

CAADPE is a statewide association and resource for professionals in community-based nonprofit alcohol recovery and other drug abuse services treatment agencies. Members provide substance abuse services at over 300 sites in California. It is the only statewide association representing all modalities of substance abuse treatment programs. Its membership constitutes the infrastructure of the state's substance abuse treatment delivery system.

CAADPE underwrites the activities of AWARE

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AWARE...

**Always
Working
At
Recovery
Environments**

***An Advocacy Handbook
for the
Treatment & Recovery
Community***



**California Association of Alcohol and Drug
Program Executives**

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*



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Preface

This handbook is the result of the work of a dedicated group of advocates who are committed to making a difference in their communities. The information included in this handbook was first presented during the annual California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs Conference, *DESIGNING THE ROAD MAP: Research to Policy- Shaping the Future of Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Service*. The conference examined the applicability of the chronic care model to the substance abuse treatment field and identified trends in the field and areas for future policy development. The conference was held at the Sacramento Convention Center, Sacramento May 4-6, 2005 with 400 individuals attending.

AWARE presented a workshop about the role of consumer advocacy as an on-going and complementary component of the chronic care model, in addition to its importance as an integral activity in treatment and its value as a peer to peer program in sustaining recovery and relapse prevention.

A CD-ROM containing the PowerPoint presentations used by the workshop presenters accompanies this handbook.

Vince Scribner

Vince Scribner is an Operations Supervisor for a 40 bed residential unit for Tarzana Treatment Center in the Antelope Valley. The Tarzana Treatment Center offers a wide range of services ranging from outpatient to residential chemical dependency treatment, HIV outreach services, and mental health assessments through its Community Assessment Center. Mr. Scribner is a Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor and is continuing his education in the field of psychology. He is a member of AWARE and a recovering individual of 6+ years.

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Barbara Spille

Barbara Spille is a Certified Substance Abuse and Addiction Counselor who has worked for the Tarzana treatment Center since 1991, in a variety of roles ranging from counselor to supervisor. She is currently the Alumni Coordinator and has been involved in the Southern California chapter of AWARE as the liaison for Tarzana Treatment Center. She has been involved in organizing many National Recovery Month events, and is a recovering individual of 16 years.

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Larry Gentile

Larry has been the President/Chief Executive Officer of Behavioral Health Services, Inc. (BHS) since July 1979. From 1976 to 1979, he was the Deputy Director of BHS. He has a Bachelor of Arts from St. John's College with graduate work in counseling and business administration. Prior to 1976, he was a teacher, counselor, and school administrator at Mount Carmel High School in Los Angeles. He served as:

- Member and is currently chairperson of the Los Angeles County Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Commission (NDDC);
- Member and is currently vice president of the California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives (CAADPE);
- President of the Southern California Association of Program Directors;
- First Chairman of the California State Advisory Board on Drug Programs;
- Member of Joint Audit Advisory Committee;
- Member of the Governors Drug Policy Council;
- Member of the Inglewood Unified School District Board of Education for four years.

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Ken Selden

Ken Selden has been a Pro Treatment Advocate Specialist at Cri-Help, Inc since 2001. This position let his expertise expand in the field of communication and Treatment Advocacy for Alcoholics and Addicts. Ken graduated from University of Hawaii in 1980 with a B.A Liberal Arts.

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What is AWARE?

Always Working at Recovery Environments (AWARE) is a consumer advocacy program sponsored by the California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives, Inc. (CAADPE).

Aware is unique in that it is the only consumer advocacy program designed for use in treatment settings as a vital component of the treatment process.



The AWARE Mission
 is to empower and encourage
 the recovery community,
 including their families and
 significant others, to contribute to,
 and actively participate in, public
 dialogue about alcohol and other
 drug abuse services.



Workshop Presenters/ Planning Committee

Debra Bonnell

Debra Bonnell has an ongoing relationship with the Tarzana Treatment Center, as she was a patient of its Residential Treatment Program in 2000-2001. After successfully completing treatment, Debra sought employment in the field and began working for Tarzana Treatment Center in November 2001. Ms Bonnell is a member of AWARE and is a recovering individual of four years. dbonnell@tarzanatc.org

Candy Cargill-Fuller

Candy has been the Director of Community Relations and Marketing of Behavioral Health Services, Inc. (BHS) since January 1996. She has a Bachelors Degree from California State University Dominguez Hills in business administration and information technology, and is currently pursuing her masters degree in Public Administration. Prior to 1996, she worked as a drug and alcohol treatment counselor in both public and private settings. She served as:

- Current member of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month Planning Partners;
- Current member of the Los Angeles County Recovery Month Planning Partners;
- Secretary for the Long Beach South Bay Substance Abuse Coalition;
- Communications Chair for the City of Hawthorne Chamber of Commerce;
- Past board member for the Los Angeles Chapter of the Employee Assistance Professional Association.

