

A Newsletter
issued
specifically by
and for:
Employment
Liaison Officers
Issue – Winter
2019

**REMEMBER –
Our principal
aim is to offer,
with complete
anonymity to
all concerned, a
publication
where we can
share our
experiences of
this vital
service role.
Whilst fulfilling
“primary
purpose” of
carrying our
message of
recovery by
helping the
alcoholic who
still suffers.**

In this Issue

Editorial

A Welcome from the
Trustee for
Employment

CIPD Annual
Conference
Manchester 7th-8th
November 2018

Tyne & Northumbria
IG ELO Report

An Employment
Liaison Officer

A Report from Denise
H Outgoing Trustee
for Employment

HELLO! ELOs!

...and all members of Alcoholics Anonymous

We hope you find this edition and the information it contains informative. The Employment Sub-Committee are here to support and assist all ELOs in their very important service liaison role and to ensure you know who we are our names are listed below. Please feel free to contact us we work as a team but geographically we have taken individual responsibility for our regions as listed in the current sub-committee details below

Mike P Trustee and Sub-Committee Chair trustee.LRN@gsogb.org.uk

Jim L Secretary and Joint editor of Hello ELOs specific liaison with regions: Midlands, North East and North West employment.sc@aamail.org

James C Joint Editor of Hello ELOs, website liaison, specific liaison with regions: Eastern Scotland, Glasgow Highlands & Islands, Scotia, and South West Scotland employment.sc3@aamail.org

Nick D Specific liaison with regions: Eastern, London North, South East and London South employment.sc2@aamail.org

Rob D Website liaison and Specific liaison with regions: South Midlands, South West and Wales & Borders employment.sc1@aamail.org

Our secretary email address employment.sc@aamail.org or please feel free to contact us by writing to: The Employment Sub-Committee - Alcoholics Anonymous, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ.

We are continuing contacting all regional ELOs or the regional chair if that service position is vacant, just to introduce ourselves and see how we can assist any activities you are either involved in or are considering. This can be: providing practical resources - attendance at your events – or just someone to talk to and use as a sounding board. The employment sub-committee members are currently low on numbers due to rotation of service in line with our traditions and guidelines, so we are currently looking to encourage other members to come and join us. We need fresh brains and new ideas so please see the latest edition of service news for further details of what is required and how to apply if this is of interest.

Articles and Reports needed for Summer Edition

A reminder we are currently in desperate need for articles for the summer edition of Hello ELOs. Without articles, we cannot publish the next edition. Please, could you email any employment reports or any articles by **July 1st, 2019** to Jim or me. I would also like to thank the ELOs who have responded to my plea for articles for this edition without your help we would have had to delay the publication of the winter edition or possibly postpone.

James C
Joint Editor of Hello ELOs

A Welcome from the Trustee for Employment

My name is Mike P and I am an alcoholic, I am also the new trustee for Employment. I have only just been allocated the post and introducing myself to all ELO's and RELO's and anyone interested in the Employment discipline in Alcoholics Anonymous. I would like to thank Denise H for her help introducing me to the discipline and making the transition into it.

I have done service since I came to Alcoholics Anonymous at the guidance of my sponsor at all levels and it has always been a great benefit to my sobriety. Coming to the Board of Trustees has once again shown me Alcoholics Anonymous at work and the way that it works through service.

The Employment Liaison is an important role for getting the message of the Alcoholics Anonymous program of recovery to the companies that employ people, having a workforce today companies are more likely to help someone than to dismiss them especially if they don't want to lose that employee. What we can offer is a solution.

I lost jobs because of my alcoholism, drinking on the job and messing things up; these were only because I could not go without a drink, I had a career and I never reached my full potential because of my drinking. If I had a way out of it shown me I would never have been sacked or left because of shame, Alcoholics Anonymous working with employers to make these things possible is a way Alcoholics Anonymous can help the employee get sober and the employer to keep a valued member of staff.

