



She began to grow and change, and through the DAC found a way to serve others like her who need interpretation, becoming the interpreter coordinator and scheduler for the DAC, and later its chair. Providing a concrete example of the willingness of many A.A. members to offer services to those who need them, as Melinni addressed the assembly, her message was amplified by the trilingual interpretation of the meeting: one interpreter translated Melinni's sharing from ASL to English for those who did not know sign language, and the area bilingual committee chair then translated the English version of Melinni's ASL talk into Spanish for the Spanish-speaking members in the audience — a striking example of inclusivity for all attendees. Melinni's message put a face to the question of developing an accessibilities committee, and when the vote was held the following day, the proposal to start a new service committee passed with substantial unanimity — more than a two-thirds majority. Area 68's accessibilities committee now provides a wide range of information and services; makes surveys available to assess needs; helps A.A. groups become aware of accessibility issues at meetings; disseminates Conference-approved material in Braille, ASL, large print and other accessible formats; hosts workshops; cooperates with other committees; shares guidelines on reducing barriers; works with professionals; offers informational material for doing accessibility work and starting a new committee; examines exclusionary attitudes; and gives reports on ongoing activities. Shortly after the formation of the accessibilities committee, another new entity was born from this heightened awareness of the barriers some alcoholics face: the A.A. Deaf Intergroup of Central Texas (AADI), the only such entity in Texas and possibly the world. The AADI has a calendar showing 15-20 meetings monthly interpreted in the Austin area and also has

one meeting that is conducted entirely in ASL — the New Freedom Group, to which one man recently made a two-hour drive, so critical was his need for a signed meeting. There is now a much stronger Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing presence in Austin's A.A. community. Members who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing regularly attend meetings, become a part of home groups, sponsor and are sponsored, and participate in service. The A.A. Guidelines on Accessibility for All Alcoholics state, "Respect for the dignity of others is the foundation for all our efforts to carry the message to alcoholics with diverse needs, with emphasis on identification rather than on how we are different.

As one A.A. member who is Deaf put it, 'I'm just an alcoholic, like everyone else here. I have the same need to be a 'worker among workers' and not be singled out for special treatment. If you can just make the program available to me, I'll do what I have to do to work it.'"

There are now 283 accessibilities committees throughout the United States and Canada, with new committees forming all the time. The increase of these committees makes A.A.'s Responsibility Statement more potent than ever. For, when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, the hand — or in the case of alcoholics who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, the hands — of A.A. will always be there. For additional information and shared experience about how A.A. members across the U.S. and Canada are continuing to make the A.A. message accessible to all alcoholics, contact G.S.O.'s Accessibilities assignment.

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# SOUTHERN SERVICE OFFICE BULLETIN

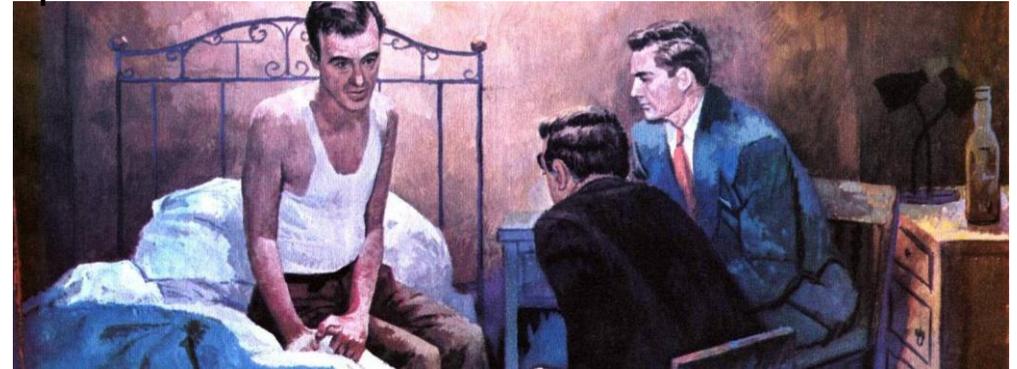
Our primary purpose is to stay sober, and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety



April 2019

The Hands of A.A.

Issue No15



"To stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety."

**LONDON TELEPHONE SERVICE URGENTLY NEED :**

**VOLUNTEERS 2PM-6PM every afternoon at S.S.O.**

**OTHERS VACANCIES:**

**South East(w) IG Tel responder.**

**North Middlesex IG Tel rep**

**Please let me know if you like to post you need on this page for next edition**

The purpose of the Hospital and Institution Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic who is confined. Institutions are places where men and women are confined for medical, mental, corrective or rehabilitative purposes. Institutions include hospitals, jails and detoxification centres. There is a constant need for active, vital AA members to help with this type of AA Twelve-Step work. There are sobriety requirements and for those who want to carry the message into correctional facilities, and security clearance is required. Forms are available to accomplish this. Treatment or hospital panels do not require clearances.

