

# STEPS FOR CREATING AN AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE WEBSITE

**1 Area committee support:** The area has carefully considered the benefits of an area website, the human and financial resources have been identified and allocated, GSRs have informed their groups, and members have committed to joining the committee.

**2 Elect a webmaster and/or web committee:** Having a web committee can help with the gathering of information and can assure that the website does not lose continuity at the end of the webmaster's term, or if the webmaster resigns for any reason.

Agree on a password that is known by the webmaster and two other committee members. This kind of extra measure helps to keep the website in the hands of the committee, and not one individual.

**3 Create website operational guidelines:** Cover all areas that are necessary to be functional and to guide subsequent committees to continue the work that this area service committee initiated. Guidelines are meant to be helpful and fluid. These guidelines should be adaptable to the changes in the committee and the technology.

**4 Create webmaster guidelines:** Again, flexibility is important because of changing technologies and the differences in the skill levels of subsequent webmasters. The idea here is to make the webmaster aware of the ideas that the ASC wants to convey on the website, as well as the reasons behind the choice of the web provider, etc.

**5 Determine the focus of the web front page (audience, information, etc.):** This will help areas to use the language that is most attractive to the anticipated visitors to the site. Language that simply describes Narcotics Anonymous and clearly and succinctly describes our program of recovery and services offered in the area will assist any visitor. A website free of NA-specific language usually speaks to the broadest audience.

- a. Determine what is necessary for the web front page and its design. Simplicity and clarity may be key aspects of the design. We want the visitor to be able to easily navigate the site to find the information that they seek. An additional consideration in design is NA's public image. Many areas may want to place identifying area artwork on their site; however, we may do well to consider who the audience is that we are trying to reach and that we anticipate visiting our site.
- b. Decide on the content of the other website pages. Again, this will help areas to use language that will attract the audience for that page, and to keep the information brief and easy to navigate.

- 6 Decide on a web provider:** As Chapter Ten in the *Public Relations Handbook* suggests, the concept of “free” may signal a need to check further. The price for “free” service can include links to sites that are not recovery-oriented.
- 7 Website ownership:** Website domains should be owned and paid for by the service body. The area is accountable for the website; the area service committee ought to establish itself as the responsible entity for the website.
- 8 Research the website server security:** Contact your website host and find out what steps have been taken to ensure that the prospective website and email accounts stay free from worms or other malware.
- 9 Decide on what other sites you will be linking to:** If you are adding links to other service committee sites, be sure to find out how long they have been in existence and if their website has had any security issues in the past. This information is usually available through contact with their webmaster. You may want to consider linking to [www.na.org](http://www.na.org), which can then link your readers to other NA sites.
- 10 Bring the website design to the ASC for approval:** This will help to ensure that all the information the committee wants will be included on the site.