Golden Heart Area NA - Basic Hospitals & Institutions Guide

Why is an H&I Meeting/Presentation Needed
The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the NA message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I meetings/presentations, except for those in longer-term facilities, are intended to simply introduce those attending to some of the basics of the NA program.

WHAT CONSTITUTES AN H&I MEETING/PRESENTATION?
1. In order to form a clear understanding of an H&I meeting/presentation, it is important to know where it fits in our service structure. Rather than being an NA group, which may be represented at the area service committee by a GSR, an H&I meeting/presentation is a service provided by that area service committee through its H&I subcommittee.
2. An H&I meeting/presentation is always held under the auspices of an H&I subcommittee. Any meeting not linked into the service structure in this way is not an H&I meeting. Where there is no existing H&I subcommittee, groups conducting H&I service can be accountable by following the WSC H&I Guidelines and reporting to an ASC or RSC.
3. H&I meetings/presentations are held in facilities where addicts do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings.
4. Meetings which are held in a facility, but which are fully self-supporting and free of restrictions, are not H&I meetings.
5. All H&I meetings/presentations are closed to outside participation. NA members from the outside should attend the H&I meeting only when invited by the panel leader. The only people to attend H&I meetings are the panel leader, panel chair, panel member, and speaker, or anyone approved by the H&I subcommittee to go into that H&I meeting. If there is any confusion over whether or not a meeting should be an H&I meeting/presentation or a regular meeting, please contact your H&I subcommittee for assistance.

Meeting / Presentation Format
The format of any particular H&I meeting/presentation may vary from meeting to meeting depending on the type of facility. In short term facilities, the format will be more focused on the panel members carrying a message in to the residents, while at a long term facility we may encourage more participation from the residents. Whatever format is chosen, we normally get the residents involved with a question and answer session at some point in the meeting/presentation.

Who is Best Suited to Carry the NA Message in an H&I Meeting
In our experience, it is best for members to have three months clean before attending an H&I meeting, and six months clean before speaking at one. It is not important whether or not we have been in a similar facility ourselves. Anyone with a clear and consistent Narcotics Anonymous message who is willing to share is well suited for H&I work.

DO’s AND DON’Ts FOR H&I WORK IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES
Do follow the guidance found in the WSC H&I Handbook. The World Service Conference H&I Committee has compiled this list based upon the experiences of subcommittees around the world that have sent input on H&I service matters. They provide some very helpful guidelines, and should help you avoid some of the common pitfalls.

Correctional Facility Rules
Do Attempt to get all agreements in writing
Do Clarify the rules with whomever you bring into the facility
Do Adhere to the security regulations at all times
Do Arrive early to satisfy security requirements
Do Keep staff informed of your whereabouts
Do Obey the dress code, exercise common sense
Panel Leaders and Members
Do Screen all panel members, speakers, and chairperson(s)
Do Always clear a member who is on parole/probation with the facility and parole/probation officer
Do Adhere to clean time requirements of the correctional facility and of the H&I committee
Do Ensure that a clear NA message of recovery is carried by all panel members
Do Choose panel members and speakers according to H&I guidelines

Literature
Do Provide NA literature for correctional facility meetings
Do Make directories of outside meetings available to the inmates
Do Use NA literature recommended for H&I work and stamp all literature with the local phoneline number
Do Provide facilities with literature order forms and encourage them to supply their own NA literature

Correctional Facility Meetings
Do Start and end on time
Do Explain briefly in the meeting format what H&I is
Do Clearly state that Narcotics Anonymous is separate from the correctional facility and from other fellowships
Do Emphasize that NA recovery is available to all addicts regardless of drug(s) used
Do Explain the language that we use (addict, clean, recovery, clean time) and why we use it (the First Step of NA, and the Sixth Tradition of NA)

Inmates Meeting Participation
Do Involve inmates with the meeting, especially those in long-term facilities (readings, etc.)
Do Emphasize the importance of attending a Narcotics Anonymous meeting the first day out of the facility

Panel Leaders and Members
Don’t Allow a member who has outstanding warrants to participate in a correctional facility meeting
Don’t Bring any contraband items or weapons into the facility
Don’t Take messages or carry letters in or out of the correctional facility
Don’t Show favoritism to any inmates
Don’t Bring an NA member who has friends and/or family in the correctional facility
Don’t Wear flashy jewelry and don’t carry excessive cash
Don’t Use excessive profanity
Don’t Attend H&I facilities alone

Facility Guidelines
Don’t Debate any issues involving the correctional facility’s rules, regulations, programs, and other fellowships with inmates and staff
Don’t Discuss conditions within the correctional facility
Don’t Discuss correctional facility staff members with inmate(s)
Don’t Discuss inmate(s) with correctional facility staff members
Don’t Sponsor inmate(s) in the correctional facility that you are attending as an H&I member
Don’t Accept money or gifts from, or give money or gifts to any inmate

Meeting Guidelines
Don’t Give anyone within the correctional facility your address or telephone number
Don’t Provide anyone with another NA member’s address or telephone number
Don’t Bring in anyone who is not supposed to be there (newcomers, friends, guests)
Don’t Ask what type of crime an inmate has been convicted of, or discuss guilt or innocence
Don’t Break another person’s anonymity
Don’t Emphasize ‘using days’ while sharing an NA message of recovery

Excerpted from "Hospitals & Institutions Handbook" & "Basic Hospitals & Institutions Guide" by Narcotics Anonymous