

National Society of  
Genetic  
Counselors



Strategic Plan  
2019 - 2021

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## Introduction

The National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) Board of Directors developed this strategic plan during a one-day strategy session on June 21, 2018. The plan provides a roadmap through 2021 that creates focus in order to optimize NSGC's resources for maximum impact. Members of the Board of Directors and staff agreed on four areas of focus that will have a significant impact on the future of genetic counseling and delivery of genetic services. The Board and staff then worked together to identify short- and mid-term objectives and action steps to achieve those strategic goals. The NSGC developed this plan with the assistance of the SmithBucklin Consulting Team.

## NSGC Mission

**Our Mission:** The National Society of Genetic Counselors advances the various roles of genetic counselors in health care by fostering education, research, and public policy to ensure the availability of quality genetic services.

## Definitions

**Strategic Area of Focus:** A critical issue or set of related issues, which NSGC can influence with attention, focus, and action.

**Strategic Goals:** A broad outcome statement based on a critical issue that requires NSGC's attention, focus and action. It must have *significant* and *meaningful* impact on our ability to realize our mission.

**Objectives:** A precise statement of what will be done to support the achievement of a strategic goal.

**Action Steps:** Specific tasks or projects critical to achieving the objectives and overall strategic goals that are measurable and time specific.

## Future Process

In order for the NSGC to achieve its strategic goals and mission, the Board must actively monitor progress towards achieving objectives, and adjust the plan as needed when they encounter changes in their environment or barriers to success. A quarterly dashboard is recommended to monitor progress and an annual strategy session will be necessary to ensure the plan remains relevant.

# NSGC

## Strategic Areas of Focus and Strategic Goals

### Strategic Area of Focus 1 Service Delivery

**Strategic Goal 1:** NSGC will promote the delivery of high value genetic services to all consumers based on individual needs.

### Strategic Area of Focus 2 Access to Genetic Counselors

**Strategic Goal 2:** NSGC will engage government and third party payers in order to increase access to genetic counselor services.

### Strategic Area of Focus 3 Research

**Strategic Goal 3:** NSGC will develop an infrastructure to accelerate research to evaluate genetic counseling processes and outcomes.

### Strategic Area of Focus 4 Diversity and Inclusion

**Strategic Goal 4:** NSGC will promote a culture of inclusivity that supports visible and invisible diversity, and leverage that culture to expand the perspectives represented in our field, build community and foster equity in genetic services.

## Objectives and Action Steps for Goals

### Strategic Area of Focus 1 Service Delivery

**Strategic Goal 1:** NSGC will promote the delivery of high-value genetic services to all consumers based on individual needs.

#### Objective 1:

Promote tools that allow reliable identification of patients who may benefit most from genetic counseling by genetic counselors and promote delivery of high-value genetic services by all clinicians.

#### Action Steps

- Identify medical and psychosocial risk factors that influence patient outcomes impacted by genetic counseling by genetic counselors when compared to other healthcare providers by September 30, 2019.
- Develop and validate an algorithm to identify individuals with complex needs that are managed, optimally, by a genetic counselor by September 30, 2020.
- Develop and/or adapt models for collaborative genetic service delivery within healthcare teams by December 31, 2020.
- Disseminate algorithm and collaborative delivery models to members to promote within their clinical settings by March 30, 2021.
- Assess opportunities and develop a plan for promoting algorithm and collaborative delivery models to relevant stakeholder groups by June 30, 2021.

#### Objective 2:

Promote collaborative approaches to care that support the delivery of effective, efficient, value-based genetic services across healthcare systems.

#### Action Steps

- Work with professional organizations representing healthcare providers to educate their members about effective incorporation of genetic services within their practice through December 31, 2021.
- Develop business cases for hiring, utilization and retention of genetic counselors in diverse work settings by December 31, 2019.

- Develop and disseminate resources for members to advocate to relevant stakeholders for efficient delivery of genetic counselor services allowing genetic counselors to practice at the top of their scope by December 31, 2020.

## Strategic Area of Focus 2 Access to Genetic Counselors

**Strategic Goal 2:** NSGC will engage government and third-party payers in order to increase access to genetic counselor services.

### Objective 1:

Achieve recognition of genetic counselors as authorized providers by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and ensure implementation of the law.