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♦ **Diversity of AWARE Membership, Activities, & Issues**

Barbara Spille, Vince Scribner, & Debra Bonnell

The session offered some history of AWARE, including the support and underwriting of CAADPE on the group. The focus of the discussion was on the diversity AWARE represents, including those with co-occurring disorders (Hepatitis C, AIDS, etc.), and family members of recovering individuals.

AWARE focuses on activities and the importance of advocacy.

Some of the activities — public education and civic participation projects — that AWARE chapters participated in were described.

The panel discussed activities such as:

Civic Participation

- Homeless Runs,
- Holiday drives for food and toys of the needy and the homeless
- Community clean-up programs

Education

- Proposed California Performance Review Hearings
- Implementation of the Mental Health Initiative
- The discriminatory nature of public benefits assistance
- Identifying addiction as a disease for the larger community
- The difficulties of finding employment after completing treatment.

What is AWARE?, cont.

The AWARE program is a statewide self-advocacy program that involves those in treatment and recovery, their family members and significant others. Through the AWARE program, individuals have the opportunity to share their personal and collective experiences of the alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment and recovery with policy makers and the community at large. The program offers a range of strategies to distribute, collect and analyze information that is important to the recovery community. Self-advocacy activities are available to multiple treatment agencies and individuals in the recovery community throughout the state of California.

History

AWARE was created as a part of the Recovery Community Service Program (RCSP), an imitative program administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services' Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, and designed to be delivered as a peer-to-peer recovery support service. Such programs are not treatment, but can be an extension of it.

Core values

There are many types of RCSP grantees, but they share five core beliefs that give them “common ground”:

- **Inclusion**—Recovery is a big tent and there is room for everybody.
- **Authenticity** — Members of the recovery community use their direct experiences to identify the problems and needs in recovery and find ways to address them.
- **Participatory process** — The full participation and commitment of individual members helps build strong, vibrant recovery communities.
- **Leadership development** — Developing new leaders enriches the community and helps ensure the community’s growth.

Source: Recovery Community Services Program, CSAT

◆ **ROLE OF STIGMA**

Vince Scribner, Moderator

Scribner identified and discussed several points that are a source of stigma for those recovering from substance abuse, including:

- The discriminatory aspects of public benefits and public assistance
- The consequences of community at large not identifying addiction as a disease.
- The difficulties finding employment after completing treatment.

◆ **NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH AND THE ROLE OF AWARE**

Candy Cargill-Fuller, Moderator

Cargill-Fuller discussed the opportunities for community involvement and demonstrated the resources available for groups planning Recovery Month activities.

The Discussions

The panel discussions outlined below focused on AWARE and the ways in which AWARE helps foster positive recovery communities from the perspectives of administrators, recovery professionals, and recovering substance abusers.

◆ **ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR**

Larry Gentile, Moderator

The need for leadership on the part of program administrators when implementing models such as AWARE in recovery settings was the focus of the panel discussion. Gentile discussed the hurdles he personally faced when he first began using AWARE in his own program. His discussion focused on offering suggestions for starting AWARE-type models in existing programs. Because AWARE empowers clients, and this empowerment is vital, he recommended allocating at least one staff member with specific duties for implementing an AWARE program in its early stages.

AWARE Philosophy

AWARE believes that advocacy in treatment settings is desirable in that it promotes civic engagement, thereby complementing and enhancing treatment, and is a step toward re-enfranchisement in community. There is treatment value in active participation and civic engagement which strengthens ties to the community and supports sustaining recovery.

The AWARE Program ...

Educates those in recovery so that they may, in turn, educate the public about the recovery community and encourages them to provide positive, accurate accounts of recovery and treatment.

Empowers those in recovery by providing training and opportunities to address public policy issues with input to policy makers about alcohol and other drugs through personal accounts and statistical evidence on the importance of recovery.

Organizes Self Advocacy Conferences so that those in treatment meet with others in recovery and community leaders.

Creates a voice for the recovery community, strengthening its own community, and providing service to the larger geographical or cultural community.

Provides professional staff assistance from the Recovery Community Service Program for implementing public education efforts and organized visits and tours of treatment centers.