There are vacancies up and down the country for Employment Liaison at both Intergroups and at Regional levels, if you think you would be able to talk to employers in your Intergroup and Regional levels then please go to your Intergroup or Regional meeting and talk to the Chair for more information, or if you like you can email me at trustee.LRN@gsogb.org.uk or visit our web page in the employment section. Service is a great way of giving back to Alcoholics Anonymous, and a great way to pass the message.

Mike P Trustee

CIPD Annual Conference Manchester 7th-8th November 2018

Jim's Report on behalf of the Employment Subcommittee My brief report on A.A.s attendance at this event is as below: I attended this event as a member of the Employment subcommittee and to represent the fellowship at a national level to add support to the Manchester Intergroup who had agreed to act as delegates on the A.A. stand at this event.

The event was very well supported by CIPD member companies with approximately 200 exhibitors taking stand space in the Manchester Central Convention Complex main arena hall, the exhibitors included companies far too many to list in this report but to

give a flavour of the organisations that were exhibiting they were companies specialising in:

Consultancy Services

Change and OD · Employee Engagement · Employee Relations · Employer Brands · Human Resources · Human Capital Management · Management · Outplacement and Counselling · Outsourcing and Shared Services · Recruitment · Talent Management · Training · Workforce Planning

Employee Benefits and Rewards

· Benefits and Incentives · Employee Assistance Programmes · Health Assessment and Screening · Healthcare Insurance · Pensions · Relocation and Removals · Well-Being

Employment Services

· Career Counselling · Employee Surveys · Employment Advisory Services · Health and Safety · Legal Advisory Services · Mediation

Government and Professional Bodies – Associations

· Assessment · Bespoke Training · Blended Learning Solutions · Business Schools · Coaching · E-Learning · Experiential Learning · Leadership Development · Management Development · Managing – Evaluating Training · Open – Distance Learning · Qualification Based Training · Teambuilding · Training Materials – Resources · Training Providers · Training Venues – Facilities

Publishers

· Books · Journals · Trade Magazines · Online Material

Recruitment Services

· Assessment and Assessment Centres · Employment Agencies · Online Recruitment Services · Pre-Employment Screening · Psychometrics · Recruitment Advertising · Recruitment Outsourcing

Technology and HR Software Solutions

· Artificial Intelligence · Assessment – 360 Degree Feedback · Flexible – Remote Working · HR Management and Information Systems · Managed Outsourced – Shared Services · Payroll Systems · Time and Attendance Management · Workflow – Data Management

Over the two days there were over 5,000 people that attended the event which as well as having access to the 200 plus exhibition stands and literature provided by the

companies could also attend 38 ongoing 30-minute conference sessions with over 100 speakers. This was as well as the keynote speakers with specialist topics. The topics included:

Wednesday

· Opening Keynote · The new era of trust and its key for success · The skills of effective HR leaders · Leading large-scale structural transformation · Using technology to recruit the right talent · Creating a culture of self-directed learning · Bullying and harassment in the workplace · Different approaches to create a truly inclusive workplace · Applying design thinking and methodology · Organisational development · Reducing bias in recruitment · Moving from annual appraisals to a culture of high performance · The future of skills and employment · Developing purposeful leaders · Developing analytical skills and data literacy · Employment law · Back to human – creating connections · Creating a holistic well-being to boost productivity · Influencing the business through data-metrics · Creating an ethical culture

Thursday

· The ethics of people management · Designing a holistic reward and benefit strategy · Agile ways to increase collaboration and innovation · Automation and artificial intelligence · Empowering line managers · Advisor to business partner · Developing OD&D · Data security and employee digital presence · Demystifying predictive analytics · New trends in recruitment · How to evolve the HRBP model · Managing organisational complexity · Journeys of digitalisation · Enabling people through a strategic approach · Leveraging apprenticeships · Adopting a flexible working strategy · Reducing stress and mental wellbeing · Creating unforgettable experiences · Closing keynote.

Alcoholics Anonymous was listed under the “Well Being” category in the event programme and the stand space was well located adjacent to one of the refreshment areas and close to one of the speaker’s arena’s meaning the visitors attending any speaker’s events passed our stand.

