

# Plain States Zonal Forum

June 11, 2005  
Sioux City, Iowa

Public information discussion topics:

- I. Integrating Technology into PI
- II. PI in Rural Settings
- III. What's Working in PI
- IV. Speaking to Non-Addicts

- I. Integrating Technology into PI

Need to look at using the internet to carry our message. This can get the message to a larger audience and save money on printing costs. Use email for sending out meeting minutes. It is important to keep websites and links accurate and to make sure the information on them is current. It is recommended that servicing a website should be done by two or more members in a committee. Discussion followed on who should be accountable to whom for monitoring websites, links, etc. Ultimately, it is the PI Committee who is responsible for this. When posting literature on websites/online, it is important to follow the guidelines as set out by the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust.

Use of looped PowerPoint presentations in booths is a good way to carry the message. Avoid the use of acronyms when writing presentations, and use full language and PI approved text. When doing professional presentations, use the same ones in order to be consistent with the message. Research your audience before making presentation in order to tailor the message to the audience.

Running ads on internet servers may prove good for access to the information, but in the end are bad for accountability in terms of inferred affiliation. Using disclaimers on the ads/sites help to alleviate this problem.

Discussion of cell phones and VRU's (Voice Recognition Units). The focus here was various regions using cell phones to provide a more personal touch for the still suffering addict whereby they can speak to a real live person as opposed to an answering service. There was some discussion about the importance of closely monitoring the cell phone bill for improper usage. VRU's can be helpful in that they can provide you with the locations that your calls are coming from in order to help target PI efforts.

## II. PI in Rural Settings

It is important to set goals for contacting parole officers, treatment facilities, distribution of meeting lists, contact numbers, and application of resources. Need to make sure trusted servants are qualified, a consistent message is carried, and that any commitments made are kept.

Use PI Learning Days and Workshops to train members in carrying the PI message. It is sometimes common for an area to focus the majority of their resources in the inner city; it is important to also carry this message to the rural areas. Using presentations, mailings, and flyers to rural treatment units, booths at county fairs, advertising in local papers are all proven methods of carrying the message. Other ways include using mailers, bulletin boards at Laundromats, stores and churches.

Networking with a sponsee can help to fill the various commitments that are needed to fulfill service responsibilities in smaller areas.

## III. What's Working in PI

One region reported great success using bus ads. Having a live person answer the phone lines gets the best results. Public Service announcements, flyer days, alternative language messages have also all been effective. Public image is important. Being polite, courteous, and well dressed when representing NA is also essential. Putting very specific information on meetings lists and flyers helps as well (such as what door to enter, where to park, directions in some cases, etc.) helps addicts to find meetings.

One area mentioned the use of peel-away stickers with Helpline info and putting these on pay phones, bulletin boards, and other high traffic areas.

It is better to have a few committed members carrying the message than to have a warm body filling some position so that the message is carried consistently and that commitments are followed through on.

Websites can be a good tool, but they can also be fraught with problems. One member had a site off a link to their employer's website; others have pop up and banner ads on their sites which can imply an affiliation when one does not exist.

## IV. Speaking to Non-Addicts

PowerPoint presentations have proven to be very effective. Presentations should include local, area, and world history of the NA Program as well as information tailored to the audience being addressed. Use full language, no acronyms, stay focused on NA, avoid affiliations with other outside organizations,

and maintain a professional demeanor and dress. Critique your presentation before and after. Ask for questions. Carry resource materials like pamphlets, meeting lists, and flyers for handouts at the presentation. Follow through on any commitments made. Build a personal relationship with the facility, staff. Work to develop good communication between NA and any given facility or group.