

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GOES ONLINE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

Alcoholics Anonymous members are coping with the Covid-19 pandemic by taking their meetings online.

The Fellowship of around 40,000 members in Great Britain & Continental European Region have had to adapt to be able to continue their recovery.

The AA Fellowship normally holds 5,000 face to face meetings a week across AA GB but with the Government social distancing policy things have had to change.

The majority of groups have turned to Zoom, Skype and other online platforms to hold their weekly meetings.

Tom Fox, a non-alcoholic trustee elect on the AA GB General Service Board, said: "The Fellowship of AA has been resourceful and two weeks into the lockdown online meetings have become a lifeline for many recovering alcoholics.

"They are able to share their experience, strength and hope with each other and use the 12 Steps and the tools of recovery to help them through very uncertain times.

IN EDINBURGH & MIDLOTHIAN THERE ARE CURRENTLY 45 ONLINE AA MEETINGS.

THESE CAN BE ACCESSED VIA OUR LOCAL WEBSITE AT:

<https://aa-edinburgh.org.uk/online-meetings/>

Where any meeting is shown as CLOSED only AA members and newcomers with a desire to stop drinking can join. Where a meeting is shown as OPEN Anyone with a genuine interest in AA and how it works can join. These would typically be health professionals, those supporting problem drinkers in the community and family members affected by someone's drinking.

"Our phone lines and online response service has seen a rise in the amount of calls since the Covid-19 pandemic began and as a Fellowship we are grateful that we are able to help people during this time and either direct them to another member to speak to or to an online meeting where they can receive help."

Alcoholics Anonymous runs a national telephone helpline as well as an online 'chat now'service for the suffering alcoholic to receive help and an email response service.

Since the outbreak calls to the help line have gone up by 22 per cent and calls to the 'chat now' service have risen by 31 per cent. The email response service has seen a rise of 32 per cent boosted by a 300 per cent increase in requests for meeting information by members as meetings go online. For help contact www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk or call our 24 hour helpline on 0800 9177 650.