



Strategic Planning Report

14 April 2019

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Strategic Planning Process

Initial Research and Analysis

NPGA’s strategic planning process began in October 2018 with the following activities. This Board-led effort was coordinated by a Board-appointed Steering Committee (SC) and supported by strategic planning consultant Anne Carroll of Carroll, Franck & Associates. SC members included the following:

- Don Feeney
- Michael Hochman
- Marsha Kelly
- Marie Hinton
- John Rundquist
- Susan Sheridan Tucker, executive director

This phase included the following tasks:

- Baseline information and governance review
- Stakeholder identification and analysis
- SWOT analysis
- Logic modeling

Round 1 Engagement

To ensure the Board’s strategic planning work was shaped by the perspectives of key stakeholders, Steering Committee members built on the results from the previous tasks and developed a set of critical questions. In January 2019 the following groups were invited to share their ideas online in January 2019 and a handful were interviewed; approximately 63 people participated:

- NPGA Board
- Staff and contractors
- NPGA allies and friends/ mailing list members, donors
- National Council on Problem Gambling (national office staff and selected state affiliate directors)
- Gambling researchers in Minnesota
- Certified gambling treatment providers
- MN DHS Advisory Committee members

Goal-Strategy Mapping

Complete results from Round 1 were shared with the entire Board, and members were assigned specific sections to study in detail. In early March 2019 the entire NPGA Board and lead staff participated in a day-long goal- and strategy-setting workshop, working from Round 1 results. Facilitated by the strategic planning consultant, the group used a robust “causal-mapping” process that yielded a tightly aligned set of draft long-term goals (10-15 years), mid-term strategies (3-5 years), and a host of supporting tactics.



Round 2 Engagement

The purpose of this round was to gather feedback on the draft goals and key strategies from key stakeholders to shape the final Board decisions, help inform implementation and action planning, and identify opportunities and ideas for collaboration to advance common priorities.

In preparation for gathering stakeholder feedback on the drafts via an online survey, the linked goals and key strategies were clustered and further described. For each goal cluster we asked the following questions:

- How will this goal help NPGA make a meaningful difference with problem gambling?
- What's missing or what would make this goal better?
- How might you/your organization and NPGA work together to accomplish our shared priorities related to this goal?

Email invitations were sent to the following stakeholder groups; 37 people participated: Board members, providers, the national organization and key state affiliate leads, providers, and a few other key stakeholders. A web link was provided to mailing list members.

Final Core Strategic Plan

Round 2 Stakeholder feedback was used to identify any refinements and then prepare the proposed final set of goals and strategies provided in this Report for Board review and approval on 17 April 2019. There was one change to a key strategy to make it clearer and more relevant. The rest of this Report provides a brief overview and detailed information on the goals and key strategies.

Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Following Board approval of a final set of long-term goals and mid-term key strategies, the Board and staff will begin the next phase including the following major tasks:

- Address governance issues: This may include sample policies and procedures, new or revised content, alignment with evaluations, and similar
- Develop action planning framework: To put the strategic plan to work, develop aligned, dynamic, and transparent Board and staff action plans that are usable and valuable and provide the basis for the Board's critical strategic monitoring responsibilities
- Develop Strategic Plan monitoring and update process: Create a plan for the Board to monitor and evaluate the organization's progress against the Plan goals and key strategies, and a process for regular Plan reviews and updates

Overview

Mission and Core Values

NPGA's **mission** is to improve the lives of those affected by problem gambling through advocacy, education, training, and research. Our work is guided by our **core values**:

- **Neutrality:** As an affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling, we are neither for nor against legalized gambling.
- **Accuracy:** We 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 a gambling problem are not inherently bad people.
- **Inclusion:** We believe that the interests of those affected by problem gambling are best served by inclusion of a wide range of interests. These interests 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.

