

NA World Services Strategic Plan from 2026 CAR (with updated terminology)



NA World Services 2026–2029 Strategic Plan

It may be unfamiliar to many members, but the NAWS Strategic Plan isn't new. NA World Services has operated with a strategic plan for over 20 years. Every conference cycle, the plan is revised and renewed, the new plan has been included in the Conference Approval Track material, and the priorities in the plan help shape the work ahead. This is the first time the NAWS Strategic Plan has been included in the *Conference Agenda Report* for Fellowship approval, and it's the first time the plan has been created by the conference as a whole.

At WSC 2023, the conference decided to approve a three-year cycle on a trial basis. (From 2000 to 2020 the conference cycle was two years.) The longer cycle has allowed the time for a truly collaborative planning process. The Fellowship's delegates (and alternates) have been involved in every stage of co-creating this plan. The unprecedented level of conference participant (CP) involvement means this is a plan created collectively, representing the needs of NA as a whole.

The components of the plan:

- **Pillars (was Key Result Areas):** Pillars are the major areas in which we need to focus our service efforts in order to realize A Vision for NA Service. These are the four pillars of the plan we build together. They will change very little, if at all, from cycle to cycle.
- **Issues:** Issues are the factors that conference participants collectively decided are most important to address this cycle.
- **Goals (was Objectives):** Goals give us an objective to aim for and help us develop solutions that make sense in our current circumstances. They express *what* we want to achieve by the end of the planning cycle, as opposed to *how*.
- **Solutions:** Solutions are paths to achieving our goals. They are the work we want World Services to undertake on behalf of NA as a whole. Solutions don't have to include *everything* that might make progress on a goal, just the steps we want to take in the cycle ahead, if the project is prioritized. They explain broadly *how* we intend to reach our goals.
- **Explanatory Paragraphs:** We have included explanatory paragraphs throughout the plan to help address some of the questions and comments you may have and to clarify some of the thinking behind the content of the plan.
- **Project Plans:** The details of solutions, such as deliverables, timelines, media, etc., are contained in project plans.

The plan may or may not include each of our particular passions, but it absolutely reflects our collective needs and priorities. We might each, as individuals (or groups or areas or regions), prefer different phrasing in one place or another, or a slightly different emphasis in a goal or a solution, but rest assured, every bit of the plan has been discussed by conference participants—delegates, alternates, and the board. We have had many, many discussions to create this plan. This has truly been a consensus-based process. As *A Guide to World Services* says, "Consensus is based on the belief that each person has some part of the truth and no one person has all of it (no matter how tempting it is to believe that we ourselves really know best!). The consensus process is what a group goes through to reach an agreement. It is how we manifest the idea 'together we can do what we cannot do alone' in a service setting" (from the Decision Making at the WSC section of *GWSNA*). And so, we offer this plan in the spirit of good faith with which it was created.

For more information on the plan and planning process, please see the essay in the body of this Conference Agenda Report.

2026–2029 NA World Services Strategic Plan

Pillar: PUBLIC RELATIONS

A Vision for NA Service looks forward to a time when “Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery.” This pillar is in service of that aspiration. According to the [NA Membership Survey](#), almost 40% of NA members find their way to the program from a treatment program or counseling agency, and another 17% get here through the criminal justice system. The better our PR efforts are, the more chance addicts who need us will get referred to us.

Issue: Credibility of NA

Goal 1: Raise internal Fellowship awareness of the importance of effective Public Relations in carrying our message, achieving our Vision and furthering Fellowship development.

Solutions:

- Create an internal NA service campaign focused on the importance of engagement in public relations activities.
- Develop more Fellowship-facing PR training and tools to support member engagement in public relations.

Goal 2: Create PR tools for four target external audiences, raising their awareness of NA as a viable program of recovery.

- General public (including families)
- Government (including criminal justice, policy)
- Addiction treatment
- Medical profession

Solutions:

- Create a PR campaign for each target audience.
- Update the pamphlet *NA: A Resource in Your Community*.
- Update presentations for professionals (clarifying NA’s position on DRT/MAT and the spiritual nature of the program).