This workshop was presented at the 2nd Annual ADP conference in May 2005.

“AWARE: a Grassroots Model of Advocacy”

AWARE plays a vital role in substance abuse recovery. The AWARE model of recovery is effective because recovery support begins during treatment and continues into recovery, and because it is based on the philosophy that people should talk about treatment and recovery. By actively working to promote national activities such as National Recovery Month and working within local communities to enhance community awareness and reduce stigma, AWARE is an integral part of changing the landscape of recovery communities.

Workshop Description and Details

Millions of people and their families are in recovery from addiction and are leading productive lives. Advocacy and education help break the cycle of addiction and erase the stigma of recovery. Money spent on treatment saves lives and saves money spent for medical and social costs. Dollars spent on alcohol and drug prevention are compounded in savings for future treatment and counseling.

Through advocacy and education, AWARE promotes recovery efforts by re-establishing ties to the community — family, employment, and civic involvement — and believes that people can be vocal about their recovery without compromising the anonymity of those who desire it.



Join AWARE




Be part of the greater recovering community!



Who Should Get Involved?

All persons AOD treatment and recovery, family members, and significant others interested in supporting the improvement of the AOD service delivery system throughout the State of California can benefit by joining the program. AWARE welcomes clients in all modalities of treatment throughout



-  State Office (CAADPE/AWARE)
-  Regional AWARE Chapters
-  Planned Regional Aware Chapters

Sample Agenda Items

Consult the members on what they would like to learn and activities they would like to be involved in as a group or as individual agencies.

Topics

- Tips on job searching at government and commercial agencies
- Effective interviewing
- How to dress
- What to include in a job application
- Civic participation: register to vote, reclaim voting rights, community service

Activities

- Historic sites and State Capitol visits
- Local clean-ups, graffiti removal
- Presentations before community and civic organizations during Recovery Month
- Food collection and distribution to needy families during holidays.
- Regular meetings with police, community policing, and neighborhood watch groups in the area.
- Recovery Month activities – city, county, school board proclamations, Recovery Walks



Ongoing Meetings and Activities

Decide on some goals and objectives for the year. This can include identifying a community project, setting a goal to learn about advocacy, and to conduct a certain number of public education or advocacy meetings for the year.

Have an agenda for each meeting. An agenda will give you a roadmap for what needs to be discussed and keeps everyone on track. Some possible educational topics are on the next page.

See the CAADPE website — www.caadpe.org — and click on the AWARE button for additional information about AWARE and how to replicate AWARE programs and general information about consumer advocacy.

AWARE Chapter Structure and Organization, the Core of Successful Consumer Advocacy

The AWARE Program is a statewide organization comprised of chapters by, for, and about individuals in recovery from, and affected by, the disease of addiction.

Its mission is to empower and encourage the recovery community, including their families and significant others, to contribute to and actively participate in public dialogue about alcohol and other drug recovery services and policies.

Elected leaders of AWARE chapters conduct the business of the chapter, are entitled to certain rights and privileges as elected leaders; and share responsibilities of maintaining the AWARE chapter.

AWARE leaders occupy a position of trust, and as such are subject to the following non-inclusive list of obligations.

- Support the chapter's purposes;
- Constructively contribute to the chapter's programs and activities;
- Share knowledge and experience with fellow officers and members;
- Attend meetings regularly;
- Prepare fully for each assignment, task, and responsibility;
- Report activities at each chapter meeting;
- Apply themselves to the programs outlined by the chapters;
- Participate in chapter activities;
- Evaluate others in a positive, constructive manner;
- Build open, friendly relationships with fellow members and officers;
- Nurture others into leadership positions.

Meetings

The First Meeting

Set ground rules and decide basics, for example meeting frequency, process for notification of future meetings, format for meetings, Informational and educational speakers on topics of interest to the group, as well as business meetings. Develop a telephone tree, post notices on bulletin boards, send out flyers to agency staff , interested clients and families, and send e-mail notices. Organizers should draw up a simple set of standing rules or by-laws to be formally adopted by the group. Existing AWARE chapters are good resources for models of such documents.



And finally, elect your leadership. These are the individuals who will keep the ball rolling and the group on track and focused on the goals.

