This is the sixth of seven PowerPoints covering material in the 2023 *Conference Agenda Report*

- Regional motions 19–25

Conference Agenda Report
CREATING OUR FUTURE
WSC 2023: 30 April–6 May

2023 CAR PowerPoints

These **PowerPoints** only cover the main points of the *CAR*.

We encourage all members to read the *CAR* itself.

Please visit www.na.org/conference for the complete 2023 *CAR*.

Public Relations and Hospitals & Institutions

Motions 19 – 21—page 54 of the *Conference Agenda Report* contains a list of resources that may be helpful when considering these motions

Motion 19: To direct the WB to create a virtual Institutional Review Board (IRB) to review all researchers and their research questions that request access to the Narcotics Anonymous population through NAWS to conduct research.

Maker: Wisconsin Region
Intent: To avoid the misuse of Narcotics Anonymous member information.
Financial Impact: A virtual workgroup would have minimal direct costs.

Motion 19—Rationale by Region

To ensure that the members of the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship are protected when NAWS is asking them to participate in surveys that are being led by non-NAWS researchers. According to the protected population clause of the American Psychological Association (APA), anyone who has a mental health diagnosis is taken into the protected population when conducting research, further our members, who are addicts are classified in the category of substance use disorder according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5th Release (DSM-5), which classifies addiction as a mental illness. . . .

Motion 19—Rationale by Region

An IRB would ensure that consent is given from each member, which would further ensure that our members understood what their answers were going to be used for, as well as ensuring that anonymity and clarity was offered to all who participated in the surveys. An IRB would ensure that ethical and safe practices are carried out for our members and the principles that our Fellowship stand by within our traditions are followed when allowing anyone to conduct research using the Narcotics Anonymous population. This IRB would review all research requests to ensure proper care with our member information.

Motion 19—World Board Response

World Services has successfully cooperated with outside researchers on a number of occasions, and the resulting research and articles have brought us closer to our vision that "Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery." We do not believe it is necessary to create an Institutional Review Board (IRB) because there are already safeguards in place to protect Narcotics Anonymous member information and avoid the "misuse" referenced in the motion's intent.

The only research that NA World Services has agreed to assist with is on behalf of reputable medical researchers who have national and international reach in what they publish. . . .

Motion 19—World Board Response

As they are medical researchers, their projects and questions already go through a vetting process. The surveys we have posted to assist in their data collection are voluntary and anonymous. Their research has to be preapproved by a medical review board. Concerns about ethical and safe practices and clarity and consent are all part of the process they are already required to go through. Establishing an IRB at NA World Services would likely mean we would be unable to consider any of these requests because a medical review board is the final sign-off on a research survey. It would be a shame to go back to the days when NA is not cited in any research, and the published research on addiction is mostly funded by pharmaceutical companies. . . .

Motion 19—World Board Response

We have not participated in many research projects. The World Board, who approves these activities, has been and will continue to be very cautious about what research NA World Services cooperates with by facilitating access to NA members.

IRBs are typically associated with the US Food and Drug Administration or research conducted through universities. NA World Services has never agreed to participate in university research projects because of their limited nature and scope. When we receive these types of requests, we forward them to the local delegate or service body to see whether they are willing to work with the request. . . .

Motion 19—World Board Response

Many professionals who might not pay attention to NA if they heard about us elsewhere will listen to what reputable researchers have to say. Cooperating with researchers who are "friends of NA" helps NA's public image, which means providers are more likely to refer addicts to NA and policymakers are more likely to consider NA a viable path to a new way of life. We are more able to help addicts when the public can see what we have to offer.

Motion 19: To direct the WB to create a virtual Institutional Review Board (IRB) to review all researchers and their research questions that request access to the Narcotics Anonymous population through NAWS to conduct research.

Intent: To avoid the misuse of Narcotics Anonymous member information.

Pause for discussion

Motion 20: To direct NAWS to provide at na.org audio recordings of the worldwide webinars on the topics of Public Relations, Hospital &Institution, Step Writing for Inmates, Fellowship Development, Phone Line, and others.

Maker: Wisconsin Region

Intent: To provide access to any interested member of Narcotics Anonymous throughout the world so they can hear the Experience, Strength, and Hope (ESH) of members from other geographic parts of the world.

Financial Impact: There would be an opportunity cost to implement this motion. It would take staff time to clean and post the recordings and to track down all of the necessary release forms.

