

Treatment Workshop

Overview of the responsibilities of an Area and District Treatment Chair.
Bridging the Gap.

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Area Treatment Chair

What are the responsibilities of the Area Treatment Chair? What I have done the past two years.

- Attend Area Committee Meetings.
- Attend Area Assemblies.
- Chair Sub-Committee Meetings.
- Chair Treatment Workshops for Service Information Day.
- Liaise with the District Treatment Chairs and their Committees.
- Become familiar with the Treatment Workbook and be available to answer questions.

- Monitor Area Treatment Email.
- Receive Bridging the Gap requests.
- Be available if a District would like a workshop presentation.
- Just be available whenever and however you can be of help.
- Chair Pre-Conference Agenda Sharing Sessions.

District Treatment Chair

What are the responsibilities of the District Treatment Chair?

- Get and maintain a Committee.
- Volunteers to carry the message.
- Co-Ordinate Groups to carry the message in Treatment Centers.
- Volunteers for Temporary Contacts to Bridge the Gap.
- Know the facilities in their District that the A.A message is needed.
- Have an open dialogue with Center Managers.
- Be well versed in the Treatment Committee Workbook.

- Report to District table.
- Attend Sub-Committee Meetings.
- Receive BTG requests and forward to a suitable Temporary Contact.
- Keep facilities stocked with A.A. literature.
- Make sure Treatment Center Staff know where to find the BTG form on the Area 83 Website.

Bridging The Gap

Getting Members from Treatment Centers to the doors of A.A.

- Sobriety while in a Treatment Center is not easy, but it's manageable.
- The most vulnerable time is upon graduation and re-entry into the real world.
- This is where we need to extend the hand of A.A. prior to leaving treatment or make the connection within the first day.

Treatment

Treatment Committees are formed to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment and outpatient settings, and to set up means of "bridging the gap" from the facility to an A.A. group in the individual's community.

- The A.A. Guidelines in Treatment MG-14

Bridging the Gap Request Form

- On the Area 83 website click resources, then Treatment, then Bridging the Gap and a form will come out for the client of the Treatment Center to fill out.
- The form is then sent to the Area Treatment Chair email address. I forward to the appropriate District Treatment Chair.

Temporary Contact Programs to “Bridge the Gap” Between Treatment and A.A.

- A temporary contact is an A.A. member who works with clients who are being discharged from treatment settings and helps them bridge the gap to A.A. in the local community.
- The pamphlet “Bridging the Gap” was developed to provide information to A.A. members about temporary contact programs.

A few cautionary words from those who have offered this kind of service before. *These are not rules, but a sharing of experience:*

- You may be the first outside A.A. contact that the person meets. Be affable, friendly, interested.
- Be on time for whatever appointment you make.
- As a volunteer member of the Contact Service Committee, your act of service consists of introducing the person to the local group or meeting. It is suggested that you explain what A.A. is and the Twelve Step program of recovery, and also what A.A. does not do.
- Try to avoid becoming a long-term taxi service.
- Try not to confuse the temporary contact service with long-term sponsorship.

- Take the time to introduce the person you escort to as many A.A. members at the meeting as possible. Be sure to include an introduction to the group secretary and/or meeting chairperson.
- If a group goes out for coffee after the meeting, ask your contact if he/she wants to join the “meeting after the meeting.”
- Try not to push your contact; some people are very shy.
- Use your own sense of what’s happening in your contact’s recovery to dictate how many meetings you take him/her to.
- Provide the contact with a meeting schedule.
- Keep the general conversation to A.A. related matters.
- Avoid becoming involved in discussions about your contact’s treatment or confinement. We have no opinions about outside issues.

For AAs on the



A.A. TEMPORARY CONTACT/ BRIDGING THE GAP REQUEST

CONNECTING
INSIDE A.A. MEMBERS
TO THE OUTSIDE
A.A. COMMUNITY

Bridging the Gap

Part of Bridging the Gap between an individual in a facility and A.A. is the Temporary Contact Program, which is designed to help the alcoholic in an alcoholism treatment program make that transition.

As you know, one of the more “slippery” places in the journey to sobriety is between the door of the setting and the nearest A.A. group or meeting. Some of us can tell you that, even though we heard of A.A. within the facility, we were too fearful to go.

The video *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous*, shown to clients in treatment, emphasizes the importance of having a *temporary contact* as the essential link between treatment and recovery.

It is suggested that the temporary contact take the newcomer to a variety of A.A. meetings; introduce him or her to other A.A.s; insure that he or she has phone numbers of several A.A. members and share the experience of sponsorship and a home group.

A.A. Bridging the Gap/ Temporary Contact Program

Dear A.A. Member,

We have a program in this area called The A.A. Bridging the Gap/Temporary Contact Program. If you are interested, you can be matched upon your discharge to an A.A. member in your home community. This Temporary A.A. Contact volunteer will take you to up to six A.A. meetings, introduce you and help you get acquainted and comfortable in A.A. During this time you will learn more about sponsors, home groups, working A.A.'s Twelve Steps and service.