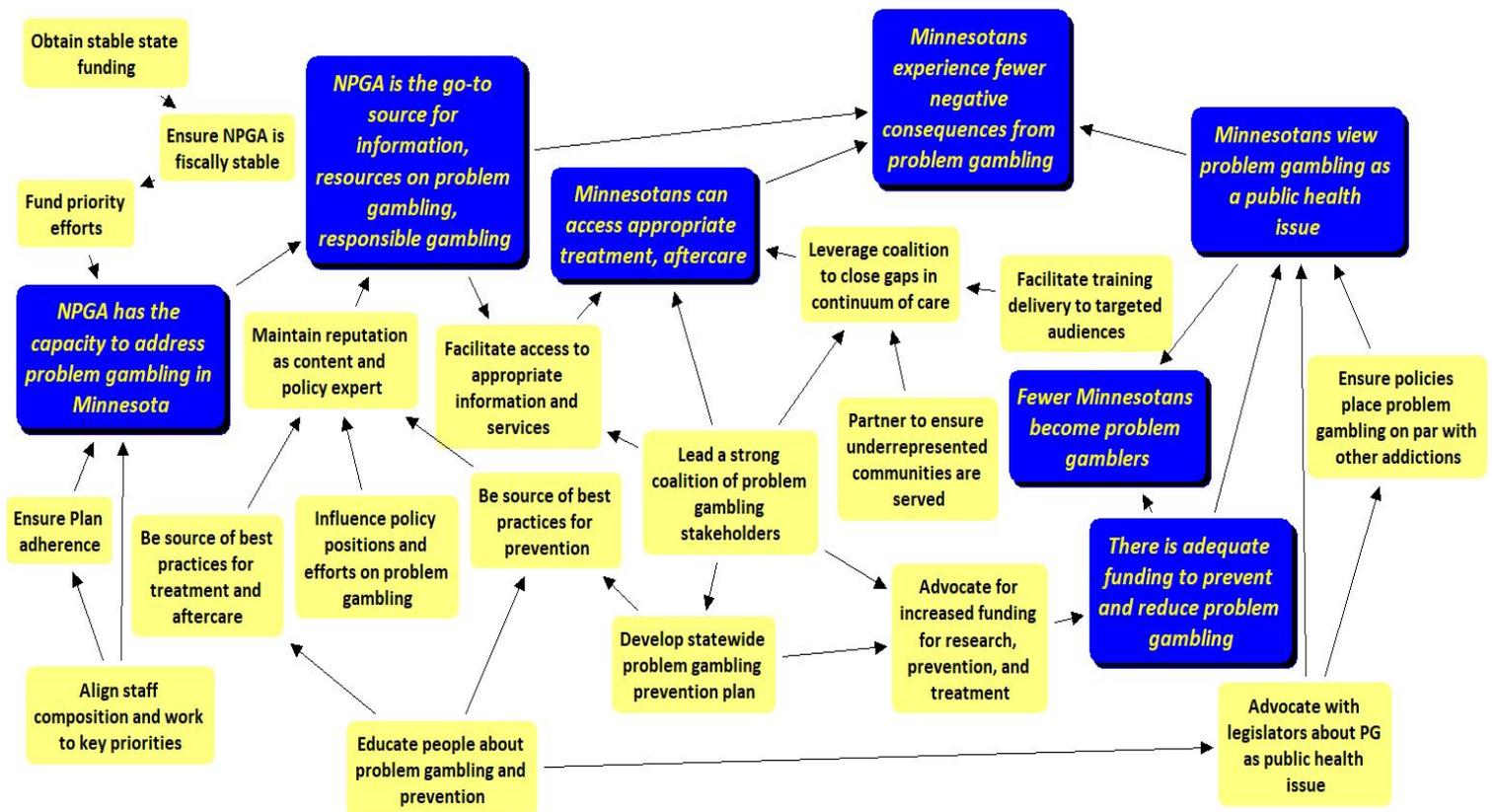
Summary Goals and Key Strategies

The graphic below summarizes the final goals and key strategies, detailed beginning on the following page:

- The aspirational goals (**blue**) look out 10-15 years and will require strong partnerships to achieve
- To advance those goals are key strategies (**yellow**) that will take 3-7 years to complete or maintain
- These are further supported by a large number of tactics that will be part of annual staff and Board Workplans

The NPGA Board and staff have committed to monitoring, reporting out, and regularly updating the Strategic Plan and continuing to work closely with all key stakeholders and partners to accomplish our common priorities.

