

GSR'S

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW RE YOUR

GROUP INFORMATION

UPDATES

For South Midlands Intergroup

WHERE TO SEND WHAT, WHEN & WHY

FOR THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF AA

**“HELPING THE STILL
SUFFERING ALCOHOLIC
INSIDE & OUTSIDE THE
ROOMS”**

UPDATED APRIL 2023

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GSR: WHAT IS MY BASIC ROLE & WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

(Full role explained in AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain -6th Edition, 2021, Pg. 80 - 82)

The GSR's main role is as a conduit ensuring two way communication between the group and the wider AA. Not a time onerous role, but it does involve 3 important actions:

- 1) To attend SMIG (South Midlands Intergroup) meetings 4 times a year (& send apologies if you can't).
- 2) To pass information to the group as it is circulated to GSR's for distribution and take anything the group wants to communicate back to Intergroup or wherever appropriate.
- 3) The main reason for this document, to keep AA updated when details of the groups and group officers change.**

Taking responsibility for action 3 helps ensure the wheels of AA run more smoothly and desperate alcoholics have a better chance of getting the help they need, when they reach out for it. Not keeping all group details updated has the exact opposite effects.

This document is to help you achieve this. **IF YOU READ IT THROUGH, FOLLOW THE GUIDANCE IN EACH SECTION, CAN PUT A TICK IN EVERY 'DONE' BOX ON THE CHECKLIST (PAGE 11), YOU'VE 'NAILED IT'.....till next time!**

It's helpful if all updates are done as changes arise but, if not, it's good to check we have covered all the bases every quarter, before each SMIG.

WHO DO I NEED TO SEND INFORMATION UPDATES TO?

AA systems alas do not currently enable us to inform AA of information changes once, to one place for automatic forwarding to where it needs to go. So, you need to update:

- 1) *AA GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE
- 2) *SMIG ELECTRONICS LIAISON OFFICER
- 3) SMIG SECRETARY
- 4) SMIG TELEPHONE SERVICE LIAISON OFFICER

(Having said the above, confusing but if you update information on line via the relevant page on the SMIG website, this will also ensure that the AA National website is updated. However, the reverse is NOT true. If you submit information to the AA General Service Office this will only be used to update the AA national website and you will still have to contact SMIG with updates.*

The following pages contain the information you need for 1 to 4 above.

1) SENDING UPDATES TO AA GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE (GSO)

GSO use your information to update the National AA website, enabling outside enquirers, the Telephone Service and Chat Live service to access & give out current meeting details.

Group meeting details required includes: Group name, day of week, time, duration, address (inc. zoom details and password etc., if relevant), if meetings are open or closed, if meetings have wheelchair access, loop system for hearing aid users, sign language interpretation, if operates chat system, name and number of two where to find contacts (see Pg. 10), contact details of group GSR, Treasurer and Intergroup.

You can submit the required information several ways.

- a) on line via the SMIG website <http://aasouthmidlands.org.uk/submit-meeting-information/> (you may need to register to access this area on the website). This way the AA national website and the SMIG website get updated, no need to separately inform GSO.
- b) OR..... complete the Group Registration and Amendment Form via the AA website [https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/AA-Meetings/Submit-Your-Meeting-Information-\(Pink-Form\)/](https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/AA-Meetings/Submit-Your-Meeting-Information-(Pink-Form)/) The SMIG website however is not automatically updated. You still need to inform SMIG (see above/next page)
- c) OR..... You can fill in the Group Registration and Amendment form (inserted in Pg 12 & 13) and email to the address on it or return by post.
- d) OR..... since covid times and until they say otherwise, for simple updates (e.g. Where to Find contact updates), just email groupInformation@gsogb.org.uk (full form not required)

Follow through: Sometimes information can go astray or be overlooked. Updates normally take a couple of days to a week. Please check for yourself the AA website. If you don't see changes made please contact them (Tel: 01904 644026 (0900 - 1700hrs, Mon-Fri) e-mail: groupInformation@gsogb.org.uk)

Two tips to help you re completing the group registration/amendment form.....