We spoke to many employers who took away a selection of literature – posters – cards etc we also got a list of names and contact detail of people who requested a follow up and I will circulate these to the employment subcommittee members so the person responsible for that region or intergroup if no regional ELO in post can liaise and ensure we maximise our contact with that organisation.

Summary

A very worthwhile event that gave us the opportunity to meet and have discussions with many UK wide employers explaining more about our fellowship and how our employment liaison officers can assist them in both recognising the benefits of trying to assist employees with potential alcohol problems rather than initially embarking on the disciplinary route and understanding how to signpost those individuals to A.A.

My recommendation would be that we consider attending this event again and any further events organised by the CIPD and also inviting the CIPD regional chairs and members to attend our future events.

Further discussion required at our next employment subcommittee meeting to brainstorm how we can maximise – improve our attendance at this and similar events in the future.

PI meetings – roadshows – conferences – conventions etc that we organise.

I have the events programme and further information containing much more information on this event that I will share with the subcommittee at the next opportunity.

Thanks to the guy's and girls from Manchester intergroup who also manned our stand at various times over the two days Gary – Rory - William and Andrea.

Any further information required contact: Jim. Telephone: 07974452470. Email employment.sc@aamail.org

Tyne & Northumbria IG ELO Report

DRUG & ALCOHOL PROVIDER EVENT. GATESHEAD JOB CENTRE. WEDNESDAY 24TH OCT 2018.

Alcoholics Anonymous were invited to attend the above event hosted by Susan Mosley, DWP Enhanced Support Worker.

The following other organisations were also in attendance:

Moving on Tyne and Wear Fulfilling Lives – Experts by experience network Platform young people drug and alcohol service Susan Mosley was promoting SMART Recovery and CGL – Evolve drug and alcohol service in their absence The following organisations were also invited but were unable to attend; CGL - Evolve Basis housing support Jigsaw young people's support Oaktrees Gateshead Carers support NA – accepted invitation but didn't turn up.

Between 09.00 - 10.00 I talked to six groups (6 - 8 to a group) of work coaches, giving an explanation, of what AA is and what it does using the Preamble as a guide. I also talked briefly about my own recovery and how AA had helped me and continued to do so.

Between 10.15 - 12.00 I talked to approximately 24 clients. Again, briefly sharing my experience, strength and hope and for those that expressed an interest, signposting them to meetings, giving them the local helpline number and the text support number.

I was provided with some supporting literature by Mark A, (P.I Officer) all of which was taken.

This was a well organised event, well attended and AA's presence was very well received by both the job centre staff and in general, by the clients. I have emailed the current meetings list to Susan and she has requested that when the new lists are printed that some be provided to Job Centre Plus to distribute to Job Centres in Gateshead. She would also welcome some of the new beer mats when they become available. I also provided her with some posters and a couple of business card holders which have the national freephone number on.

This was a very successful morning and Susan plans to run it as a regular event in Gateshead and also in other job centres in the area.

Mark M. LIF

An Employment Liaison Officer (ELO)

I love meeting folk from HR. They are considerate, thoughtful and interested in trying to learn how to deal with the issues their colleagues bring to them: over-work, stress, grievances and aggravations – to name just a few. They are naturally inclined to try and understand how to deal with over zealous use of alcohol. They normally try to resolve problems by influencing behaviour.

The line manager often has a different perspective: productivity, safety, quality and profit – again, to name just a few.

I have found that the skills and talents needed to excel in this area are more brutal requiring swift decisions and results. Poor performance is resolved by moving the culprit on – to another department or out the door. The motivation is an instant fix not influencing; it takes too long.

Then there is the employee: Trying to maintain a lifestyle, trying to do their job and trying to climb the career ladder. Anything they do that casts doubt on their abilities can be construed as a Career Limiting Move (CLM). Seeking help from HR can be perceived as a CLM. Seeking help from the line manager is almost certainly a CLM! My apologies to those very talented and inspired line managers who don't fit this mould, but they are in the minority.