Mission: The Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance is dedicated to improving the lives of those affected by problem gambling through advocacy, education, training and research.



Goal: NPGA is the go-to source for information, resources on problem gambling, responsible gambling

Description: This goal and supporting strategies highlight NPGA's role as a known and respected resource. This includes prevention, responsible gambling, treatment, and aftercare, as well as national issues. Through our collaborative relationships with its stakeholders, NPGA will gather, disseminate, and provide resources relating to problem gambling issues. We remain committed to keeping up with best practices and communicating them to the community. This goal is supported by the capacity-building goal and in turn helps reduce negative consequences from problem gambling.



Mid-term strategies supporting this long-term goal

- **Be source of best practices for prevention:** NPGA is recognized in the community as the organization that provides the best resources to the community for prevention
- **Influence policy positions and efforts on problem gambling:** NPGA has a seat on the National Council on Problem Gambling board/subcommittees and plays a key role in state policy activities to help move our agenda forward
- **Be source of best practices for treatment and aftercare:** NPGA collaborates with others to promote the most effective services
- **Maintain reputation as content and policy expert:** NPGA is known in the community as the go-to organization because it stays on top of problem gambling and gambling expansion issues

Goal: Fewer Minnesotans become problem gamblers

Description: Ultimately, if NPGA and its stakeholders work effectively over time, we will see a reduction in the number of Minnesotans becoming problem gamblers. This goal is supported by other goals that address problem gambling within a public health approach and has funding from a variety of sources to inspire and sustain “upstream” initiatives that address awareness and responsible gambling programs through wide-reaching education and a statewide prevention plan.