- a) *To save yourself the frustration of being timed out if completing on line, ensure you have all the information you need to complete the form before you start.*
- b) *You have to fill in all the information each time even if only one detail changes so, while remembering to keep your group contact details secure, keep a copy of the information you last submitted, to refer to the next time.*

2) SENDING UPDATES TO ELECTRONIC LIAISON OFFICER (ECLO) (ecomm.smidlands@aamail.org)

This information enables the SMIG website details of your group to be updated.

You can submit the required information...

- a) on line via the SMIG website <http://aasouthmidlands.org.uk/submit-meeting-information/> (you may need to register to access this area on the website). This way the AA national website and the SMIG website get updated, no need to separately inform GSO.
- b) Or..... e-mail ECLO (ecomm.smidlands@aamail.org) details of changes to the meetings i.e., date, time, venue etc., whether zoom, face to face or hybrid, zoom address and password etc.
- c) As for the AA National website, please check for yourself the website is updated and, if not, please follow through to ensure the details were received and updates do get made, using the ECLO email address above.

3) SENDING UPDATES TO THE SMIG SECRETARY (secretary.smidlands@aamail.org)

This ensures your group is kept in the AA information loop, e.g. regarding training, workshops, conventions, conferences, SMIG meeting agendas & minutes, Group & Officer reports, service opportunities at various levels within AA, newsletters, safeguarding advice, finance etc. etc

You need to send the SMIG secretary:

- a) Changes in meeting details e.g. Venue, time, date, whether it has disabled access,
- b) Change in Group Officer contact details. Needed are Name, telephone number and e-mail address for GSR & Secretary and name and number of **two Where to Find Contacts**, preferably 1 male, 1 female (see Pg 10).
- c) Your Group Report (see below) **no later than 7 days prior to each SMIG meeting**.
- d) Apologies if you cannot attend the next SMIG meeting (*please try & send another member in your place. It not only means your group is still involved and therefore has information first hand but it gives that person opportunity to have a taste of other types of service available and more understanding maybe of how AA runs*)

Group reports:

Sending reports is part of a South Midlands Intergroup GSR's responsibility though it has been asked from time to time "what is the point?". Regardless whether others read them or not, a properly thought about report can be beneficial for the group itself, (& if read shared experiences can benefit other groups). When a GSR/ group submit reports (& hold conscience meetings) which examine how they are doing and if they are fulfilling their role and purpose, they are more likely to do just that, fulfil their role and purpose. 'Having to' produce a report gives us pause for thought to take stock, it can prevent 'aimless drifting', it can help us focus us on our core purpose of helping the still suffering alcoholic and on the importance of promoting service and service rotation etc.

There used to be a Group Report form to fill in. Please ditch this and simply e-mail the Secretary your concise text so that it can simply be cut and pasted into one, easy for you to read document, along with all other reports. Guidance as to what to include: Average attendance - Are newcomers attending - Is the group contributing financially to SMIG - How is the group & the meetings going in general - Is there anything specific that you have started to do in meetings that you have found to be helpful which may be useful for other groups to consider - Are service positions filled and rotating as generally recommended by AA and agreed on in the group?

SENDING UPDATES TO THE TELEPHONE LIAISON OFFICER (TLO) (telephones.smidlands@aamail.org)

You need to:

- a) Update the TLO with current contact details of 12 steppers for your group (If you don't know what your group 12 stepper list details are in order to check against, please ask the TLO to confirm this to you). Details for each 12 stepper needed are:
 - Their name
 - Their telephone number (& check if numbers change)
 - The times generally the person is not available on the phone
 - Do they have a car
 - What area (distance) they are willing to travel to
- b) Ensure your named 12 steppers understand what their role is (summary of role on next page)
- c) Promote telephone service in the group, whether as a telephone responder or 12 stepper. Anyone interested can obtain more details from the TLO. Recommended sobriety for both roles is 1 year.

12 STEPPERS

These are people who can be called on to help an alcoholic reaching out for support in your area. When someone calls the Telephone Service the telephone responder will try to offer for them to receive a call/visit from someone in their area and/or for someone to take them to or meet them at a meeting in their area. The telephone service will not give out your number, but will call you to ask you to call the person back. The goal for all of this - whether phone calls, visits or meet ups, is to try to get the person to a meeting. Then their recovery is up to them! The ideal is to have 3 or 4 people at least from each meeting, with at least one male and one female.