#### Action Steps

- Build a patient and industry coalition to support passage of the Access to Genetic Counselor Services Act by March 30, 2019.
- Lobby Congress to support and pass the Access to Genetic Counselor Services Act until passage of bill.
- Influence the development of rules and regulations to support successful implementation of the law within 12 months of bill passage.
- Provide education and resources to members and employers about the impact of genetic counselor recognition by CMS simultaneous with implementation of the law.

### Objective 2:

Support the passage, implementation, maintenance and monitoring of genetic counselor licensure or regulation in the US and Canada.

#### Action Steps

- Support member efforts to pursue genetic counselor licensure in all fifty US states until all states achieve licensure.
- Provide grant funding in support of state licensure and provincial regulation efforts through December 31, 2021.
- Monitor licensure laws and support members in ongoing maintenance or revision of licensure laws in line with NSGC model licensure language through December 31, 2021.

**Objective 3:**

Engage in payer advocacy to increase access to genetic counselors.

**Action Steps**

- Advocate for robust coverage policies and adequate reimbursement for genetic counselors through December 31, 2021.
- Work with third-party payers to develop policies that simplify and streamline the preauthorization process for genetic counselors coordinating genetic services by June 30, 2020.
- Educate payers about the value of employing and consulting with genetic counselors in roles including utilization management, coverage policy development and review, peer-to-peer appeals, and test assessments by December 31, 2019.
- Inform health plans about genetic counselor recognition by CMS once the legislation is enacted.

**Objective 4:**

Promote the establishment of defined genetic counselor networks that are easily accessible by the public.

**Action Steps**

- Meet with third-party payers to educate about growth of the profession and advocate for establishing defined certified genetic counselor networks by December 31, 2019.
- Ensure health plan provider directories include genetic counselors by title by March 30, 2020.
- Disseminate information to members about how to ensure they are included in the payer networks by March 30, 2020.

### Strategic Area of Focus 3 Research

**Strategic Goal 3:** NSGC will develop an infrastructure to accelerate research to evaluate genetic counseling processes and outcomes.

**Objective 1:**

Establish NSGC's 2019-2021 research agenda.

**Action Steps**

- Develop high-level research questions that will identify and evaluate best practices and outcomes in the delivery of genetic counseling by September 30, 2019.
- Finalize and approve NSGC's 2020-2021 research agenda by November 30, 2019.
- Publicize approved research agenda to members and other potential researchers and stakeholders by January 1, 2020.

**Objective 2:**

Develop an infrastructure to support funding and ongoing management of research.

**Action Steps**

- Investigate options for a grant management infrastructure by June 30, 2019.
- Assess financial impact of preferred options and develop a recommendation for Board approval by September 30, 2019.
- Investigate options for identifying and accepting unrestricted research funding by September 30, 2019.
- Implement approved infrastructure by March 31, 2020.

## Strategic Area of Focus 4 Diversity and Inclusion

**Strategic Goal 4:** NSGC will promote a culture of inclusivity that supports visible and invisible diversity, and leverage that culture to expand the perspectives represented in our field, build community and foster equity in genetic services.

**Objective 1:**

Establish an organizational structure to advance, monitor and revise our approach to inclusion, diversity and community building.

**Action Steps**

- Develop an organizational inclusion and diversity statement by June 30, 2019.
- Create ongoing opportunities for members to connect in a manner that bridges practice settings, geographic location and background through December 31, 2021.

- Develop and implement a plan for an ongoing, structured NSGC community-building initiative by October 31, 2019.
- Assess barriers to professional development of underrepresented groups within the genetic counseling profession and identify any opportunities for NSGC to reduce identified barriers by June 30, 2020.

**Objective 2:**

Identify, guide and develop resources and partnerships to facilitate member outreach to engage with diverse communities.

**Action Steps**

- Advance education and provide opportunities for self-reflection around cultural competence and sources of conscious and unconscious bias through December 31, 2021.
- Identify and engage with organizations with influence in targeted and underrepresented patient communities by March 31, 2020.
- Create tools for members to engage with community organizations to reach potential patients by December 31, 2020.
- Assess barriers to recruitment of underrepresented groups into the genetic counseling profession and identify any opportunities for NSGC to reduce identified barriers by June 30, 2020.
- Develop mechanisms to highlight genetic counseling as a career within hard-to-reach communities by December 31, 2020.