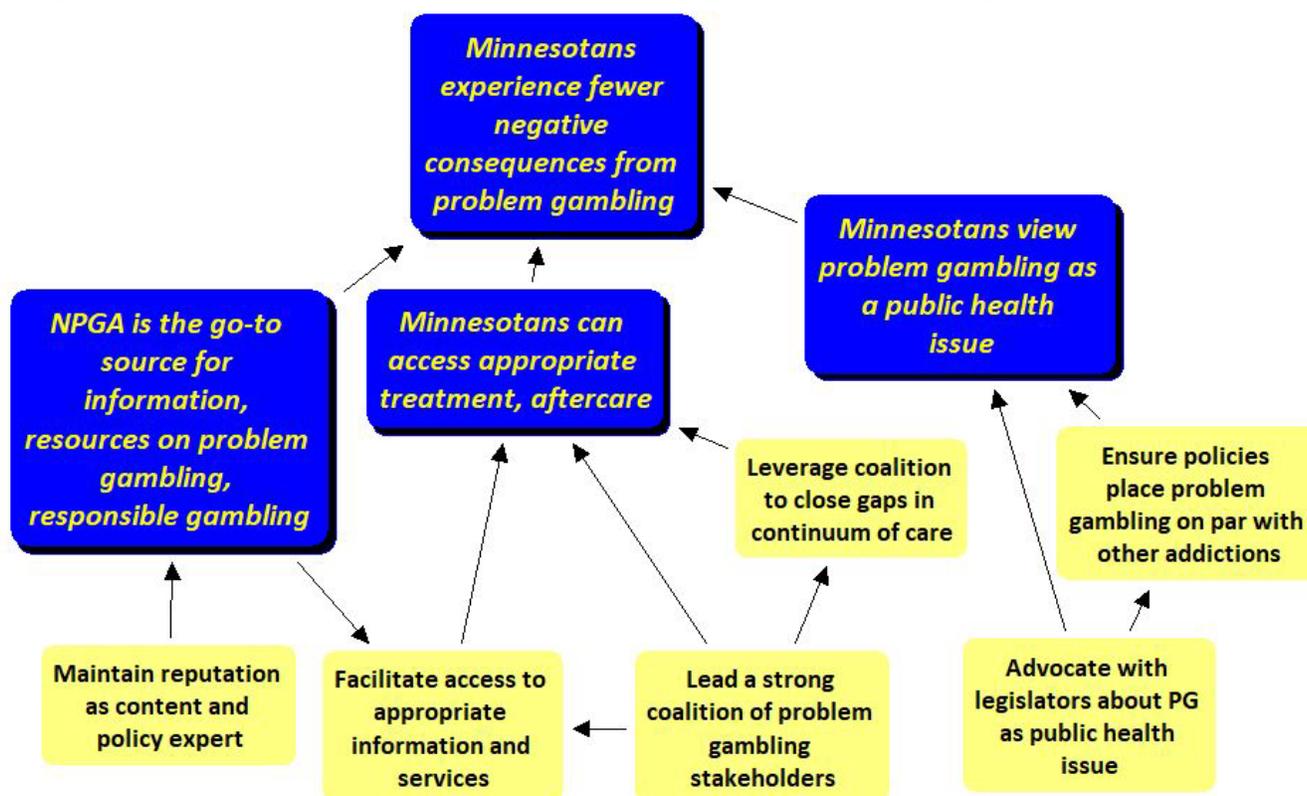


Mid-term key strategies supporting this long-term goal

- **Advocate with legislators about problem gambling as a public health issue:** NPGA develops strong relationships with key lawmakers to understand issues relating to problem gambling
- **Ensure policies put problem gambling on par with other addictions:** Work to ensure Minnesota policies reflect the similarities problem gambling has with other addictions, without forgetting problem gambling also has some unique characteristics that require particular attention
- **Develop a statewide problem gambling prevention program:** With input from stakeholders, develop a statewide comprehensive plan that includes education for teens, young adults, diverse communities, responsible gambling practices, self-exclusion, etc.
- **Advocate for increased funding for research, prevention, and treatment:** As NPGA works to identify needs, advocate with the legislature and gaming industry to contribute funds for program development

Goal: Minnesotans experience fewer negative consequences from problem gambling

Description: This goal is directly supported by other goals and their key strategies that focus on updated information and resources, appropriate treatment and aftercare, and a clear understanding the problem gambling is a public health issue. Reducing the consequences is a multi-pronged approach achieved through strong relationships and advocacy that ensure deep understanding of key issues and close gaps in the continuum of care. A comprehensive approach incorporating prevention, education, treatment, enforcement, research, responsible gambling, and recovery will lead to few negative consequences from problem gambling.

