



# Strategic Plan 2015-2018

Includes Recap of results initial plan 2011-16

## Thank You:

A special thank you goes to Randy Stinchfield, John Rundquist, Marsha Kelly and Todd Maki (Minnesota Lottery) for their work as a strategic planning committee charged with updating and expanding the original plan from 2011-16.

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## **Mission Statement**

“The Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance is dedicated to improving the lives of those affected by problem gambling through advocacy, education, training, and research.” (*short form*)

## **Core Values**

*Neutrality:* As an affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling, we are neither for nor against legalized gambling.

*Accuracy:* We will strive to ensure that all information we provide is accurate and complete.

*Compassion:* We recognize that problem gambling does not result from moral failings and that those with the condition are not inherently bad people. Our presumption is that they are good people with a bad problem.

*Inclusion:* We believe that the interests of those affected by problem gambling are best served by inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to those in recovery, family members, treatment professionals, the gambling industry, those having professional contacts with problem gamblers, and those in other helping professions.

## **Strategic Planning Timeline 2011 - Present**

Oct 2010	Facilitated Planning Retreat Strategic Plan developed for 2010-16
Dec 2013	Northstar and DHS Host State Summit on Problem Gambling Additional insight to inform NPGA activities and coordinate with State program
April 2014	NPGA Board appoints Strategic Planning Committee to examine the 2011-16 plan, and determine a process to review new information and update plan.
July 2014	SWOT completed by Full Board and results sent to Committee Committee presents discussion and ideas to full Board for approval. Exec Director to compile the final results and plan document

## **Original Plan 2011-2016 Recap**

The next section provides a condensed review of the key areas of focus that guided the work plans and use of grant moneys for the period 2011-2014. Material has been edited for easier review.

1. Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance will continue in the community outreach and education area to expand the awareness, knowledge and understanding of the issue of problem gambling across Minnesota. With creative communications programming using multiple media, we will continue to help Minnesotans understand what problem gambling is, how it affects individuals, and that treatment is available and effective.
2. Beginning in 2011, Northstar Alliance will place a stronger emphasis on its role as a “connector” for the problem gambling treatment community. As the field is still in early development, there is a need for a facilitating organization to work with the treatment community on program development, the continuum of care, and the appropriate educational support required to advance the field. Tactic to develop a Minnesota “Problem Gambling Treatment Consortium”, envisioned as the unifying “trade association” of problem gambling treatment professionals.
3. Training of problem gambling for professionals is not a standardized process. Problem gambling treatment occurs within a variety of professional disciplines and is an area of specialization. Northstar is committed to working with the field in an effort to develop and provide the best possible professional education options available. Keeping training available and affordable will ensure there are qualified professionals available to treat Minnesotans.
4. Research and input from the community show several areas of direct recovery support that are not being addressed in any consistent fashion through services. These are financial management advice or money management services; and accessible legal advice and services. Northstar will explore ways to facilitate development of a volunteer network of professionals in these two subject areas to help fill the gaps in service.
5. Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance is the Minnesota affiliate to the National Council on Problem Gambling. Northstar will work collaboratively with the National Council at the Federal and State levels to e advocacy work being done at the federal level, and will provide a voice to the field and recovery community with the Minnesota legislature to ensure continued and sufficient funding for prevention, education and treatment in this state.
6. The board and staff of the Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance recognize the importance of sound business systems and fiscal responsibility. The Alliance will conduct all its operations in an open and transparent manner and follow the standards and requirements of the State of Minnesota and the Minnesota nonprofit community. The

agency will maintain an appropriate level of operating reserve and develop budget plans and margins that support long term sustainability, including increased donor support and ongoing efforts to reduce operating costs.



### **Implementation 2010-2016**

In 2010 and 2011, there was significant focus on developing a few basic communications “tools” and putting together an infrastructure to manage the agency in alignment with state budget cycles. Much of the other work through the first 2-3 years was reactive, responding to opportunities that were deemed appropriate. Testing various advertising mediums was often possible due to reduced rate offers that were unexpected but appealing. The same for professional conferences, speakers network presentations, and opportunities through the National Council.

