

Helpful Suggestions

1. You may be the first member of the local AA community that the prospective member meets; don't be the last.
2. Keep the general conversation focused upon recovery. Avoid discussing the new member's treatment experience. We have no opinion on outside issues.
3. Take time to introduce the new person to as many A.A. members as possible. However, don't pressure your contact; some people are very shy.
4. Invite them to the "meeting after the meeting" if there is one and show them how enjoyable sobriety can be.
5. Generally, your commitment will have been fulfilled after attending 5-6 meetings with the new member. Use sound judgment when deciding when to end the relationship.
6. Make sure the newly-discharged member receives meeting schedules, A.A. literature, and phone numbers if possible.
7. Encourage them to attend meetings, find a home group and get a sponsor as soon as possible. Explain that having a temporary sponsor is better than none.
8. Share your experience, strength, and hope with the newly-discharged member as you would with any other person in the A.A. fellowship.
9. Be familiar with the suggestions of the BTG program contained in this pamphlet. We don't offer or imply any other service and assistance unless we personally want to provide it.
10. Respect the anonymity of the new member.

Remember:

- It is best to take the new member to a meeting within 24-48 hours of discharge.
- You are not responsible for the member's attitude or actions in or out of the meetings.
- It is suggested that you do not become a taxi service, loan money or anything of value.
- We neither act in any capacity to provide services such as counseling, legal assistance, etc., to A.A. members, nor do we intercede on their behalf in any personal matters.
- Alcoholism is sometimes linked together with other addictions such as substance abuse. Non alcoholics are frequently introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous and encouraged to attend meetings. Although any visitor who is interested in A.A. may attend open meetings, only those with a drinking problem are meant to attend closed meetings.

Suggested reading from AAWS

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| <i>Where Do I Go From Here?</i> | (F-4) |
| <i>Information on A.A.</i> | (F-2) |
| <i>A.A. At A Glance</i> | (F-1) |
| <i>A Newcomer Asks</i> | (P-24) |
| <i>Q. & A. About Sponsorship</i> | (P-15) |
| <i>Bridging the Gap</i> | (P-49) |

**For more information, e-mail:
bridgingthegap@snjaa.org**

**Or call:
(856) 728-3318**

Bridging the Gap



Pre-Discharge Contact Program



• Temporary Contact Volunteer •

*Connecting A.A. Members
from Treatment Facilities
to the local A.A. Community*

**AREA 45
Southern New Jersey**

Temporary Contact Form

Please add my name to the list of temporary contacts. I would like to become a *Bridging the Gap* volunteer in our District.

Your Name

E-mail _____

Sobriety Date _____

Birth Year _____ Gender: M / F / Other

City _____ State _____

ZIP Code _____

Mobile Phone _____

Home Group _____

Home Group City _____

District # _____

Please notify the BTG Coordinator when there are changes in your contact information.

Please detach and return this form to the *Bridging the Gap* coordinator or your home group's General Service Representative (GSR).



**Best Option:
Complete the
form online.**



Dear A.A. Member,

Bridging the Gap, or BTG, helps a new member transition from meetings in a treatment facility to the A.A. fellowship in their local community. As a temporary contact, you are being asked to guide them through this process.

The new member completes a pre-discharge form and forwards it to the *Bridging the Gap* coordinator. If you have volunteered for this service, we will contact you, obtain your confirmation, and then forward you the new member's information.

Your mission is simple: contact the new member as soon as possible and arrange to take them to a meeting after they are discharged from treatment. In general, your responsibility is to accompany them to as many as six meetings in your local area.

Note: It is not implied that you automatically become their sponsor, not even temporarily. It is best if the word sponsor is not used to describe this type of commitment. The term temporary contact is preferred.

If you are willing to help a new member, please complete the Temporary Contact Form and forward it to your home group's General Service Representative or anyone on the BTG committee.

All volunteers must adhere to the rules of the facility regarding contact with treatment clients. This applies while they are in the facility as well as after they are discharged.

Program Procedures

1. Those currently in treatment facilities are eligible for BTG when they are within three months or less of discharge.
2. A temporary contact is located and given the new member's contact information.
3. When a new member makes a BTG application, we match that person with a temporary contact in the community where they will be residing.
4. The new member provides such information as discharge date, arrival time in the local area, address and phone number.
5. The temporary contact will arrange to meet the new member at an agreed upon time and location to attend their first AA meeting together. It is important to be punctual.
6. It is suggested that the first meeting be viewed as a regular twelfth step call and that you take another A.A. member with you. Use the same guidelines you would with any newcomer.
7. Review the *Bridging the Gap* program with the new member in order to reduce the possibility of misunderstandings, reminding them it is only a temporary arrangement.

Bridging the Gap

