

March 2023 Pre-Conference Assembly CPC Committee Report, 25 March 2023

1. We had 10 in person; 8 on Zoom
2. D16 (Paula S. and Paula L.) gave a CPC presentation to the committee which they presented in February to Western NM University, Chair of Education & Counseling. Present at this presentation were graduate students and faculty. This was an excellent example of what CPC does and how we communicate with the mental health professional community. Great presentation for anyone who is wondering what CPC does and how we do this. The presentation will be available on the A46 CPC committee page for anyone who is interested or is trying to put a presentation together for their district after this assembly.
3. We said the Serenity prayer and moved into discussion on Conference Agenda Topic assigned to CPC.

March 2023 Pre-Conference Assembly – CPC Committee Topic and Questions for A46 Delegate

Our committee was tasked with the 2023 Agenda Topic Summary: CPC – Item C “Review progress report on the development of outward facing pamphlets for mental health professionals” where a working group interviewed BOTH Alcoholic MHPs and Non-Alcoholic NHPs and compiled feedback on what they would like to see in this pamphlet. The A46 CPC committee was asked to answer similar questions.

1. ***What does your group or committee hope is included in a pamphlet directed to mental health professionals?***
2. ***What information do you think can help mental health professionals effectively address suffering alcoholics?***

Input from A46 CPC Committee at March 2023 Pre-Conference Assembly

1. Please see attached document from D-14 CPC Committee Co-Chairs (Lawrence M. & Bob J.) for suggestions and comments regarding the development of an AA Pamphlet for Mental Health Professionals. (attached); Summarized in items 1.a – 1.d
 - a. suggest that the title of the pamphlet to read: “To Behavioral Health Professionals” in lieu of Mental health professionals
 - b. suggest that the pamphlet juxtapose the term “substance use disorder” with “alcoholism” – the term which AA uses in its literature and conversations within the fellowship
 - c. suggest that the pamphlet could explain that members share their “experience, strength, and hope” with other members, primarily as it relates to the application of AA’s program of recovery, rather than a “treatment modality”.
 - d. Suggest the closing statements in the pamphlet state AA’s strong desire to cooperate with behavioral health providers/agencies in their efforts to lead their clients towards a path of recovery, while acknowledging AA does not claim to be the only path to recovery
2. Please suggest that mental health professionals (MHPs) actually attend a meeting to see what actually happens at a meeting. This will enable the MHP to be more effective in relating to their clients.
3. Please reference the AA Meeting Guide App in the pamphlet for quick reference by a MHP when talking to their patients

4. There appears to be confusion between spirituality vs. religion; therefore, please address the difference in the pamphlet. Describe better what we mean by “spiritual malady”.
5. Please include in the pamphlet what to expect at a meeting, types of meetings, i.e. open , closed, specialty meetings.
6. Please include any efficacy studies or links to summaries of how AA is effective.
7. Please include that, “There are those too who suffer from grave mental disorders, but recover if they have the capacity to be honest”. Explain that drinking is but a symptom of a spiritual malady.
8. Please include the statements already in other literature that describes what AA does and what AA doesn’t do.
9. That AA is available to help patients who want to stop drinking permanently and that our members endeavor to achieve complete abstinence.
10. That AA is available to help patients who want to stop drinking permanently and that our members endeavor to achieve complete abstinence.
11. The pamphlet should include statistics about how long AA has been around (and that before AA most alcoholics either died or went insane), an estimate of the number of countries where meetings take place, and an estimate of the number of AA members worldwide.
12. AA is a holistic spiritual approach to alcohol substance use disorder. It is a 12-step program geared towards spiritual enlightenment. AA is diverse and works for self-acceptance. AA works on a peer-to-peer concept.
13. A phone # for Central Office of the AA in the area. QR code for meeting finders. Mental Health professionals understand substance use disorders, but they should own a copy of the AA Big Book

Point of Interest and Comments:

The MHPs who were interviewed seemed to focus on how the language in the BB is archaic from 1935 and is not relatable to modern medical and behavior health professionals. While the language and discussion was ahead of its time in 1935, it has not kept pace with modern medicine and behavior health. Therefore, it is recommended that the pamphlet should “translate” for the MHP language like “allergy”, “psychic change”, “phenomenon of craving”, etc.

It was suggested that health professionals to tell their alcoholic patients: All of our members have personally experienced alcoholism. We understand the personal suffering that accompanies uncontrolled drinking and the shame of its undesirable consequences. We also know what is like to want desperately to stop drinking, yet be unable to do so. We can identify with their patients who are suffering and we can bring hope to them based upon our personal experience.

Asked for input in writing to cpc@nm-aa.org no later than April 10, 2023 in order to send the final report to Eloy by April 14, 2023.

Finally, we closed with the serenity prayer.