The following chart details a few of the most significant program milestones. In some cases, such as the website and social media channels, these “tools” cross all categories and play a significant role in virtually all our work. *(For a detailed look at each year’s tactical implementation and results see the state quarterly summary reports posted on log-in section of the website).*

## Highlights by Category

Community Awareness	Professional Education	Affiliate
<p>Revised Website (2x)</p> <p>Established social media channels.</p> <p>Sent speakers to various community groups and distributed materials at community health events.</p> <p>Developed three radio advertisements.</p> <p>Invited to write commentary articles for several health related publications.</p> <p>Op Ed piece on DFS published in the StarTrib.</p>	<p>Developed Speakers Network curriculums (by audience) for various network members to present throughout the state to both community and professional (clincis, tx programs) audiences.</p> <p>Exhibited at many professional conferences including those for alcohol and drug counselors, MFTs, MSW, Psychologists, and other similar professionals.</p> <p>Presented at lawyer CLE trainings and spoke at CPA conferences.</p> <p>Hosted four MN Conferences on Problem Gambling with a fifth in development for 2016.</p>	<p>Staff and board participation at the National Conference.</p> <p>Participation each year in lottery ticket campaign, and Problem Gambling Awareness Month.</p> <p>Received awarded for our outstanding Newsletter at the National Conference.</p> <p>Exec Director serves on Affiliate Committee</p> <p>NPGA Board member Don Feeney serves on the national Board and serves a term as president.</p>
<p>Advertising through multiple print media, online ads, billboards, radio, to general community: Key messages based on a) gambling can be a serious problem/addiction, b) there is help available, c) treatment works. Advertising has targeted sports fans, recovering people, family members, and its purpse can be either to drive traffic to the Helpline or drive traffic to specific content on our website.</p>	<p>Trained probation officers on problem gambling and how to administer the SOGS to meet state requirements for Rule 82.</p> <p>Produced an online version of the Rule 82 training on behalf of the Dept of Corrections.</p> <p>Produced live stream webinar on SBIRT. (Ken Winters)</p>	<p>Provided more than ten scholarships for MN professionals to attend the National Conference.</p>
<p>Developed brochures and fact sheets based on special needs (audiences) to augment existing materials created by the state and fill in gaps.</p>		

Highlights by Category (Continued)

Connections	Recovery Support Financial Legal	Management
Consortium concept did not proceed due to lack of commitment by providers and the availability of the Advisory Committee to serve that capacity to some degree.	Identified resources for financial assistance. Continue to update as resources are found.  Training for attorneys but unable to develop volunteer network of attorneys to help clients. Real need unknown.	Modified accounting needs following exit of previous treasurer.  Recruited Virginia Davis to serve as treasurer.  Defined process steps for in-house accounting and increased role of external accounting firm.
Building contacts (continues) within the state at all events, meetings, discussions and through web and social media input.		Restructured chart of accounts to meet requirements of DHS.  Shifted accounting function to the cloud for dual access from NPGA office and Accountants
Dialogue with MARRCH in 2014 regarding potential of joint “conference within a conference” was tabled. Continued discussions with MAARCH.		Purchased cloud database service and built highly segmented database beginning with available in-house lists and expanding to over 7000 contacts for news and information and potential donors.
		Document agency operating procedures
		Met budget expectations to receive \$50,000 match grant 3x.

**What’s Missing**

While the original strategic plan was in place there continued to be areas of involvement that became additional focal points not originally identified. The two primary areas were/are Research and Advocacy.

The need to support research projects became clear over time, both to assist Northstar in planning but also to inform work being directed by the State program. All reports are available on the website.

### Completed Research Highlights

- Minnesota Problem Gambling Awareness Study, a baseline study completed in 2011 and 2013 for comparison on awareness and attitudes over time. Designed to help measure effectiveness of awareness efforts.
- Several examinations of Minnesota Student Survey data examining youth gambling trends and difference by ethnic backgrounds and by geographic areas.
- Review of literature on gambling in older adults and using data from the MN Lottery gambling surveys to guide a prevention campaign for seniors.
- Focus group on appropriate language use and approach for advertising and messaging.

