doing no more work on the *Guide* until the 1992 World Service Conference reached a decision on the Twelve Concepts for NA Service.

September–November 1991

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service communicated its intent to conduct two metro services workshops in the first part of 1992.

The committee met in September and November to factor input from the fellowship, the trustees, and the WSO Board of Directors into the concepts to create the approval-form draft.

On 9 November 1991, the committee released the approval form of the booklet entitled *Twelve Concepts for NA Service* to the fellowship. The booklet was to be voted upon at the 1992 World Service Conference.

January 1992

After the first of the year, having completed work on the concepts, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service revisited the metropolitan services chapter of the *Guide*. On 10 January 1992, NAS held a metropolitan services workshops in New York. Over one hundred NA members from more than twenty regions attended. Participants shared their various difficulties with delivering services in the densely populated cities of the USA's East Coast. Representatives from New York, Chicago, and Detroit presented three distinct ways of delivering local services. Members discussed a variety of options including districts, metropolitan service committees, and metropolitan regions.

February/March 1992

The committee held a similar workshop in downtown San Francisco. The majority of participants who attended this workshop were from regions within California, but members from British Columbia and Washington State made presentations. Aside from the Oakland–East Bay area, California had not addressed problems related to services in a metropolitan area, compared to what other regions had reported. Some regional participants expressed resistance to metropolitan models, but records indicate that area participants expressed significant interest in metro services as outlined by NAS members. The ad hoc left the workshop planning to include language outlining a transition process for metro service structures.

At its February 1992 meeting, the committee decided to take the input from these workshops and create a separate chapter on delivering services in a metropolitan setting. That chapter included alternative structures for areas and model diagrams. Two members with metropolitan service experience were added to the committee at that meeting.

1992 World Service Conference

The 1992 World Service Conference approved the booklet, *Twelve Concepts for NA Service*, by a 77% majority (80% of RSR votes). The committee met briefly and decided to focus its efforts exclusively on finishing the *Guide* during the 1992-93 conference year.

Post-conference

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Services approached the local services chapters first, holding its first post-conference meeting 29-31 May 1992 at WSO-Van Nuys. Several changes were incorporated into the group, area, metro, and regional chapters. The committee revisited all input stemming from the meetings in Albuquerque, the 1990 summer and fall workshops, the world service meetings, and input submitted by individuals and service bodies. During the *Guide's* final stages of development, the committee considered each individual piece of input when making its revisions.

July 1992

The committee met again in Van Nuys on 10-12 July 1992. During the meeting, members continued reviewing and revising the local service chapters of the *Guide* and began working on the service structure diagrams. In addition, the committee reviewed the "Local Service Centers" chapter and fine-tuned the sample meeting formats, checklist for new NA groups, and sample rules of order. Stemming from input received over the previous four years, the committee realized the need for service bulletins that would provide additional information to local NA communities without making the *Guide* itself overly detailed.

September 1992

Some members of the fellowship had approached the committee with their concerns that the *Guide* might be presented for approval at the 1993 World Service Conference. In the September 1992 *Conference Report*, the committee assured readers that it would not be presenting a motion to approve the *Guide* at WSC '93—that it would, in fact, oppose any motion to do so. The committee decided not to release *Guide* chapters individually as they were completed lest such action generate misunderstanding. The committee did not plan to suggest an approval process for the *Guide* so that the WSC's options would be left completely open. NAS invited those members who felt that this was irresponsible to please provide suggestions.

October-December 1992

At both the October and December meetings, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service discussed minor revisions to the local services chapters, but most of its efforts impacted the world services chapter.

At the October 1992 WSC "quarterly" workshop in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, the committee made a presentation describing the world service chapter of the *Guide to Service*. In addition to world service discussions, members offered input on various parts of the entire *Guide*.

At its December 1992 meeting, the committee discussed whether it should make a recommendation to the 1993 World Service Conference concerning an approval process for the *Guide*. After discussing fellowship input and committee members' views, NAS decided the most responsible thing to do would be to offer a recommendation. The committee went on to develop a proposal for presentation in the January 1993 *Conference Report*.

January 1993

In the *Conference Report*, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service reported that it would mail the completed version of *A Guide to Service in NA* to conference participants about a month before the opening of WSC '93. The committee also told readers about the process it was recommending for the approval of the *Guide*. The handbook would be released at the close of the 1993 World Service Conference for a one-year approval period, and it would be voted upon at WSC '94. The committee further recommended that, should the *Guide* be adopted, a world service handbook be created, based on a transition plan to be developed for the world service structure.

March 1993

During its March 1993 meeting in Van Nuys, the full committee had a final, line-by-line review of the *Guide* and factored input into the draft one last time. The *Guide* was then distributed to all committee members for their final review and approval. Based on this review, additional revisions were factored into the *Guide* after the March meeting. The committee released the *Guide* to the fellowship approximately one month prior to the 1993 World Service Conference.

WSC '93

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service presented the *Guide to Service* along with a cover letter summarizing the work it had done during the 1992-93 conference year. The World Service

Conference was considering a proposal to enter a period of inventory. NAS recommended that, if the conference decided not to enter the inventory, *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous* be sent out for a one-year approval period to be voted on in 1994. The committee stated that it would, however, support the conference moving into an inventory process, provided that the merits of the *Guide* were evaluated alongside the results of the inventory. NAS recommended that, after the inventory's completion, the *Guide* go out for a one-year approval period, at the end of which it would be voted upon by the conference in 1995.

The conference discussed how to proceed with the *Guide*. After much discussion and many motions and amendments, the conference decided that "The *Guide* should be set aside until the world services inventory was completed."

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service thanked those who had served on the committee during the previous nine years. The committee membership list included thirty-two addicts from twenty-seven regions, not including staff members. These had served alongside many more NA members from many other regions who had helped in many different ways. Committee representation included RSRs, WSC Administrative Committee members, members of WSC standing committees (including chairs and vice chairs), regional trusted servants, and members of the WSO Board of Directors and the World Service Board of Trustees. Members came from Australia, Canada, Colombia, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and throughout the United States of America.

The committee thanked those who had supported the committee's work by contributing input and participating in workshops on the *Guide*. NAS gratefully acknowledged that the input received throughout the project's development had helped shape *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous*.

Since the *Guide* had been completed and was in the hands of the WSC, and the actions taken by the conference required no further work by the committee, the 1993 World Service Conference disbanded the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service. The level of fellowship review of the *Guide* since that time is not known.