

## Question 1

What are the potential benefits of welcoming non-geographically based groups into our geographically based Area? What are the potential risks? Are there any options for overcoming the risks?

### Benefits

- Increases our diversity.
- Meet more new people.
- Hear new messages and perspectives from people from different places and cultures.
- Opens the door to wider service skills and experience which can enhance our districts and area.
- Provides additional opportunities to participate in service.
- Different opinions on topics that had not been considered before.
- Members who are "snowbirds" can stay involved in service during the winter months.
- Better able to hear when meetings are on Zoom.
- We can see the autonomy of other groups.
- The more variety of groups and people in Al-Anon, the richer our Al-Anon community will become.
- Financial support – because groups donate to district and area
- Familiarity with technology has increased and made hybrid a possibility.
- Inclusiveness – meetings open to all.

### Risks

- Members may not follow the traditions and may not want to continue practices begun by the local members.
- A deterrent to not returning to face to face meetings.
- Two different pots for group finances.
- Physical location of GR/Coordinator/Officer may be outside of Iowa.
- Travel costs may be a barrier.
- Providing technical component to the District/Area business events can be challenging.
- Network connectivity issues can reduce audio and visual reception.
- Financial impact for electronic equipment maintenance, technical skills
- Voting confusing
- Attend electronic meetings for convenience – don't have full attention, driving connectivity, more attention in person than zoom
- Impact on district and area service structure
- Timezone issue
- Leadership may not get shared as easily, and leaders may burn out
- Local people tend to do the chairing. Non-locals aren't as invested or committed to the meeting.
- Lose the one-on-one and personal touch with the newcomer.
- GR may not be as experienced and doesn't have the support from previous GRs.
- Lose the communication from the District down regarding events, news, announcements, etc.

- No relationship building with going to those district/area events
- Isolation of the newcomer and/or others.

### Options for Overcoming Risks

- Our understanding of technology has increased and members are comfortable attending business and regular meetings.
- Trainings or How to's from skilled members or teaching organizations can enhance our technological understanding.
- Set limits on the geographic location of the GR/CMA/Coordinator/Officers
- Being flexible.
- Understand there will be a lot of learning through trial and error.
- Districts may choose to be non-hybrid and not allow electronic groups into their structure.
- Continue to offer hybrid events and workshops.
- Service Sponsorship to enhance the electronic GR.
- Create a new position for a Technology Coordinator to assist the Area and Districts with technology and digital concerns.

### Question 2

Groups which meet electronically often attract members who do not reside within the geographic boundaries of the Area. These members may be encouraged and willing to serve our groups, Districts, and Area as trusted servants. What impact might this have on our District and Area service structure? What impact might this have on how our Area service responsibilities are fulfilled?

- If not within geographical location, you won't be used to things offered in that area, ex: places to eat and sleep; it would be hard for me to be in an electronic meeting and set something up in Canada, for example.
- It would be hard for them to be present in person if they were from another state or country.
- If it's the world wide fellowship, does it matter where they're from?
- How would we decide in which District they would participate?
- We could create an electronic district.
- Area voting, does it filter to district, does district 7 vote to agree or does the area make the decision for them – still has to be worked out. Has to be agreed upon by district as well.
- Policy will need to be created at the Area level.
- How will districts create or include this in their guidelines?
- Possibly divisive if districts don't want to accept an electronic group.
- Positive impact to our Area because it increases the pool of skill and talent for service positions.

### Question 3

Groups which meet on electronic platforms and seek to participate in the local structure may have trusted servants who reside in different locations across the geographic Area. How would the Area determine in which District(s) these groups would participate?

- I don't know how we could do that.
- Flip a coin.
- We could make a random choice or put it out to districts and see which district would be interested.
- There could be a district with fewer meetings that would be eager to welcome another meeting to their district.
- Districts have autonomy to choose if they want to include electronic meetings.
- Create an electronic district.