Your Bridging the Gap contact is temporary only. They are there to support you, answer questions and explain the A.A. program of recovery. They will not provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money or such other services. You may hear basic suggestions for sobriety that the Fellowship shares, including don't drink; go to meetings; read the Big Book; call your sponsor and work the Steps.

Past experience has shown that attending an A.A. meeting as soon as possible after discharge is vital to making a sober transition to life on the outside. Many of us have been where you are now and know that the program of A.A. and its fellowship can do for you what it had done for us and countless others.

Individuals who are soon to be discharged may need to accelerate their request through the BTG Coordinator or the Area Corrections & Treatment Committee volunteers. Let them know if you need immediate processing.

Some professionals refer to alcoholism and drug addiction as "substance abuse." Non-alcoholics are, therefore; sometimes introduced to A.A. and encouraged to attend A.A. meetings. Anyone may attend open A.A. meetings, but only those with a drinking problem may attend closed meetings.

Bridging the Gap/ Temporary Contact Request Form

I am within three months of my discharge date. I would like to have an A.A. Temporary Contact who will provide a link for me to the A.A. community through meetings and introduction to other A.A.s.

Name: _____

SEX: Male Female

Doc Number: _____

Facility: _____

City: _____

Province or State: _____

Zip or Postal Code: _____

Discharging to: (Town or Area): _____

Date of Discharge: _____

City: _____

Province or State: _____

Zip or Postal Code: _____

Daytime Phone : _____

Please mail to:

For AAs on the



OUTSIDE

A.A. TEMPORARY CONTACT/ BRIDGING THE GAP VOLUNTEER

CONNECTING
INSIDE A.A. MEMBERS
TO THE OUTSIDE
A.A. COMMUNITY

A.A. Bridging the Gap Program

Dear A.A. Member,

The Bridging the Gap Program, or BTG, connects the new member being discharged from a facility to A.A. in their community. You are being asked to be that connection, what is called a Temporary Contact.

When a new, soon-to-be discharged member contacts us, we match that person to a Temporary Contact in the community where they will be living. If you have volunteered for this type of service, we will call you, get the okay and then send you their contact information.

Your job is simple. You contact the new A.A. member and arrange to take them to an A.A. meeting, preferably within 24-48 hours of their discharge. Your commitment is taking them to as many as six meetings.

During this time, you help them become acquainted, get phone numbers and perhaps locate a sponsor and a home group. You introduce them to others in A.A. so they have a broad, healthy base, then you are available to serve as a Temporary Contact for another person.

Please note: *It is not intended that you become their sponsor, even temporarily. It is best if the word "sponsor" is not used to describe this type of service. The term Temporary Contact is preferred.*

If you are willing to be the hand of A.A. when a member from a facility reaches out for help, complete the Temporary Contact form and give it to your G.S.R., or your BTG coordinator, Corrections or Treatment chairperson.

Volunteers need to adhere to the rules facilities have regarding contact with residents, both while they are in the facility and after they are discharged. The BTG coordinator can provide the necessary information for each facility.

Suggestions for the Temporary Contact

1. Remember you may be the first outside member of A.A. the contact meets. As such, you are representing all of us. It is important to be relaxed, friendly and interested.
2. Keep the general conversation related to recovery. Avoid discussing the new member's discharge. We have no opinion on outside issues.
3. Take time to introduce the new person to as many A.A. members as possible. Do not, however, push your contact. Some people are very shy.
4. Invite them to the "meeting after the meeting" if there is one. Show them we are happy, joyous and free and that sobriety can be enjoyable.
5. Your commitment is usually finished after attending six meetings or as soon as a sponsor has been located. Use good recovery related judgment about when to end the relationship.
6. Make sure the newly released A.A. member receives meeting schedules, phone numbers and A.A. literature.
7. Encourage the new member to attend meetings as often as possible, to find a home group and to get a sponsor as soon as possible. Let them know even a temporary sponsor now would be acceptable.
8. Share your experience, strength and hope with the newly discharged member, just as you would anyone else new to A.A. in your community.
9. Be familiar with the suggestions of the BTG program contained in the pamphlet. We don't offer or imply any other service and assistance unless we personally want to provide it.
10. Please respect the complete anonymity of the new member.

First Name: _____

Family Name: _____

SEX: Male Female

City: _____

Province or State: _____

Zip or Postal Code: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Nighttime Phone: _____

Home Group: _____

Location: _____

This information is confidential
and will remain inside A.A.

Date: _____

Please cut this part and remit to your
GSR, your BTG coordinator,
Corrections or Treatment chairperson.

Thank You for Serving
Alcoholics Anonymous



- If you are interested in becoming a temporary contact you can provide the information to me and I will pass along to the Treatment Chair in your District.
- You can also pass along to your GSR.
- Here is the pamphlet from GSO on Bridging the Gap.
- https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-49_BridgingTheGap.pdf

Treatment Workshop

Thank you for taking the time to come out or log onto the workshop today. Now we will be available for questions.

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