These goals are more than we can accomplish in one cycle and are a beginning rather than an exhaustive list of goals to meet NA’s PR needs. Goal #1 is focused on PR service within NA. For Goal #2, while there are many other possible important target audiences, these four are the most common means by which addicts find NA. We hope local communities will identify their own targeted audiences and adopt any tools developed to address local needs. The term *tools* is used here to allow flexibility in determining what methods can effectively reach the identified audiences and easily be used by the Fellowship. Methods that were repeatedly mentioned were multimedia, videos, and materials created specifically for use in social media.

Pillar: SERVICE SYSTEM SUPPORT

Our vision describes a future when “NA service bodies worldwide work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to support the groups in carrying our message of recovery” and “every member, inspired by the gift of recovery, experiences spiritual growth and fulfillment through service.” Service System Support is all about improving our connections and unity and attracting members to get involved and stay involved.

Issue: Impact of the Rise of Virtual NA

Goal 3: Improve the ability of virtual groups and service bodies to fully participate in the service system and for their voices to be heard as part of the NA Fellowship’s conscience.

Solution:

- Collect best practices for virtual groups and areas to participate in NA services (e.g., global center service entity; existing geo-based system).

WSC 2023 made a decision by consensus that an NA meeting that meets regularly in person or virtually can choose to be an NA group if they meet the criteria described in *The Group Booklet*, including the six points for an NA group, and are consistent with NA philosophy as expressed in our Traditions. We now have to discover exactly what that will require, largely based on our collective experience. Our service system was initially developed based on geographical location, and enfranchising virtual groups and areas may require creativity and adaptability. Ultimately, collecting best practices may lead to new pieces and/or revisions to *Virtual Meeting Basics*, *The Group Booklet*, and/or *A Guide to Local Services*.

Issue: Lack of Cohesion in the Service System

Goal 4: Further the concept of coordination and collaboration within the service system and the understanding and appreciation of complementary roles and contributions to A Vision for NA Service.

Solution:

- Create a contemporary guide to service in NA to replace *A Guide to Local Service*. Consider a modular-based approach similar in format to the *Basics* series. Include guidance on how to incorporate virtual groups in the service system and information on zones. As resources are created, consider possible future alternative format versions of content (e.g., videos).

Planning can definitely help these efforts, and we intend to continue improving collaboration with zones. This goal is about *furthering the concept of collaboration* rather than simply *increasing collaboration*, because while NA World Services can model and encourage collaboration through efforts like planning and development of new tools, much of the actual coordination and collaboration will be accomplished locally. (Development of new tools to replace *A Guide to Local Services* could help to capture our current successes.)

Issue: Development and Organization of Trusted Servants

Goal 5: Through mentorship, training, and tools, increase continuity of service and inspire members of all ages and stages of recovery to be of service.

Solutions:

- Create messaging and tools to help existing trusted servants create an environment that inspires members to be of service, and establish a pipeline for developing trusted servants on an ongoing basis.
- Create mentoring guidance and resources to encourage younger members (in age and recovery) to be of service.

Mentioned frequently by participants was the benefit of finding ways to attract past and current trusted servants to a mentorship role that includes encouraging newer members to get involved. We look forward to the day when the aspiration expressed in A Vision for NA Service is realized and “Every member, inspired by the gift of recovery, experiences spiritual growth and fulfillment through service.” In our recent [NA Membership Survey](#), members stating they held no service position increased by 22%. Here, as throughout the plan, we are aware that members would like to see more video resources. The specifics of *how* to accomplish the prioritized solutions will be included in project plans that are developed.

Issue: Disruption in the Flow of Funds

Goal 6: Create tools for groups and service bodies to offer convenient ways for members to contribute, and to facilitate and encourage the distribution of funds through all components of the service system.

Solutions:

- Create a resource for groups to use to navigate electronic contributions.
- Create messaging and resources around why we give, why it matters, and where it goes (e.g., Unity Day, webinars, social media, reading cards, etc.).