### Advocacy Efforts

Northstar is a gambling neutral entity. Our policy is to advise legislators on problem gambling issues, and to advocate for awareness and treatment funding. We take no position on whether there should or should not be gambling. When there is discussion of, or bills related to gambling, we are available to testify and to help legislators understand the issue. We add new incoming legislators to our database each election cycle and insure that they are receiving our publications that can keep the issue of problem gambling in the forefront and position Northstar as the organizational expert on the issue.

Originally legislative funding for the national affiliate ( Northstar) was written into law as a one-time appropriation. It required us to seek a new appropriation every biennium by writing a bill, finding a sponsor, and getting the bill passed in both houses. In 2013 Senator Ann Rest carried our bill in the Senate and Senator Paul Gazelka was one of the House sponsors. In that bill we successfully removed the requirement of having to earn \$50,000 in matching funds in order to receive the total appropriation of \$225,000. In the final hearing in the HHS committee, following testimony from Northstar's Executive Director, the bill was passed, and in addition, at the suggestion of Chairman Senator Tony Lourey, the appropriation was made permanent, eliminating the biennial bill process. An extremely helpful action for Northstar's small staff.

## **Enhancing the Plan for 2016 and Beyond**

The planning committee's recommendation were discussed and given a nod of approval by the Board in July 2014. At that time Grant II had just been initiated (March) and with that funding came both significant opportunities and a touch of chaos as we worked to maximize the value of each dollar. For a variety of reasons, a more formal strategic plan was not completed at that time.

### **Importance of Planning**

Careful planning is an absolute must if we are to be the most effective in delivering effective programming. Unfortunately the contracting stage has gotten ahead of the planning stage. The recent contracting cycle that blended both funding streams (grant I and grant II) into one new contract provided a very short window (once we were informed of the appropriation dollars) to develop project plans and budgets for the remainder of FY 15-16 and FY 16-17. This resulted in making more decisions about projects and funding on the fly without the type of thought and analysis that should occur. A critical success factor moving forward will be our ability to plan thoughtfully and be prepared to flex rapidly to match the funding levels available.

### **From the Strategic Planning Committee**

#### General Observations and Recommendations

- The existing strategic plan is comprehensive and consistent with our mission. It also overlaps well with the critical issues that emerged from the state summit.

*Recommendation: Continue to strengthen current work and focus on doing a few things well rather than trying to do everything.*

- When people think of Northstar there needs to be no struggle defining who we are and what we do.

*Recommendation: While our mission is to focus on the topic of problem gambling, we must also continue to strengthen the awareness of Northstar as an agency. Multiple audiences, whether individuals, families, professionals, lawmakers, or the media will help broaden general awareness in the state when they understood what Northstar is and what we provide.*

- Awareness and Education has been our primary focus

*Recommendation: It would allow us to better focus awareness efforts by identifying primary goals within defined audiences as opposed to using modest budgets to do “general awareness”. This area should be closely coordinated with DHS.*

- NPGA, as the Minnesota affiliate to the National Council, can continue to learn from and collaborate with NPGA and other affiliates.

*Recommendation: NPGA should monitor the National Council strategic plan and see what directions might be taken from that, particularly in the area of reserve fund and endowment funds. Also explore strategies and tactics that are being successfully used (or tried and discarded) by other Affiliates.*

- Our ability to plan has primarily been driven by estimated funding allocations from the state.

*Recommendation: A strategic goal for NPGA should be to establish alternative funding options and establishing a stronger reserve fund. This includes expanding corporate sponsorships and Also work with DHS on the timing of information related to funding and plan appropriately to avoid last minute decisions on how to allocate the funding from the State.*

- We have an established online presence and much of the future work for Northstar can build off that capacity.

*Recommendation: Online communication and education opportunities abound and a great deal can be accomplished online to support our mission and achieve goals within awareness, education, research and advocacy.*

- The tribal communities that operate casinos have varying attitudes and approaches to their role and responsibility in the area of responsible gaming programs.