Hints and Suggestions for 12th Steppers below (Issued by the TLO September 2021)

These are based on AA's collective experience, and the Big Book, Chapter 7, 'Working with Others'. AA has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all its members. AA Great Britain regularly updates safeguarding guidelines, which are found on our website.

1. We cannot know what we may find. It is recommended that no fewer than two AA members go on a 12th Step call. Consider safeguarding at all times, and be aware of the pitfalls, of sexual or romantic attraction. **At least one of the 12 steppers should be the same sex as the person they are visiting.**
2. Involving a newer member can help with identification and give them valuable 12th Step experience.
3. Ideally, meet the person requesting help in a discreet public place, so we can share our experience, strength and hope.
4. If we cannot deal a request promptly (e.g., if no other AA member is available) we phone the alcoholic with an explanation, making it clear that we do care and understand their need for help.
5. When taking someone to their first meeting, we introduce them to other members, help them get contact information, and let them know that there are many different meetings.
6. After the initial contact, we maintain contact with newcomers, answer questions, talk about the benefits of sponsorship where appropriate, and above all, share our experience, strength and hope.
7. We provide newcomers with appropriate literature (starter Pack, Big Book, etc.), and with resources such as local and national website address, 'Chat Now' details and Local 'Where to Finds'. These can help them learn more about AA.
8. AA does not advise about medication.
9. When making contact, particularly by phone, we practise anonymity and avoid leaving indiscreet messages on family phones or leaving our family's phone number with a prospect we have not yet met.
10. When we speak to the still-suffering alcoholic, we 'continue to speak of alcoholism as an illness, a fatal malady'. (Alcoholics Anonymous, p92)
11. Not every person who contacts AA is ready for help. If someone does not wish to meet or come to a meeting, we let them know that 'the hand of AA' is always there if they want help in the future.
12. Remember that there is no such thing as an unsuccessful 12th Step Call. You have both planted a seed, and helped your own recovery.

WHERE TO FIND CONTACTS

AA General Service Office hold a directory of 'Where to Find' meeting details for the country should anyone ring from anywhere asking about specific meetings. The SMIG Secretary has a list of the 'Where To Find' meeting details in the SMIG area, in order to produce a list of meetings that can be given out in meetings. They are primarily there so people can confirm details of specific meetings (e.g. check it is on to save a wasted journey or get help with directions!). 12 steppers may contact them e.g. if a prospective member is coming who is a bit nervous to see if someone could meet the person outside and bring them in.

Two versions are produced, **INTERNAL:** for use by AA members only, **EXTERNAL:** e.g. for use in public such as at GP surgeries, etc. Ideally, on the 'Internal' copies, there should be 2 contact phone numbers from each meeting, one male, one female.





Following are a few tips regarding updating these lists:

- These are based on previous information held and only stay current & therefore useable if you send updates as meeting and contact details change.
- If any changes are needed please notify the SMIG secretary (secretary.smidlands@aamail.org) **AND** GSO (the AA General Service Office - groupinformation@gsogb.org.uk) a.s.a.p. Both are equally important. There is currently no system for automatic distribution of this information to where it needs to be and GSO only accept updates directly from the group.
- Please update **2 weeks** before each SMIG meeting at the latest.
- These are sent to you in electronic format, as one sided A4 documents, for you to print, as you need them, on paper, or distribute electronically to your members. If nobody suitable can print copies for your group, copies can be made available at SMIG meetings, for specific groups and quantities, if requested, **2 weeks** prior to the next SMIG meeting.
- When you receive the new copies, please destroy the old electronic and printed copies. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR LITERATURE BOXES!**

CHECKLIST:

As outlined in this document please try and send details of changes as they arise. In addition, please do use this checklist for yourself and in meetings, in good time before each SMIG meeting. Details can be quickly run through in group 'Any Other Business' or Conscience Meetings.