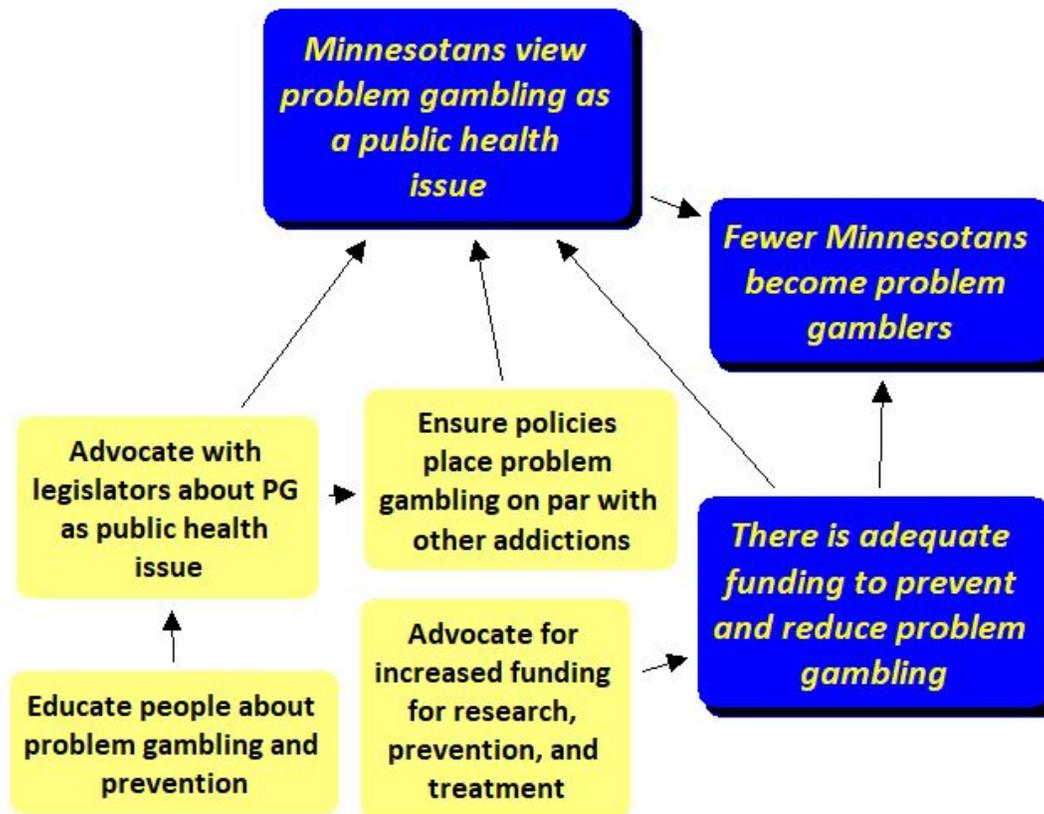


Mid-term key strategies supporting this long-term goal

- **Maintain reputation as content and policy expert:** By becoming the state "experts" on problem gambling we will build our credibility and trust within the community as the source for all things problem gambling
- **Facilitate access to appropriate information and services:** NPGA uses its public funding to ensure that those impacted by problem gambling have numerous ways to step onto the "ramp to recovery"
- **Lead a strong coalition of problem gambling stakeholders:** Build relationships across a variety of stakeholders to increase visibility for the issue; NPGA becomes the leading convener for the voices of problem gambling to advance common priorities
- **Leverage coalition to close gaps in continuum of care:** The power of a strong coalition enables NPGA with others to identify the gaps in care and services; recognize there are many solutions; and accept problem gamblers where they are in their path and work with others to provide access to various methods of care
- **Advocate with legislators about problem gambling as a public health issue:** Problem gambling has its social costs; though it is difficult to measure the real impact of problem gambling on a community we know that it can destroy families, leave people destitute, increase criminal activity, that the suicide rate is higher with problem gambling, etc.
- **Ensure policies put problem gambling on par with other addictions:** Work to ensure Minnesota policies reflect the similarities problem gambling has with other addictions, without forgetting problem gambling also has some unique characteristics that require particular attention

Goal: Minnesotans view problem gambling as a public health issue

Description: This goal and supporting strategies focus on statewide awareness and understanding of problem gambling as a critical public health issue. This is supported by strong education and advocacy and successfully convincing state leaders that policies place problem gambling on par with other serious addictions. Policies and practices must acknowledge this issue is significant for those addicted and for their communities. We know when an issue is elevated to this level of importance and information is conveyed to Minnesotans at each life stage, there is a greater likelihood of reducing problem gambling.

