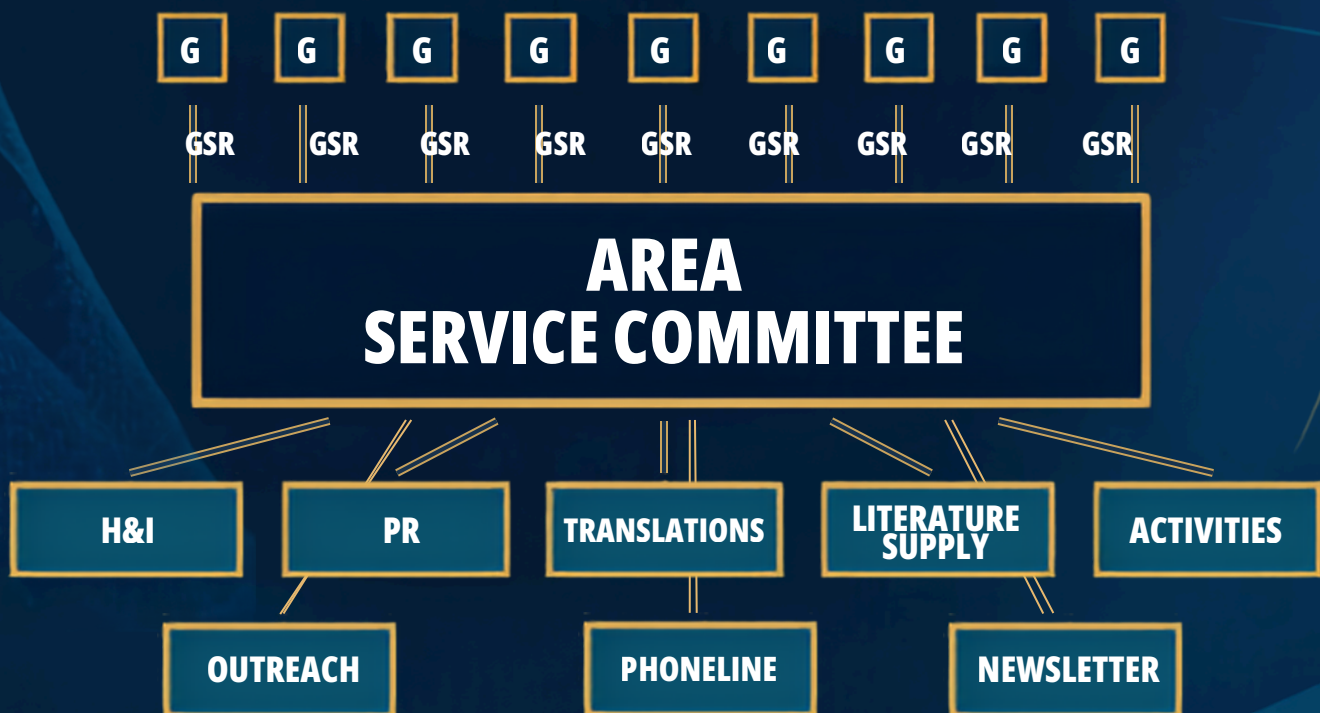


WHAT IS THE AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE?

Think about your first introduction to Narcotics Anonymous. Maybe you learned about NA through a panel meeting at a treatment center or while serving time in jail. Maybe you saw a poster encouraging you to call a local helpline. Maybe you downloaded a meeting schedule from an NA website. Each of these are examples of services provided by a local Area Service Committee (ASC).

You may wonder, “Why don’t NA groups provide these services?” Because as the 5th Tradition states, “**Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.**” If groups focus on providing these services, it can distract from carrying the message and lead to duplicate efforts and wasted resources. That’s why, as the **9th Tradition** suggests, the NA groups create the **Area Service Committee** to provide these services on their behalf.





Members often describe the NA service structure as an upside-down pyramid—groups form **Area Service Committees (ASCs)**; areas form **Regional Service Committees (RSCs)**; regions send delegates to the **World Service Conference (WSC)**. The upside-down pyramid description captures an important nuance of the 9th Tradition: “...service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”



“Area service committees are ultimately **responsible to the groups they serve**. Narcotics Anonymous groups send **group service representatives (GSRs)** to serve on the area committee. While still maintaining final responsibility and authority for area services, they invest enough **delegated authority** in their GSRs—and through them, in the area committee—for the necessary work to get done.”



NA groups also send **money to the area committee**, money needed to coordinate panels, maintain phonelines, and conduct public information activities. Through their **contributions of money and manpower**, the groups exercise both their responsibility and their authority for NA services.



How does the area service committee relate in turn to NA’s regional and world services? In much the same way as the group relates to the area committee: through **carefully selected representatives** who are delegated the authority necessary for effective service.” - **A Guide to Local Services**