Motion 20—Rationale by Region

To gain a worldwide understanding of our Fellowship and the services being provided, when holding webinars on the topics of PR, H&I, Step Writing for Inmates, FD, and Phone Lines. This will also help to give information to those who are on different time zones so that they can gain the ESH of those webinars and have access to this helpful information.

Motion 20—World Board Response

We want to align our limited human resources where they can be the most beneficial, and we are skeptical that posting these recordings fits that bill. NAWS holds many different types of webinars and web meetings. This motion is asking that recordings of web meetings attended by the chairs of area, regional, or zonal PR or H&I committees be posted online. These meetings consist almost entirely of discussion among these PR or H&I trusted servants. (Phoneline, Inmate Step Writing, and Rural webinars have not been held this cycle because of low attendance.)

Posting the recordings to na.org would require slight cleaning of the recordings; obtaining written releases from all participants, which can be a bit of a challenge; and time to post them on our website. . . .

Motion 20—World Board Response

We believe there are more effective ways to provide interested members access to the information. We now create written summaries of each of the PR and H&I web meetings, and those summaries are available upon request.

We also hold quarterly web meetings, open to all members, on topics of Fellowship interest. We post audio recordings of these open web meetings, but NA members do not seem to be very interested in accessing the postings. We do not currently have the ability to track the number of downloads, but none of the recordings is in the top 200 accessed files on na.org. Our first PR and H&I webinars open to all members are scheduled for November 2022.

We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of our communications and how to best respond to members' needs.

Motion 20: To direct NAWS to provide at na.org audio recordings of the worldwide webinars on the topics of Public Relations, Hospital &Institution, Step Writing for Inmates, Fellowship Development, Phone Line, and others.

Intent: To provide access to any interested member of Narcotics Anonymous throughout the world so they can hear the Experience, Strength, and Hope (ESH) of members from other geographic parts of the world.

Pause for discussion

Motion 21: To direct NA World Services to remove the Hospitals and Institutions Handbook from the inventory.

Maker: Free State Region

Intent: To remove an outdated service manual from WSO inventory

Motion 21—Rationale by Region

The H&I Handbook has not been updated since the 1980's and with our current literature update process, will never be prioritized high enough. We believe a better approach would be to update the Public Relations Handbook Chapter 6 (Criminal Justice) resource section and H&I Basics with more information relevant to current practices and methods for carrying our message that could include using virtual platforms and tools. We believe this will better serve our trusted servants involved in H&I service by providing more current and better tools.

Motion 21—World Board Response

We recognize that the H&I Handbook is very out of date, but that it is still used by some members. The H&I Handbook was written in 1986 and revised in 1997. H&I Basics was created in 2010. We agree that it needs to be updated.

We understand this motion's concern that new communities not translate an obsolete handbook. At the same time, some members are reluctant to remove access to NA service material even if it is outdated. . . .

Motion 21—World Board Response

We recently reorganized our handbooks and basics web pages (which are www.na.org/handbooks and www.na.org/basics). Because of similar concerns, we added this note part way down the handbooks page: *The handbooks below are some of our older service resources, many of which have not been revised for some time. Printed copies of these will be discontinued when current stocks expire.* The handbooks below the note are at least 24 years old: phonelines, newsletters, outreach, and literature committee handbooks.

Motion 21: To direct NA World Services to remove the Hospitals and Institutions Handbook from the inventory.

Intent: To remove an outdated service manual from WSO inventory

Pause for discussion

WSC Policies

Motions 22 – 25—*A Guide to World Services in NA* is a resource that may be helpful in considering these motions. It is posted at www.na.org/conference.

Motion 22: If any Motion or Proposal, in Content or Intent, has been submitted and failed to achieve consensus or adoption at two consecutive World Service Conferences, the previously proposed Content and Intent may not be suggested to the Fellowship in the *Conference Agenda Report* (*CAR*)/ Conference Approval Track (CAT) or at the WSC for one entire conference cycle.

Maker: Southern California Region
Intent: To use the Fellowship's decision-making processes and time responsibly and effectively.

Motion 22—Rationale by Region

By temporarily setting aside ideas and motions that have not been developed fully, this motion gives the WSC the opportunity to focus its limited time and resources on issues that have garnered a wide attention and direction for the body to decide. It also allows the makers of these motions time to develop the idea and build greater understanding and consensus within the Fellowship. This motion allow us to improve in how we carry out our services and try to learn from challenges and processes that do not yield a consistent or beneficial result.