*Recommendation: Develop a proposal for the tribal leaders that will offer Northstar as a resource and invite them to join in the efforts around responsible gaming. Work with MIGA as to the scope of the proposal and use their contacts to initiate a conversation. Considerations might be a basic problem gambling training for casino managers and supervisors, or some sort of assessment of current RGPs within each casino.*

The following tactical projects have been allocated for through June 2017. While some are very specific as to activities, others are more general and provide the flexibility for us to fit them to needs.

Each of these projects is aligned in some capacity with key focus areas and in line with the recent recommendations from the strategic planning committee.

## **Awareness**

**Older Adult Awareness Campaign** – targeting seniors and family members with prevention messages

**Northern Exposure** – Short name for a broad brush campaign in the Northern 1/3 of the state that has included print advertising, out of home ads in bars and restaurants, presentations to professional MH programs and AOD treatment agencies, and awarding of scholarships for professionals to take problem gambling training and become state providers in towns/areas where there are few services (Addresses summit issue of access to care)

**Radio Commercials**- budgeted to produce at least one additional radio commercial. Audience and messaging to be determined.

**Video Clips**- To increase the value of our social media and web presence, we will produce a variety of short and simple video clips using regular people, recovery people, professionals and even animated graphics. These short clips will be used to address various issues targeting specific audiences. For example, a current gambling counselor stating the 3 things someone has to do to become a gambling counselor; or a short one or two sentence message from a recovering person stating the one thing they would want someone to know about problem gamblers, (Problem gamblers are good people with a bad problem. Get the facts, visit [www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org](http://www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org)).

**2016 Awareness Month** – This year's campaign has ended and the results are being compiled.

**Adv online, radio, print** – this category is budgeted to allow for flexible choices in online radio and print advertising to take advantage of good placement sales, or test various market options. Creative to be determined.

**Website Upgrade** – the internet is changing quickly and as discussed in the strat planning committee, much of our work in the coming years will use online options. The Northstar Website has evolved and is constantly changed based on needs. This budget item is to upgrade the platform the site is based on and make some visual and structural changes to improve accessibility.

**Speaker's Network Presentations** – funding to continue the Speakers Network to do outreach to targeted organizations and agencies and respond to speaker requests.

**General Reprints / Materials**-Northstar is the primary distribution channel for both the state awareness materials and information pieces we have developed. Reprint budget.

## **Education**

**Legal Materials** – Developing prevention material for attorneys who are high risk for gambling problems, and also for attorneys who may deal with clients who have gambling issues.

**Rule 82 Web Training** – continues our work with training probation officers on Rule 82. Web training had been requested by Dept of Corrections for a couple years.

**2016 MN Conference in November** – A two day conference is being planned for Nov 2-3 2016.

**Police or jailers/ law enforcement materials and outreach-** We are getting more frequent requests from jails and correction facilities speakers and/or materials. Also some law enforcement interest. These are two important audiences and we have no targeted materials for them.

**Scholarships / counselors-** Our Northern Exposure campaign identified nine professionals in underserved areas of northern Minnesota who wished to participate in problem gambler counselor training. Funds were budgeted in the event it is deemed appropriate to offer some similar options in other underserved regions of the state.

**Scholarships / National Conference in NY** –this meets our goals to help ensure a well trained problem gambling workforce. Attendance at the National Conference can have great educational value for Minnesota professionals.

**Continuing Education Training for Providers/Webinars** – the topic of training counselors has been debated for about two years between DHS, the advisory committee and other stakeholders. Some dissatisfaction with the current online training opportunities led us to explore our role in facilitating training for counselors. We explored options including creating new training, leasing online training from out of state and facilitating its availability. Given the current state of these discussions it was agreed between Northstar and DHS that we would continue in an effort to provide continuing education for current professionals. The issue of “basic training” for new gambling counselors will continue to be discussed.