TASK	Done?	Date done
Are SMIG meetings, Workshop & other relevant dates in my diary (see SMIG minutes for dates for the full year)		
If I can't attend a SMIG meeting have I sent apologies to SMIG secretary?		
If I can't attend, have I asked someone else suitable go in my place?		
Have I sent meeting/ group officer changes to the GSO		
Have I sent meeting/ group officer changes to the SMIG secretary		
Have I submitted a Group Report to the SMIG secretary?		
Have I sent meeting updates to ECLO		
Have I checked the AA & SMIG websites to ensure changes have been done?		
Have I sent the TLO any changes to 12 stepper details		
Have I given the group 12 steppers the 12 stepper role guidance		

GROUP REGISTRATION / AMENDMENT FORM	DATE:
<i>Please return completed form to:</i>	
GSO AA, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ	
Records Dept E-mail address: groupinformation@gsoab.org.uk	
<i>Please delete as appropriate:</i>	
First Group registration: YES/NO	Date of 1st mtg:
Amendment to registered group: YES/NO	
Change Of: DAY (Yes/No) TIME (Yes/No) VENUE (Yes/No)	
Date of Change:	
SECTION A - Information for GSO Records & Where to Find (WTF)	
1. Group Ref No if known:	
2. Country:	3. Country:
4. Venue Postcode (please ensure correct code is supplied):	
5. Town/City of meeting venue:	
6. Name of Meeting:	
7. ADDRESS OF MEETING VENUE:	
Latitude (if known):	Longitude (if known):
8. DAY OF MEETING:	
9. TIME MEETING STARTS:	DURATION:
10. If 'open' meetings held - give details when:	
11.  Full wheelchair access to meeting place:	YES/NO
 Loop system for hearing aid users:	YES/NO
 All mtgs interpreted in British Sign Language: British Sign Language available by request.	YES/NO YES/NO
 Chit system available:	YES/NO
12. Contacts for publication in Where to Find Directory (2 people max)	
Name:	Tel: (incl. STD code)
Name:	Tel: (incl. STD code)
IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR TELEPHONE CONTACTS ON LAST PAGE	

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL SECTION B - FOR GSO CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS ONLY PLEASE GIVE FULL NAMES & ADDRESSES FOR MAILING PURPOSES
ALL GROUP CORRESPONDENCE TO BE SENT TO:
Tel no. (incl. STD code):
Group contact E-mail address:
Secretary: Name /Address/Tel No:
Tel no. (incl. STD code):
Treasurer: Name /Address/Tel No:
Tel no. (incl. STD code):
GSR: Name /Address/Tel No:
Tel no. (incl. STD code):
INTERGROUP - (which Intergroup does your group belong to?):
Generic Group E-mail (no personal E-mail addresses please as this will appear in the Where to Find):
GROUP FOUNDER (if known):

TELEPHONE CONTACTS FOR PUBLICATION IN THE WHERE TO FIND

Extract from Guideline 1

Members whose names appear in the 'Where to Find' should be prepared to take full responsibility as contacts and delegate where necessary. This implies that such a telephone number will be freely available within the Fellowship and that the contact is prepared at any time to:

- ACCEPT A CALL FOR HELP
- GIVE INFORMATION TO A PROFESSIONAL EG A GSO NUMBER
- GUIDE A FAMILY MEMBER TO THE RIGHT SOURCE FOR HELP EG TO AL-ANON
- SPEAK TO MEMBERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP ENQUIRING ABOUT MEETINGS'

By completing these details I am aware that this information will be passed to the Group Information Administrator at the General Service Office, York. Once received it will be stored on a database held within the office and contact telephone numbers will be also be published in the Where to Find and/or London Where to Find.

Signature:

Date:

If at any point you have any queries or would like your details removed from the database and/or Where to Find please contact the Group Information Administrator at:

General Service Office, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York, YO1 6JT

01904 644026

groupinformation@gsogb.org.uk

**PLEASE
ENSURE
THAT YOUR
GROUP
DETAILS
SHOW THE
CORRECT
POSTCODE**

For office use only

RSO

DEL

STATS

WEBSITE GPN