Four

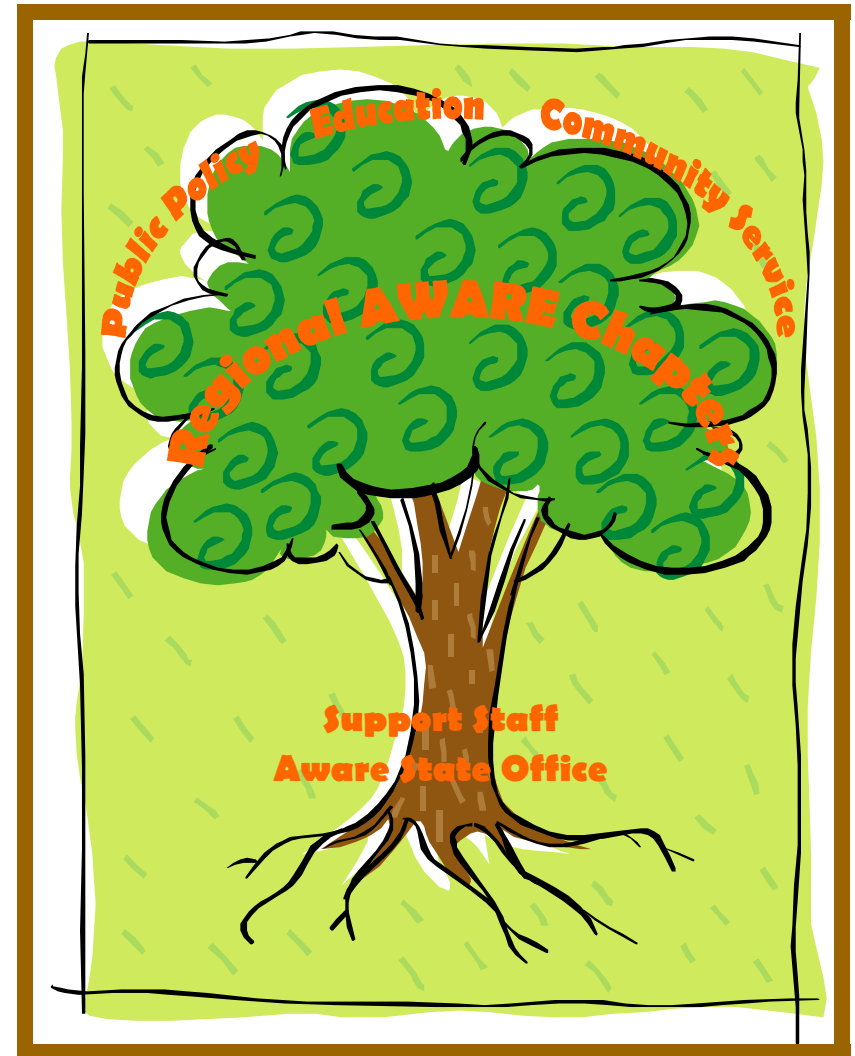
Consult with treatment program executive leadership. This is an important and crucial step in the process. Unless the agency's executive leadership understands that consumer advocacy activities enhance treatment, and they are supportive, it will be difficult for individuals to participate in AWARE activities. (Where there is little support for consumer advocacy with leadership, it may take several meetings and persistence to convince executives that consumer advocacy is a positive activity for the agency.)

Five

Next, set a date and time for the meeting. With agency support, meetings can be held in treatment agencies, sometimes rotating through sites or agencies so no one agency bears the burden of hosting the meeting.

Six

Send out a notice about the group having an initial meeting to form an AWARE program. You need to have an agenda and clear goals for the meeting. This would include a statement about WHY there is a need to start an AWARE program. Don't overlook the help of family members, loved ones and others who are in recovery.



Steps to Starting an AWARE Chapter

Getting started sometimes is the most difficult. But all it requires is one or two individuals with the vision and the goal, a little research, and a lot of patience and fortitude.

The following is a step by step outline on how to identify potential supporters and participants and to organize an AWARE program in treatment agencies.

AWARE programs can be organized in one treatment program with multiple sites or as an umbrella organization that brings together several treatment programs who are in geographic proximity to each other.



One

The first step is to identify like minded individuals and get a commitment that they will help you.

Two

Then, do a little research. Are there any similar organizations that are meeting in your area who are organized around the same issue of promoting substance abuse treatment and recovery? A simple notice posted on the agency bulletin board will let people know that a group is being formed and who to contact.

Three

Collect names of individuals who are interested in helping. Contact information for individuals in treatment can change often. If in residence, potential members are easy to find, but outpatients need to be sure to have telephone access, and if possible e-mail. (While we recognize that many individuals do not have access to a personal computer or the Internet, many individuals use the public library for Internet access and free e-mail.)