



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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**National Counseling Group Celebrates 15 Years  
Addressing Mental Health Needs Throughout Virginia**

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***Anniversary Celebrated at NCG's 2<sup>nd</sup> National Conference in Richmond;  
Event to Feature Governor Tim Kaine, General Assembly Leaders on Mental Health  
Policy, and Nationally Recognized Mental Health Experts***

Richmond, Va. – On Thursday, May 1, 2008, the National Counseling Group, Inc. (NCG) will officially celebrate its 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary providing quality mental health services to meet the needs of individuals and families throughout the Commonwealth. NCG's Second National Conference will take place from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Greater Richmond Convention Center (403 North Third Street, Richmond, Va.).

Fifteen years ago, Thomas W. Minnick, President and CEO of NCG, worked with co-founder Mr. Sam Gray to launch NCG as an outpatient program designed to more effectively address the needs of individuals suffering from the combination of mental health and substance abuse disorders by treating dual diagnosis under one roof.

"This was an important movement away from our experience with local programs where substance abuse services were provided separate from traditional mental health services," said Mr. Minnick. "This approach left some individuals and families to encounter a disjointed counseling experience, which we aimed to eliminate." Initial staff recruitment focused on professionals hand-picked for their expertise treating both substance abuse and mental health disorders.

Developed based on a foundation of research-based strategies and interventions, NCG created the Adolescent Dual Diagnosis Program (ADDP) model, which used two staff people to co-facilitate each group, with one of those individuals certified in Substance Abuse Counseling. The result – NCG quickly gained a reputation in northern Virginia for effectively treating even the most challenging clients through its strengths-based, progressive approach.

Quick success based on its unique approach in northern Virginia led to requests that NCG expand its continuum of care, reach into other parts of Virginia and accept additional sources of funding. Now with offices in Annandale, the Eastern Shore, Herndon/Dulles, Hopewell, Manassas, Martinsville, Newport News, Richmond, Virginia Beach, Roanoke and Winchester, NCG continuously evaluates and updates its mission and corporate values to ensure they reflect its efforts to increase accessibility of mental health and substance abuse services for all. NCG remains focused on meeting the varying needs of communities that are rural, suburban and urban, as well as addressing individual and family needs related to language, race, background, and socio-economic status.

Identifying resources to help meet basic needs of safety, shelter and health, as well as mental health, is also a priority to NCG. For this reason, charitable support is a critical component of NCG's mission. In 2007 alone, NCG made more than \$50,000 in church donations. It contributed \$35,000 in scholarship services, which allow them to provide care to individuals and families who don't have the resources to pay for the services they need or cannot access local, state or federal funding for services.

"Needs for services don't end when funding runs out," said Mr. Minnick. "We put our patients first, which means we do all we can to help them get the services they need."

In 2007, NCG also contributed a significant amount through Department of Corrections Mental Health Support Service scholarships. This community-based program offered by NCG is funded through Medicaid for those who are eligible.

"There is a significant population of adults with chronic mental illness coming out of correctional facilities across the Commonwealth without Medicaid services in place," said Minnick. "The problem is that these individuals have a critical need for care if they are to remain in the community without repeat offenses, leading to incarceration."

As a result of the systemic difficulties and lack of the coordination that is necessary for these individuals to access resources for care, NCG has provided more than \$230,000 worth of services to meet their needs.

"Our mission to provide care to all those in need has driven our growth and success over the past 15 years," said Mr. Minnick. "Public-private partnerships, community-based programming, offering Medicaid-funded services and charitable giving have all enabled us to better meet the mental health needs of individuals and families through Virginia."

Showcasing the impact public-private partnerships can have in the mental health arena is a primary focus of NCG's Second National Conference in Richmond on May 1<sup>st</sup>, where NCG will celebrate its first 15 years of success. The event will also feature remarks from Governor Tim Kaine, Del. Phil Hamilton of Newport News, former Secretary of Education Jim Dyke, and nationally known mental health expert, Dr. Stanton Samenow. Community Service Awards will be presented to Mr. Bud Sedwick, Comprehensive Services Act Coordinator for Henry and Patrick Counties and the City of Martinsville, who will be recognized for his support of the needs of children in his community, and the 31<sup>st</sup> Court Services Unit Food Basket Drive, which will be recognized for providing holiday meals to needy families annually in the Prince William County, Va., area.

Attendance at the conference is free for members of the media with advance registration; Contact Mindy Williams at [mwilliams@accesspointpa.com](mailto:mwilliams@accesspointpa.com) or 703-222-7607 to register.

## **BACKGROUND:**

*The National Counseling Group, Inc. (NCG) is a private organization that was established in 1993 by Thomas W. Minnick in order to provide an outpatient program designed to more effectively address the needs of individuals suffering from the combination of mental health and substance abuse disorders by treating dual diagnosis under one roof. Comprised of highly skilled, professional and caring counselors, NCG has provided premium therapeutic services to individuals and families throughout Virginia for 15 years. NCG has received many accolades for providing a variety of outpatient and community-based services to address community mental health needs throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. NCG currently has offices in*

*Annandale, the Eastern Shore, Herndon/Dulles, Hopewell, Manassas, Martinsville, Newport News, Richmond, Virginia Beach, Roanoke and Winchester.*

*NCG specializes in treating behavioral problems, substance abuse issues, mental health disorders and family discord. As a result, countless professionals have utilized NCG to service the needs of children, adolescents, young adults, adults and families. In addition to receiving referrals from private psychiatrists, attorneys, and physicians, NCG has strong relationships with public agencies throughout Virginia. NCG has contracts with more than 100 public agencies (including various Departments of Social Services, Court Services Units, Community Service Boards and public schools) and serves clients in more than 50 counties.*

*In addition, NCG is playing a major role to increase the accessibility of care to children, adults and families through public-private partnerships, provision of community-based programming, offering Medicaid-funded services and through charitable giving. In fact, in 2007 alone, NCG served more than 4,000 individuals and donated more than \$300,000 to community causes. For more information about NCG, visit [www.nationalcounselinggroup.com](http://www.nationalcounselinggroup.com).*

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