I have been invited to various company fairs focussing on employee well-being hosting stands for Zumba, stress management, fitness and... AA. Groups of employees walk around during their lunchbreak chatting and laughing with the stall holders until they get to the AA stand then, realising that it's AA, flinch back nervously and move swiftly on. Very few will stop and chat. Being seen to be interested could be construed as a CLM. Sometimes there is the person regarding us pensively from the other side of the room. I always try and catch their eye – but rarely succeed.

So, how do I, the AA Employment Liaison Officer (ELO), address the stakeholders? Who needs to be convinced, and of what? Why should a company tolerate alcohol abuse? When should AA be called for? What is the point of trying to rehabilitate someone and how can it be achieved?

I have found that 'cold calling' companies don't work: They refer me to their Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) hosted by e.g. AXA or Bupa - there are many. So, I approach the EAPs and they're not interested either as they have their own programmes. Brick wall.

Much more successful (to start with) is getting a referral from someone in AA who has a relative working in a company that's got a problem. This avenue has got me talking with someone in HR who wants to understand and asks the questions I posed a couple of paragraphs ago. This gives me the opportunity to promote the AA philosophy and offer access to our fellowship. A potentially successful outcome insofar as I have found that it often doesn't get much farther than the HR office – which might be far enough!

To promote this, I have now embarked on a process of going to each meeting in our Intergroup to seek out help from group members in getting these referrals. The public sector is easier. The local DWP offices are much more open to discussing these issues with us as they see it as a way to help and counsel their clients. This has led to our participation in regular morning briefings. The only downside is that I have no idea how effective it is.

I am also approaching the local police force to see how we can provide assistance to them and will report back later how successful that is.

My conclusion is that although the stigma associated with alcoholism is alive and kicking, the current general interest in mental health and wellbeing is beginning to break down some of the barriers to open discussion and thus allows us to influence the way employees are treated by their employers when excessive alcohol consumption is noted.

My experience with my employer was that they had no idea what to do with me. I see my role as ELO in helping organisations answer the questions I posed before and thus be able to make enlightened decisions which benefit all parties rather than throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

Chris S Potteries IG ELO

Denise H – Report for the Hello ELO Newsletter

My name is Denise H and I am an alcoholic and the outgoing Trustee for Employment. During my time on the Employment Sub-Committee I have had the privilege of seeing and hearing about the great work that continues across the country, to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to Employers. I would like to thank each and every one of the Employment Liaison Officers, across AA GB, that work tirelessly to ensure

employers know about AA and how it can help their employees and the employers themselves.

Our Sub Committees purpose is to raise awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous within all areas of Employment and we believe that it is important to establish and maintain good relations with professionals and professional bodies connected within Employment. We also offer support and advice to Employment Services Liaison Officers and help them to promote and encourage the appointment of Liaison Officers at both Intergroup and Region levels.

In 2018 we organised the annual Regional Liaison Officers meeting which was held at GSO in York and the purpose of this meeting was to inform the Fellowship what we are doing, review progress and agree a way ahead. The Committee has put a plan together for 2019 to look at how best we can get the AA message out to both Employers and to new Employment Liaison Officers at every level.

As an Employer myself, I know how important it is to ensure that we do what we can to raise awareness of AA amongst the very many companies, industries and organisations that are out there employing potential AA members.

Many organizations, unions, and governmental agencies have established programs to work with employees whose personal problems have affected their job performance and their families. Management are increasingly aware of the disease of alcoholism and its high financial and human costs and recognize the benefits of helping their employees. Carrying its message of recovery to employers has been important to A.A. since its early days, and Chapter 10 of the "Big Book", Alcoholics Anonymous, entitled 'To Employers' is suggested reading for employers, and human resource professionals, who are interested in helping people with drinking problems.

If you are reading this article please remember, that only **'us'** as alcoholics can carry this message to others. Please remember that there are employers, and human resource professionals, who would like to help people with drinking problems, and may not know how to. There are alcoholic employees who are still suffering and may not know about AA. Please let us all be responsible, by trying to reach Employers and their employees by letting them know of our vital resource, that will very often save someone's life.

Thank you for reading this

Denise H – Outgoing Trustee for Employment