Motion 22—World Board Response

We understand and appreciate the underlying intention of this motion. This motion seems to be about better aligning our processes with consensus-based decision making: If the same idea has been discussed repeatedly and is not supported, to allow the conference to take some time before picking the idea up again.

We agree with that idea, but we believe the motion as it is written would be difficult to implement and could have unintended consequences. The motion says that an item with the same "content or intent" could not be introduced for a cycle if it is not adopted for two WSCs in a row. . . .

Motion 22—World Board Response

There are several potential challenges that we can see. Motions can easily have the same or similar intent while addressing very different issues. This motion itself, for instance, has the intent "To use the Fellowship's decision-making processes and time responsibly and effectively." It's easy to imagine that same intent in a motion to cap the number of motions in old business or limit the amount of time the body can discuss a single item before making a decision. Those would be very different motions with the same intent. . . .

Motion 22—World Board Response

We are also not sure how the WSC would account for motions with minor differences. In addition, the motion doesn't leave room for new information that might arise, which would motivate the WSC to want to consider the same issue again.

We appreciate the spirit of the motion. Vetting motions is a topic that has already come up as material for a Future of the WSC workgroup, and we believe a project workgroup could productively discuss the idea and recommend processes for consideration.

Motion 22: If any Motion or Proposal, in Content or Intent, has been submitted and failed to achieve consensus or adoption at two consecutive World Service Conferences, the previously proposed Content and Intent may not be suggested to the Fellowship in the *Conference Agenda Report* (*CAR*)/ Conference Approval Track (CAT) or at the WSC for one entire conference cycle.

Intent: To use the Fellowship's decision-making processes and time responsibly and effectively.

Pause for discussion

Motion 23: All in person and virtual World Service Conferences will be streamed to provide access to NA members in English audio.

Maker: Kentuckiana Bluegrass Appalachian Region
Co-makers: Upper Rocky Mountain Region, Russian-Speaking Zone, Western Russia Region, North-West Russia Region
Intent: To allow the entire NA membership a better understanding of what takes place at the World Service Conference.
Financial Impact: The financial impact of this motion would depend on the technology we utilize.

Motion 23—Rationale by Regions

"Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications." Concept 7.

This would provide an opportunity for the fellowship to gain a greater understanding of what takes place during the World Service Conference. Members in unseated regions can make better informed decisions regarding their local service bodies in relation to the whole NA fellowship. Service bodies that are requesting seating at the World Service Conference or members that are considering serving in a World Service Conference trusted servant position could better understand the responsibilities that they are volunteering for. . . .

Motion 23—Rationale by Regions

In *A Guide to World Services*, a statement could be added to the section currently titled "The Biennial Meeting of the World Service Conference" that states that at least the audio content of the World Service Conference is live streamed, being mindful to adhere to the principles protecting each member's right to maintaining personal anonymity.

Motion 23—World Board Response

WSC participants make decisions that change the way business is done almost every conference. Some of those changes are procedural, and some are mechanical. In recent years, participants have made many decisions related to technology: using electronic "clickers" to vote, holding the first (and second) virtual WSC, making decisions by e-poll outside of session hours, e-polling initial straw polls in advance of the WSC, and more. The point is that operations of the WSC have changed at almost every conference with the consent of the participants. Sometimes participants decide to try something for one WSC and see if it seems to work well, in which case they can make a decision to implement it on an ongoing basis, and change WSC policy accordingly. . . .

Motion 23—World Board Response

Allowing participants to make decisions about the processes that affect the WSC meeting is significantly more nimble than making these types of changes through the *CAR*. Given the speed with which technology changes—and the challenges predicting the needs of the WSC in the wake of the pandemic—maintaining a nimble, responsive approach seems more realistic and prudent than mandating policy changes through *CAR* motions.

The conference has already begun discussing options about streaming the WSC. We initially had this discussion in 2020, and the people who are most impacted—the participants whose anonymity was at stake—were not in consensus. . . .

Motion 23—World Board Response

It's one of the topics that the board asked participants about in May at the interim conference meeting to get a sense of what participants were comfortable with, given anonymity concerns. This is an ongoing discussion.

