

TOPICS

- A 64-Year Conversation
- Electronic Alateen Validation and Implementation Planning Team
- Choosing a Group's Name Policy Discussion
- Local Services Policy Discussion
- Discussion of New Literature on Finances in Recovery
- Next Generation AFG Records
- Board of Trustees Chosen Agenda Item: "Does It Work If You Work It?"

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2024

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

Electronic Alateen Validation and Implementation Planning Team

A 64-Year Conversation

Al-Anon's 64th annual World Service Conference (WSC)

took place April 18–21, 2024, in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Here are some of the highlights from this year's Conference.

(EAVIP) Strategy Team presented the progress made in establishing guidelines which, in the future, could support the formation of electronic Alateen groups globally. The EAVIP Strategy was created after the Board of Trustees approved moving forward with the Alateen Electronic Group Feasibility Strategy Team proposal, which the Team based on feedback gathered at the 2023 WSC and from international structures.

At its July 2023 meeting, the Board accepted the recommendation to create uniform requirements for electronic Alateen groups to hold meetings in our World Service Conference Structure and for our international General Service Offices. Team discussions with Conference members and our international partners were instrumental in creating this proposal.

The EAVIP Team presented the 2024 WSC with the final draft of both the Global Electronic Alateen Safety Minimums (Global EASM) and WSC Electronic Alateen Safety & Behavior Requirements (WSC EASBR) for discussion. Area Delegates were provided a summary of the WSC EASBR process before the 2024 WSC and were asked to gather input from Area trusted servants to share during the Conference discussion. Time ran out during the question-and-answer period, and Delegates were encouraged to send their Area's input via email, which has since been received. This additional feedback is being compiled and will be considered during the implementation process.

Implementation of the requirements to register electronic Alateen groups remains in its infancy. The Conference was informed of the need for additional legal review and further conversations before electronic Alateen groups could be safely registered. The Team will continue to keep Area Delegates informed of progress as it unfolds.

Choosing a Group's Name Policy Discussion

Due to an increase in new group registrations with names perceived as unwelcoming, reflecting affiliation, or emphasizing differences over Al-Anon principles, WSO's Staff Policy Implementation Round Table (SPIRiT) brought the matter of group names to the Policy Committee. Following a robust discussion at the April 2022 WSC Open Policy Meeting, a Thought Force was formed to review the "Choosing a Group's Name" portion of the Policy Digest. In October 2022, the ensuing Policy Task Force was charged with revising the Policy to accurately interpret basic guides and the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service, reflect shared experiences, and identify supporting spiritual principles. After discussion, the 2024 WSC approved wording that adheres to our principles, is inviting and attractive, and avoids public controversy. This comprehensive process is reflective of the unity within our fellowship.

Local Services Policy Discussion

In 2017, the Policy Digest Review Thought Force suggested there were areas in the "Local Services" section of the *Policy Digest* that needed review.

A Policy Task Force was created to review the entire Local Services portion of the Digest. Throughout the last six years, the Task Force's charge was amended and revised for clarity.



Following discussion, the 2024 WSC approved wording that rewrote "Naming a Service" as "Al-Anon Information Services (AISs) or Intergroups" and moved it to "Members and Groups Carry the Message"; removed "Answering Services" and "Information Services (Intergroups)," as they were considered procedure, not policy; and retitled "Employees in Al-Anon Services" as "Service Participation by Employees in Al-Anon Services" with a minor edit and moved the text to "Membership and Group Meetings/Conventions."

Discussion of New Literature on Finances in Recovery

The disease of alcoholism impacts us physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially. After research and discussion that began in 2022, the Literature Committee brought to the 2024 WSC a recommendation for discussion of a new piece of Conference Approved Literature about our relationship with finances in Al-Anon recovery, a topic not covered exclusively by an existing piece of CAL. Delegates discussed the idea, and their responses were very much in favor. Following discussion, the Conference gave conceptual approval to develop the new piece. Conference acknowledged that work on the new piece would be prioritized to follow CAL efforts.



Next Generation AFG Records

Staff presented a wrap-up for the Transforming Electronic Groups project, which began after the 2021 World Service Conference (WSC), and the launch of the 2024 Next Generation AFG Records Project. This new project involves updating the technology and processes that underlie not only the support of electronic groups in geographic and non-geographic Areas but also World Service Office (WSO) operations and even the AFG Connects communities through which Al-Anon trusted servants across the WSC Structure and the globe connect.

Staff presented updates to the al-anon.org Global Electronic Meeting Search (GEMS) and the Geographic Meeting Search made since the 2023 WSC. Insights were offered in response to members' frequently asked question:



“Why can’t groups in geographic Areas be listed on both the Geographic and Global Electronic Meeting Search?”

An answer grounded in Al-Anon spiritual principles and Legacies was provided, and Area Delegates were encouraged to share the information with their groups.

Congratulations and encouragement were offered to the 56 geographic WSC Structure Areas now supporting electronic groups. Delegates were reminded that groups temporarily meeting online need help not only in deciding whether to continue meeting online or return to an in-person format, but also in completing the steps to update their group location rather than registering a new group.

The second half of the presentation focused on Staff discoveries about technology that led them to conclude the current WSO master group and inventory system needs to be upgraded. This new project will take several years. To support Area Group Records Coordinators in the meantime, Staff announced new reports to display details of both electronic and physical groups in the current Online Group Records Application.

Board of Trustees Chosen Agenda Item: “Does It Work If You Work It?”

Jayne Kenney, a PhD candidate, completed a doctoral dissertation in 2023 based on the World Service Office’s (WSO’s) 2018 AI-Anon Family Group Membership Survey. The dissertation, entitled *Does It Work If You Work It? The Therapeutic Elements of AI-Anon Participation*, was presented to the Board of Trustees in July 2023.

Dr. Kenney’s study proposed to answer the question: how does AI-Anon member engagement in certain activities commonly prescribed as essential by the program relate to changes in members’ self-evaluations of their daily functioning and mental health?

In simple terms, what is the relationship between AI-Anon attendance, other recommended activities (finding a higher power, getting a Sponsor, engaging in service, and serving as a Sponsor), and the overall well-being of members?

The research is intended to increase the clinical understanding of AI-Anon as a resource for families and friends impacted by addiction. The researcher concluded that AI-Anon appears to be an effective intervention for its members and engaging in activities commonly prescribed within the fellowship is associated with improved well-being.



AI-Anon members already know this program works, but this highlights ways AI-Anon cooperates with professional researchers who can validate the effectiveness of the AI-Anon program through data analysis.

Conference members were asked to share on how we can convey the correlation between meeting attendance, participation in recommended activities, and increased well-being, and on how we can encourage members who may have settled into the comfort zone to increase participation and focus on continued growth.

MORE INFORMATION INFORMATION INFORMATION

The Highlights of the 2024 World Service Conference has been created to provide a brief overview of our jam-packed 2024 Conference. For additional information, we invite you to read the *2024 World Service Conference Summary* (P-46) after its release later in the year. We hope that you have found these highlights to be helpful, as they only scratch the surface of the many spiritual discussions that will be outlined in the *Summary*.