

Pills Anonymous WSC H&I Committee Guidelines



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
What Is An H&I Meeting?	4
H&I Meeting Purpose.....	4
The Facility	5
Meeting Format.....	5
The Panel	6
The Twelve Traditions of Pills Anonymous.....	7
The Twelve Concepts of Pills Anonymous.....	8

Introduction

The Pills Anonymous World Service Conference Hospitals & Institutions Committee was formed initially at the 2010 WSC. The following mission statement was adopted:

The Pills Anonymous H&I Committee's mission is to establish guidelines, and provide resources and support to individuals and groups who will bear the responsibility of carrying the message of PA inside hospitals and institutions.

A group of members of the fellowship re-formed the committee at the 2011 WSC. We felt that our first order of business is to come up with a set of guidelines for H&I to assist the fellowship at this stage.

This set of preliminary guidelines is being submitted to the 2012 World Service Conference of Pills Anonymous by the WSC Hospitals and Institutions Committee. At the time of this conference, there exist some 60+ groups around the country, including one international Skype meeting. However there are no Area or Regional service committees so it would be presumptuous to set out strict guidelines for them at this time. Instead, this document attempts to form a basis for the growth of H&I at the local and regional level. It is hoped that in the near future, representatives from other areas will come together to fill out and solidify the H&I service structure. On page 15 of the 2011 PA World Service Manual, the WSC H&I Committee is tasked solely with the following mandate:

"To provide assistance and guidance to individual Fellowships as well as service Groups that initiate hospital and institutional activity."

In addition, we draw on the PA Traditions, especially traditions 1, 5 and 9, and we pray for the knowledge of our Higher Power's will for us and the power to carry that out.

What Is An H&I Meeting?

An H&I meeting differs from a PA Group in a number of ways:

1. While PA groups are autonomous per the 4th Tradition, H&I meetings should be accountable to an H&I committee on some level of service. Until such time as there exist local or regional service structures, H&I meetings will be held under the auspices of and accountable to the WSC H&I committee.
2. H&I meetings are held in facilities where the residents do not have access to regular PA meetings. H&I meetings held in these facilities are not open to outside participation, and outside attendees do so at the invitation of the meeting facilitator. Meetings that are fully self-supporting and without restrictions but are held inside a facility are not H&I meetings.
3. An H&I meeting may start at the request of the facility, or the facility may be approached by a representative of the H&I committee.

H&I Meeting Purpose

The purpose of a PA H&I meeting is to carry the message of recovery to pill addicts who do not have access to regular PA meetings. In general, these meetings serve as an introduction to the program of recovery through Pills Anonymous.

The Facility

It is imperative that we keep Pills Anonymous and H&I service distinctly separate from the facility that we are working with. Pills Anonymous has no opinion on treatment methods and is only concerned with carrying the message of recovery from pill addiction through working the program of Pills Anonymous. It is important that we make an effort to get the facility, its residents and the H&I volunteers to understand this. It may be that certain facilities do not understand our traditions and our program. We should try to resolve any misunderstandings without compromising our principles, however if we cannot, we should keep the lines of communication open. It is helpful to get the rules and regulations for the facility in writing, and to clarify the rules with the staff person who is the contact.

Meeting Format

Different facilities will have different requirements and rules and they may request a certain meeting format. There are many formats that are appropriate for H&I meetings, however the open sharing format is not one of them. In general, a one hour speaker/panel or question/answer format seems to work the best. The H&I committee can provide formats and materials with PA approved literature. Whatever format is chosen, the chair-person should not let the meeting get out of control.

The Panel

The panel is the group of members of our fellowship who conduct the H&I meetings. This panel should consist of a panel coordinator, one or more panel leaders and the panel members. The coordinator should have at least one year of clean time. This person is the liaison between the facility and the H&I committee, and is responsible for making sure the meeting conforms to both the rules of the facility and the policies of the H&I committee. The panel leader should also have at least one year of clean time, and they are responsible for conducting the meeting and selecting panel members to attend the meetings and share their experience, strength, and hope. The panel leaders should be in regular communication with the coordinator regarding how the meetings are going and if there are any problems with the facility. Panel members should have at least 6 months of clean time, a willingness to share their experience, strength, and hope, and they should be able to carry a clear PA message. As we are in the early stages of growth, it may be necessary for some panel members to wear more than one hat. In addition, it is important that we strive to adhere to the above clean time requirements if possible, although it may be necessary for smaller areas to be somewhat flexible.

The Twelve Traditions of Pills Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on P.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using pills.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or P.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has just one primary purpose — to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. A P.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the P.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every P.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Pills Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. P.A. as such ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Pills Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the P.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

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The Twelve Concepts of Pills Anonymous

1. The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for P.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The P.A. Groups delegate to the World Service Conference the complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby make the Conference — excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions — the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Fellowship.
3. As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the Groups, the Conference, the World Service Board of Trustees and its service corporation, staffs, and committees, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of World Service with a traditional “Right of Decision.”
4. Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “Right of Participation,” taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
5. Throughout our World Service structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. On behalf of P.A. as a whole, our World Service Conference has the principal responsibility for the maintenance of our world services and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Conference also recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters should be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the Conference when they act among themselves as the World Service Board of Pills Anonymous.
7. The Conference recognizes that the Charter and the Bylaws of the World Service Board are legal instruments; that the Trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all of the world service affairs of Pills Anonymous. It is further understood that the Conference Charter itself is not a legal document; that it relies instead upon the force of tradition and the power of the P.A. purse for its final effectiveness.
8. The Trustees of the World Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of overall policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all Directors of these entities.
9. Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety.
10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority — the scope of such authority to be always well defined, whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and bylaws.
11. While the Trustees hold final responsibility for P.A.'s world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees and service boards, staffs and consultants. Therefore the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the system of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers will always be matters for serious care and concern.
12. General Warranties of the Conference: In all its proceedings, the World Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the P.A. Tradition, taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that the sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference may act for the service of Pills Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Fellowship of Pills Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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