**Fact sheet series or target audience brochures-** While we proactively plan to produce targeted materials for specific uses or audiences, there are times when an idea presents itself to do something that will meet an immediate need not previously considered. Budgeting funds this way provides flexibility to respond if desired.

**Casino Employee Training and Responsible Gaming Materials-** This project addresses the strategic need to better engage the tribal casino operators in partnership to address responsible gaming program options.

## Research

**Survey of Non-gambling providers** intended to expand understanding of where gamblers go for help if not the state provider network. Also as measurement of prevalence.

**Focus Groups:** Goal is to use some funding to do additional focus group work on the problem gambling issue and how to reach people. Details to be determined.

**Research / Test MSS** –Randy Stinchfield worked with DHS and the Dept of Education to get new gambling questions reinserted in the MSS. This project is to test the validity and reliability of these new questions which will be administered this year.

## Advocacy

While always available for comment and to assist legislators, we have no plans at this time to do any proactive work in the advocacy area.

## Organizational Operations Improvement

**Computer and Printer Purchase (1x)** – Budgeted to upgrade some office equipment.

**Speakers Network Coordinator** through 2017- there is a need to restructure how we use our speakers and what resources we need to manage an ever increasing plans. The current coordinator position was budgeted to continue.

**Non-budget Fundraising** / Northstar is unable to use grant funding to explore and create long term development systems, programs and goals. In the short term we have engaged a consultant for some initial discussions for a few hundred dollars. Our non-state funding will need to support any fundraising infrastructure and/or hired consultants.

Additional plans are underway for improvements in financial operations and policies. Al Lund, Board treasurer will work with the Executive Director and Sannerud Saverese accounting firm to assess current operations and work toward improvements

## Current Budget

<b><u>Grants Summary for Biennium Contract 15-16-17</u></b>		
-		
Grant II Carry Over from Dec 2015	<b>105,400</b>	
Grant II New Contract !@ April 2016	<u>279,000</u>	
<b>Grant II Total contract April 2016 to June 30, 2017</b>	<b>384,400</b>	384,400
<b>Base Contract for Biennium</b>	<b>450,000</b>	450,000
		<b>834,400</b>
Total Grant Funds	<b>834,400</b>	

Projects	FY15-16	FY 16-17
<b><u>Awareness</u></b>		
Older Adult Awareness Campaign	31,000	0
Northern Exposure	10,000	0
Radio Commercials	0	5,800
Video Clips	1,500	3,100
2016 Awareness Month	50,000	0
Adv online, radio, print	3,000	17,000
Website Upgrade (1x vs ongoing)	4500	4000
Speaker's Network Presentations	0	0
General Reprints / Materials	4,000	4,500
<b><u>Education</u></b>		
Legal Materials	2,500	4,000
Rule 82 Web Training	45,000	0
2016 MN Conference in November	0	35,000
Police or jailers/ law enforcement materials and outreach	500	7,000
Scholarships / counselors	4,500	3,000
Scholarships / National Conference in NY	0	4,000
Continuing Education Training for Providers/Webinars	0	30,000
Fact sheet series or target audience brochures	0	20,000
Casino Employee Training and Responsible Gaming Materials	8,000	27,000
<b><u>Research</u></b>		
Survey of Non-gambling providers	2,500	0
Focus Groups: Minnesotans Knowledge about Problem Gambling	0	30,000
Research / Test MSS New Questions Validity	2,500	2,500
<b><u>Advocacy</u></b>		
No extra expense	0	0
<b><u>Organizational Operations</u></b>		
Computer and Printer Purchase (1x)	1,500	1,500
Speakers Network Coordinator through 2017	5,000	10,000
Non-budget Fundraising / consulting/ program	0	0
	176,000	208,400
<b>Total 384,400</b>		

The above budget is for Grant II projects, a total of 384,400. This is in addition to the 450,000 per year grant I base funding, which supports the operations costs and includes programming for maintaining the website and social media, speaker's network programming and conferences, and the print newsletter and e-newsletter.

Combined the total budget for FY 15-16 and 16-17 is 450,000 plus 384,400 for a total of 834,400 for the biennium, 417,200 per year.