This goal addresses both fund flow in general and the increased prevalence of electronic funds. Conference participants at WSC 2023 identified these challenges with financial resources as a Fellowship-wide issue.

Pillar: FELLOWSHIP SUPPORT

“Our vision is that one day Every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in their own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life.” This pillar is about doing the work to ensure that any addict who finds NA feels safe, respected, and valued enough to stay and welcome those who come in after them.

Issue: Safety and Belonging

Goal 7: Raise the level of consciousness regarding inclusiveness in our diverse Fellowship, and develop tools to support groups in ensuring that all members and potential members feel safe, welcomed, and included at in-person and virtual meetings.

Solutions:

- Investigate changes and/or additional wording to NA literature from gender-specific language to gender-neutral and inclusive language.
- Update the service pamphlet or develop a new pamphlet on safety in NA and dealing with predatory behavior.

- Update the *Group Booklet* to add guidance about safety and inclusion.
- Create a tool to deal with disruptive or inappropriate behavior in virtual meetings.
- See solution under Goal 8.

The scope of this goal is broad and includes predatory behavior, gender-neutral language, and more. Most projects for service material or recovery literature begin with some sort of Fellowship-wide survey to determine what members would like to see included or considered in the project. That way, the Fellowship as a whole helps to focus the ideas listed in the solutions in the strategic plan. The two topics referenced in the solutions above—dealing with disruptive and predatory behavior and gender-neutral and inclusive language in NA literature—were both selected as Issue Discussion Topics this cycle. The input on disruptive and predatory behavior pointed to much of what we need to address in new and/or revised material. The input on gender-neutral and inclusive language leads us to recommend a more focused discussion on the topic in the cycle ahead. The solutions proposed in this strategic plan include just some of the next steps that could be taken in the cycle ahead if prioritized.

Issue: Medication-Assisted Treatment

Goal 8: In the spirit of our Third Tradition, achieve a common understanding across the Fellowship of what it means to be an NA member and how to create the space for addicts to choose membership, regardless of how they found NA.

Solution:

- Develop resources for groups and workshops on how to make members and potential members feel welcomed.

The increasing and widespread use of medication-assisted treatment means more and more addicts are reaching NA without an understanding of what “the desire to stop using” might mean for them. We have been discussing drug replacement therapy and medication-assisted treatment and NA for a number of years now, and the topic can be one of the most divisive in NA. While our members differ on a number of related issues, as a Fellowship we do seem to have consensus on the principle of the Third Tradition and the need to welcome addicts and give them the space to choose NA membership if they wish to. The input we have received contains numerous requests for a firm position to be taken and published with almost equally opposing perspectives. The World Board is happy to lead the discussion but our practice is to publish a reflection of our Fellowship’s experience. This goal is not a public relations goal; it is about Fellowship support and the culture within NA.

Issue: Generational and Cultural Diversity

Goal 9: Continue to adapt communication methods and technology to meet a diverse membership’s preferences for engagement.

Solutions:

- Develop a strategic approach to communication that is intentionally designed to attract younger members and make communication easier to absorb and disseminate, using newer technology. Ideas include:
 - Gathering input directly from younger members
 - Implementing a messaging app, such as WhatsApp/Telegram as an official form of World Service communication
 - Utilizing infographics and videos to convey pieces of information in reports

Goal #9's solutions are not intended to address all cultural or generational differences. It is one step in adapting to a changing world. The strategic plan is revised each conference cycle, and some issues and goals remain on the plan for more than one cycle. There are many ideas for reaching out to other populations and communities, such as older members, indigenous members, and veterans, to name just a few. Future strategic plans can draw on these ideas, depending on the direction chosen by conference participants. The term *communication methods* includes not just the vehicle of communication but the type of content, language used, etc.

Pillar: WORLD SERVICE STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

NA World Services is a corporation with a spiritual mission and charitable purpose. This pillar is about balancing World Services' fiscal responsibility with NA's spiritual principles. The NAWs Sustainability issue is the responsibility of the World Board and the executive management of the World Service Office.