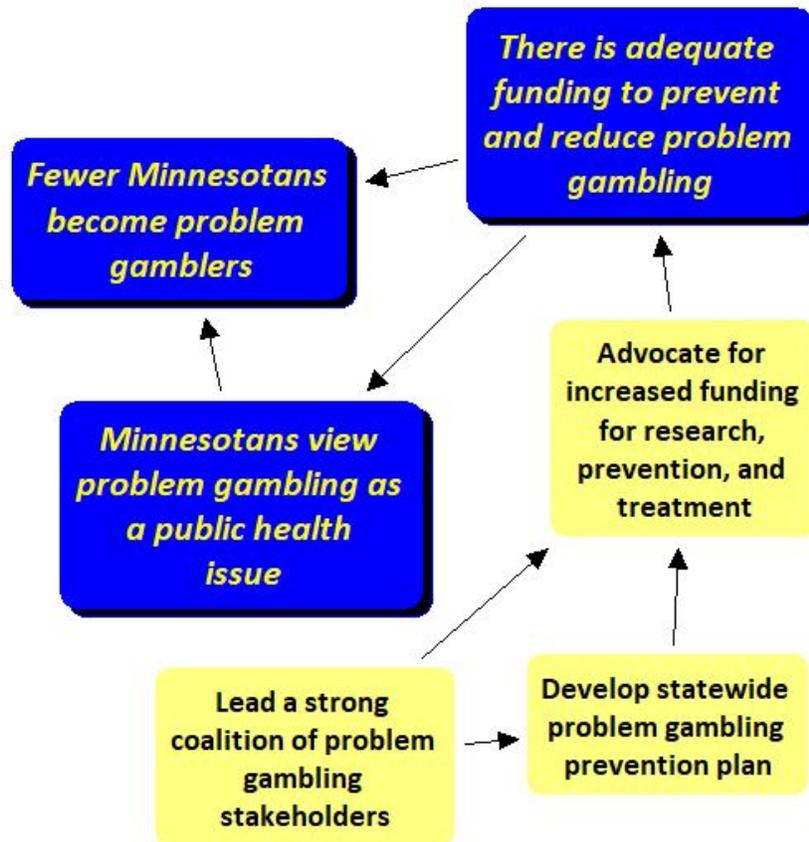


Mid-term key strategies supporting this long-term goal

- **Educate people about problem gambling and prevention:** Expand our outreach so problem gambling messaging is distributed statewide
- **Advocate with legislators about problem gambling as a public health issue:** Problem gambling has its social costs; though it is difficult to measure the real impact of problem gambling on a community we know that it can destroy families, leave people destitute, increase criminal activity, that the suicide rate is higher with problem gambling, etc.
- **Ensure policies put problem gambling on par with other addictions:** Work to ensure Minnesota policies reflect the similarities problem gambling has with other addictions, without forgetting problem gambling also has some unique characteristics that require particular attention
- **Advocate for increased funding for research, prevention, and treatment:** As new forms of gambling become legalized and available on mobile phones we will need to understand and address the impacts of new technology and expansion

Goal: There is adequate funding to prevent and reduce problem gambling

Description: This goal and its supporting strategies focus on ensuring adequate funding -- from a variety of sources -- to prevent and reduce problem gambling in Minnesota. This is advanced by NPGA building strong relationships and leading a coalition to develop a statewide plan and successfully advocating for the funding that is needed for research, prevention, and treatment.



Mid-term key strategies supporting this long-term goal

- **Lead a strong coalition of problem gambling stakeholders:** Build relationships across a variety of stakeholders to increase visibility for the issue; NPGA becomes the leading convener for the voices of problem gambling to advance common priorities
- **Develop a statewide problem gambling prevention plan:** Bringing together all voices represented, NPGA helps develop a comprehensive state plan to address responsible gambling, awareness, and prevention among youth, young adults, veterans, elderly, and underserved communities
- **Advocate for increased funding for research, prevention, and treatment:** By developing strong stakeholder relationships we can build our advocacy voice for the needs identified specifically from those who live with/ work with problem gambling

Goal: Minnesotans can access appropriate treatment, aftercare

Description: This goal and supporting strategies highlight the critical importance of all Minnesotans having access to the quality treatment programs and services they need, along with aftercare. This is supported by key strategies that build a strong coalition to help close gaps in the continuum of care by identifying and better serving underrepresented communities, ensuring robust training for a variety of audiences, and improving access to comprehensive information and services. There are a variety of “on ramps” to recovery and whichever path an individual chooses all need to be accessible, effective, high quality. These may include traditional counseling, gambler’s anonymous, peer counseling, tools for financial planning, self-exclusion, or positive play tools, as well as providing for a variety of languages and cultural practices.



Mid-term key strategies supporting this long-term goal

- **Facilitate training delivery to targeted audiences:** Work with experts to coordinate the delivery of appropriate training
- **Lead a strong coalition of problem gambling stakeholders:** Build relationships across a variety of stakeholders to increase visibility for the issue; NPGA becomes the leading convener for the voices of problem gambling to advance common priorities
- **Partner to ensure underrepresented communities are served:** Develop relationships with various cultural groups to better understand how problem gambling affects their communities and jointly determine ways NPGA can facilitate better access to services
- **Facilitate access to appropriate information and services:** NPGA recognizes Minnesotans have different needs and helps improve access to meet those needs
- **Leverage coalition to close gaps in the continuum of care:** By building strong relationships with each stakeholder cohort NPGA helps identify the gaps and facilitates closing those gaps