The last two WSCs have been streamed from Zoom to YouTube. The main language of the Zoom connection, which is English, is currently the only Zoom feed that can be streamed. Our plans are to also stream WSC 2023, at a minimum in audio, if conference participants concur. We believe that is what the motion is asking for, and we maintain that these types of operational decisions should be left to the WSC to decide and not mandated through a *CAR* motion. . . .

Motion 23—World Board Response

It is worth noting that there are typically a very small number of connections when we stream these types of events. There is simply not broad appeal among members, and that appeal is further eroded by the limits of the technology: Breakout discussions and translations cannot easily be streamed. Even NAWS open webinars on topics of broad Fellowship interest have scant YouTube streamers. So few people access the audio recordings that we post written reports to www.na.org/webarchive as well.

Again, these types of decisions should be left to conference participants to decide.

Motion 23: All in person and virtual World Service Conferences will be streamed to provide access to NA members in English audio.

Intent: To allow the entire NA membership a better understanding of what takes place at the World Service Conference.

Pause for discussion

Motion 24: All Conference Participant webinars will be streamed to provide access to NA members in English audio.

Maker: Kentuckiana Bluegrass Appalachian Region
Co-makers: Upper Rocky Mountain Region, Russian-Speaking Zone, Western Russia Region, North-West Russia Region
Intent: To allow the entire NA membership a better understanding of what takes place during CP Webinars.
Financial Impact: The cost would depend on the method used to stream, but would likely not cost anything above the expense already involved with making the WSC accessible to all participants.

Motion 24—Rationale by Regions

"Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications." Concept 7.

This would provide an opportunity for the fellowship to gain a greater understanding of what takes place during the Conference Participants Webinars. Members in unseated regions can make better informed decisions regarding their local service bodies in relation to the whole NA fellowship. Service bodies that are requesting seating at the WSC or members that are considering serving in a CP trusted servant position could better understand the responsibilities that they are volunteering for. . . .

Motion 24—Rationale by Regions

In *A Guide to World Services*, a statement could be added to the bottom of the list that states that at least the audio of the CP webinars is live streamed, being mindful to adhere to the principles protecting each member's right to maintain personal anonymity. CP Webinars otherwise have no policy directly set in *GTWS* at this time.

Motion 24—World Board Response

Allowing participants to make decisions about the processes that affect their meetings, including conference participant web meetings, is significantly more nimble than making these types of changes through the *CAR*. Given the speed with which technology changes, maintaining a nimble responsive approach seems more realistic and prudent than mandating policy changes through *CAR* motions. Sometimes participants decide to do something on a trial basis, and if it works well, they can decide to implement it on an ongoing basis and change policy accordingly.

The conference has already begun discussing options about streaming the WSC meeting itself. We initially had this discussion in 2020, and the people who are most impacted—the participants whose anonymity was at stake—were not in consensus. . . .

Motion 24—World Board Response

It's one of the topics that the board asked participants about in May at the interim conference meeting to get a sense of what participants were comfortable with, given anonymity concerns. Whether to stream the WSC is an ongoing discussion.

Participants have not had the same discussion about streaming the CP web meetings, though when participants were polled about opening the CP discussion board for public viewing at WSC 2018, they did not support the idea. Conference participant web meetings happen throughout the cycle. Not all participants attend, and they focus on reporting, discussion, and questions and answers. They utilize interpretation feeds in multiple languages, none of which could be streamed, and they often feature small-group discussion, which also would not be able to be streamed. . . .

Motion 24—World Board Response

There are typically a very small number of connections when we stream these types of events. There is simply not broad appeal among members, and that appeal is further eroded by the limits of the technology: Breakout discussions and translations cannot easily be streamed. Even NAWS open webinars on topics of broad Fellowship interest have scant YouTube streamers. So few people access the audio recordings that we post written reports to www.na.org/webarchive as well.

We post reports summarizing conference participant web meetings to the CP Dropbox. Participants are welcome to share these reports if there is interest, but again, interest seems to be minimal. We would like to be able to align our limited human resources where they can be the most beneficial.

Again, these types of operational decisions should be left to conference participants to decide and not mandated through a *CAR* motion.

Motion 24: All Conference Participant webinars will be streamed to provide access to NA members in English audio.

Intent: To allow the entire NA membership a better understanding of what takes place during CP Webinars.

Pause for discussion

Motion 25: All votes and straw polls on motions that were included in the *Conference Agenda Report* or the Conference Approval Track, not to include election ballots, will be displayed in real time for all Conference Participants to see, showing who voted and how they voted.