Issue: Three-Year Conference Cycle

Goal 10: Further refine and describe the three-year conference cycle, including major meetings, policies, planning process, deadlines, and guidelines, so that participants are able to make an educated decision about whether to adopt a three-year cycle on an ongoing basis.

Solutions:

- Use the experience of the two-cycle experiment to draft proposed descriptions and guidelines for a three-year conference cycle and include in a draft of *GWSNA* for conference decision. Better define the interim WSC meeting and address how to best use the time during and between in-person conferences.
- Collect regional and zonal best practices in adapting delegate terms to a three-year conference cycle.
- Evaluate and refine the collaborative planning process for ongoing implementation.

Goal #10 represents the World Board's commitment to offer a comprehensive picture of a three-year conference cycle for consideration at WSC 2029. A three-year conference cycle seems an effective way to plan our work together, be fiscally responsible, make decisions, and perhaps more importantly, do more between conferences that serves our Fellowship. Our current planning process is the most collaborative process in our history and has worked well because of the use of technology and a three-year conference cycle. It directly involves zonal forums as well as conference participants throughout the process. We plan to continue to build on this experience. WSC 2026 will be evaluating the efforts of this cycle and offering ideas for the future. We had initially created a separate goal addressed just to the planning process, but it is so connected to the three-year cycle that we folded the two goals together.

In 2029, conference participants will have to choose whether to continue a three-year cycle, and this goal is intended to help them be able to make that decision in an informed way. When the Fellowship made decisions to restructure World Services in 1998, they did so with the help of a draft of *A Guide to World Services* that detailed the changes the Fellowship was being asked to adopt. We anticipate a similar approach to the three-year-cycle decisions. There is a lot of work to be done between now and 2029 to ensure the WSC can make an educated decision about the length of the conference cycle moving forward.

Issue: Future of the World Convention

Goal 11: Create a financially sustainable model for the World Convention (WCNA), in harmony with our Eleventh Concept, that meets the needs and expectations of the global Fellowship in a changing world.

Solutions:

- Hold WCNA every five years, with flexible rotation of locations and possible attendance cap.
- Explore methods to require financial contributions by virtual attendees.

The World Convention is a global celebration of recovery that the World Board is responsible for planning and administering, given the scale and nature of the event. The World Board is offering a recommendation about WCNA in the 2026 *CAR* that includes the desire to plan a revenue-neutral event. Planning large events has become increasingly more challenging; being locked into a zone for the location and not being able to anticipate the number of attendees exacerbates the challenges. The solutions above are all in service of fiscal responsibility. We expect the recommendation in this *CAR* to be only a beginning as we all learn and adapt to what is both possible and serves the Fellowship.

Issue: NAWS Sustainability

Goal 12: Building on Goal 6, raise understanding of the need for and importance of adequate financial resources in carrying the NA message of recovery.

Solutions:

- Send quarterly “thank you” messaging to financial contributors with links to social media content.
- Encourage showing of Fellowship development videos at events and conventions throughout the service system.

Goal 13: Continue to evaluate and adjust activities at NA World Services to best support its roles and functions in a changing world.

Solutions:

- Continue to respond flexibly and responsibly to the realities of a changing world in operating the business of NAWS.
- Continue use of focus groups as a flexible means to be more inclusive and accountable in seeking member input and engagement.

Goal #12 is a continuation of our ongoing goal to raise Fellowship awareness of the importance and challenges of financial sustainability at NAWS under our current practices. An important piece of that is how Fellowship contributions help us carry the message, and the need for ongoing support.

Goal #13 is an acknowledgement that NA World Services has had the most dramatic resource changes in its history from the pandemic. We have evaluated and adjusted since 2020 and will continue to do so in order for our Fellowship’s primary service center to be as effective and responsive as possible. This requires evaluating existing programs and practices and adjusting to a changing world both within and outside of NA.