Maker: Kentuckiana Bluegrass Appalachian Region
Co-makers: Russian-Speaking Zone, Western Russia Region, North-West Russia Region
Intent: To see how each Conference Participant votes on each motion.
Financial Impact: This would require new voting technology, and the cost is uncertain.
Policy Affected: *A Guide to World Services in NA* WSC Decision Making Processes Addendum, currently page 67–68. (The current policy is shown on page 60 of the *CAR*.)

Motion 25—Rationale by Regions

This information would be helpful to understand where other Conference Participants stand with their decisions, if a Conference Participant is still unsure of what their vote will be. "Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications." Concept 7.

We believe each individual Conference Participant's decision on each topic is valuable information in forming Consensus.

Our Fellowship goes to great lengths to encourage and ensure a diverse WSC population. . . .

Motion 25—Rationale by Regions

When we utilize secret ballots, we lose helpful information that may not get communicated from Conference Participants that have difficulty expressing themselves in the English language. Some Conference Participants are not called on or lack the verbal communication skills to participate during open discussion and debate. With a public ballot voting system, we would be shown the information of how they voted, even if we weren't given an opportunity to hear why they voted that way.

We appreciate the amount of information shared in a roll call vote process, and the efficiency of the standard voting process. . . .

Motion 25—Rationale by Regions

By changing the settings in the handheld clickers, we can have the best of both processes.

Conference Participants who do not possess specific decisions by the time they reach the WSC can benefit from seeing the diversity of their peer communities' choices.

Motion 25—World Board Response

Typically, WSC participants decide the operational details of decision making at the conference, rather than mandating rules through *CAR* motions. We believe that is the most appropriate and practical approach.

We have been investigating new voting technology. The company that makes the technology we used at the 2016 and 2018 WSC no longer exists, and we are looking for an approach to polling and voting that will better suit a hybrid conference, rather than the "clickers" we used previously. We are aware that many participants will be unable to obtain visas for WSC 2023, and some may opt not to attend in person because of health considerations.

Thus far, the options we have looked at all feature confidential voting as the default or the only option. The e-polling software that the WSC currently uses lets us know who voted and verifies that there is only one vote from each participant, but how each participant votes is anonymous by design. There is no way to reveal how each participant votes. This appears to be the most common industry standard.

Motion 25—World Board Response

The WSC has been evolving to a consensus-based decision-making process, and in that spirit has made a number of changes to processes, all of which seem to clash with the intention of this motion. The WSC has decided, when meeting in person, that when a vote or poll is taken, the screen will display who has and hasn't voted, but not how anyone voted. That said, there are no "secret ballots" at the conference, with the exception of elections. Voice vote was the primary means for deciding things at the WSC for decades, and now voting is done electronically. Participants have the right to choose a roll call vote for any decision, but the body has decided to move away from roll call and standing votes. This evolution over the past ten years has helped to eliminate peer pressure and strengthen the consensus-building process. The only time that how individual participants vote becomes an issue for the body is when there is consensus on an item and participants who are not part of the consensus are asked if they want to speak.

Motion 25—World Board Response

Trying to match the technology to the demands of a *CAR* motion will limit our options and will restrict the WSC's ability to make decisions and do its work. To give two examples, initial straw polls on all *CAR* motions and amendments are now taken in advance of the meeting, with results posted on na.org. This makes business much more efficient and helps the Cofacilitators plan the order of business at the meeting. It also gives participants a sense of where the body as a whole stands on each motion. The WSC has also elected, at the past two conferences, to make some decisions outside of sessions by e-poll. Both of these things—initial straw polls in advance of the meeting and e-polling after sessions, would be impossible if this motion were to pass. Given the fact that the upcoming conference will be unlike any we have ever had—more hybrid than any in history—it seems wise to allow participants the flexibility to make operational and procedural decisions as necessary and not tie their hands through a *CAR* motion.

Motion 25: All votes and straw polls on motions that were included in the *Conference Agenda Report* or the Conference Approval Track, not to include election ballots, will be displayed in real time for all Conference Participants to see, showing who voted and how they voted.

Intent: To see how each Conference Participant votes on each motion.

Pause for discussion

- Six other PowerPoints available online
- *CAR* survey also available online
- *CAR* available for download

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  www.na.org/conference

SCAN ME

Celebrating 70 years 1953–2023

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