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September 1, 2007

## Northstar Physicians Presents 2007-2008

### Media Kit ...

#### **Keeping Independent Healthcare Alive and Well in the Northland**

(Duluth) Northstar Physicians Network is the **only** comprehensive network of independent clinics serving NW Wisconsin and NE Minnesota. Founded by physicians who want to practice outside the confines of corporate medicine, it offers patients an alternative to system clinics that tend to dominate local healthcare options.

By working together, these physicians offer patients the best of both worlds: personal, individual care backed by a network of resources. This network provides them with the same clinical programs and other resources found in mega medical systems.

Enclosed is more information about the **who, what, where and why** that makes this network work and examples of what our motto "**Big Enough to Make a Difference, Small Enough to Care**" really means to the patient.

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**Please keep this packet on file for future reference for your medical/healthcare beats, as it contains important community contact information and sources for current healthcare issues. Any questions about this information should be directed to Jeffrey L. Tucker, CEO, Northstar Physicians Network, (218) 722-8802, [jtucker@northstarphysicians.com](mailto:jtucker@northstarphysicians.com).**

the why

## Why Physician-Driven Care Makes a Difference ... and How Northstar Physicians Network Makes it Possible

**"I became a sole practitioner because I wanted to feel more in control of the time I was able to spend with my patients."**

– Susanne Pearce, MD, Duluth

A doctor who takes his/her time with patients? Who is the final word in their care decisions? Who knows what's happening with each patient no matter where their care is taking place? In this day and age of medicine by system-driven bureaucracy?

Concerned about not being able to compete with ever-growing corporate medical entities, eight private-practice Duluth physicians decided to join forces 22 years ago. Today this collaboration has evolved into a **network of 24 independent clinics** from Chisholm, MN to Hinckley, MN to Hayward, WI to Longville, MN.

The Northstar Physicians Network allows its physicians to deliver the level of care they feel is only possible at an independent clinic. It also allows these clinics and their patients access to the same services available at the larger non-independent clinics: the latest in quality improvement, risk management, patient safety and disease control programs, as well as state-of-the-art equipment and technology.

This network works by connecting physicians with patients through health plan contracts and community outreach. It connects physicians with physicians, clinics with clinics and clinics with vendors. Its administration provides training to clinics throughout the year and buying power to keep patient costs low.

**"Bright and passionate physicians come together to discuss the standards by which we want to practice. Northstar fosters that collaboration."**

-- Ken Ripp, M.D., Raiter Clinic, Cloquet

the where

**Northstar Physicians Network Cares for the Northland**  
**... with 24 Independent Clinics in 13 Communities**

<b>Chisholm, MN</b>	Chisholm Medical Clinic
<b>Cloquet MN</b>	Community Memorial Hospital Specialty Physicians Community Memorial Women's Health Services Raiter Clinic, Ltd
<b>Cromwell, MN</b>	Gateway Family Health Clinic
<b>Crosby, MN</b>	Central Lakes Medical Clinic
<b>Duluth, MN</b>	Duluth Kidney Services, LLC Joseph J. Sivak, MD, PLLC, Psychiatry Kundel Pediatric Associates Lake Superior Internal Medicine Northland Family Physicians Northland Urological Associates P.S. Rudie, M.D. & Associates Relf Eye Associates
<b>Eveleth, MN</b>	Iron Range Clinic
<b>Grand Rapids, MN</b>	Itasca Surgical Clinic
<b>Hayward, WI</b>	North Woods Community Health Center
<b>Hinckley, MN</b>	Gateway Family Health Clinic
<b>Longville, MN</b>	Longville Lakes Medical Clinic
<b>Minong, WI</b>	North Woods Community Health Center
<b>Moose Lake, MN</b>	Gateway Family Health Clinic (main office) Mark Gregerson, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon, Mercy Hospital & Health Care Center
<b>Sandstone, MN</b>	Gateway Family Health Clinic

**"Our physicians provide continuity to their patient's primary care.  
I don't think that happens consistently in other care facilities across town."**

– Patricia Mayer, M.D. P.S. Rudie & Associates, Duluth

the who

## Local Physicians, Northstar Members Address Concerns of Today's Patients

### **Children's Health Issues**

Northstar Physicians knows parents look to the media for information about current medical risks to their children. This year's flu season – how bad will it be? To immunize or not to immunize? Lead exposure – how to recognize and treat it. Family practice medicine is the backbone of our network, and our physicians are ready to address these and other concerns.

**Media Contact: Maria Kundel, MD, Kundel Pediatric Assoc., (218) 722-1408**

### **"Where's My Doctor" Anxiety**

Too often today a patient loses contact with their primary care physician once they are in the hospital or referred to another specialist. Northstar Physicians Care Coordination program retains the primary care provider's lead role throughout the care process.

**Media Contact: Bruce Penner, RN, Director of Clinical Operations, (218) 722-8802**

### **Delivering Healthcare to Rural Areas/Physician Shortage**

It is predicted a primary care physician shortage will hit within the next few years, with rural areas particularly at risk. The Northstar Physicians Foundation sponsors a scholarship fund that specifically encourages medical students to pursue family practice medicine in rural areas.

**Media Contact: Jeffrey L. Tucker, CEO, (218) 722-8802**

### **Women's Health Issues**

Women face many challenges in choosing the right care paths today. Hormone Therapy – Yes? No? What's the best way to manage heart disease, the number-one killer of women? Are the new, non-traditional breast cancer treatments safe? Our physicians help women sort through the myths and misconceptions.

**Media Contact: Susanne Pearce, MD, Lake Superior Internal Medicine, (218) 727-0800**

### **Quitting Smoking/Diabetes/Hypertension**

Northstar Physicians Network clinics have achieved a 79 percent success rate for managing hypertension, which is twice the national average. They also surveyed almost 100 percent of their patients about smoking and now have 68 percent of patient-smokers enrolled in a cessation program. Learn about what's working and what isn't.

**Media Contact: Bruce Penner, RN, Director of Clinical Operations, (218) 722-8802**

### **Controlling Costs/Employer-Employee Health Plan Concerns**

Concerns are increasing about how costs are determined at healthcare facilities in Minnesota. Most of the public is not aware a single state agency is responsible for setting these costs for each and every clinic and for the largest employer in the state: the State of Minnesota. Northstar Physicians is leading an effort to make the process fairer and open to the public.

**Media Contact: Jeffrey L. Tucker, CEO, (218) 722-8802**

the what

## Northstar Physicians Network Fast Facts

- Northstar Physicians Network's independent clinics are located in 13 communities across Northern Minnesota and NW Wisconsin.
- Each clinic is independently owned by the physicians who practice at them.
- The Network provides each of its facilities with a multitude of resources such as:
  - The latest in clinical training.
  - State-of-the-art technology and equipment.
  - Programs that often exceed national standards in several care areas.
  - A built-in referral network and the ability to refer out of that network based on patient needs.
- More than **500 people are employed**, including 148 doctors and 19 physician assistants/nurse practitioners.
- Northstar Physicians Network contributes more than **\$30 million annually in economic impact** to the Northland.
- The Northstar Physicians Foundation contributes to various community nonprofit organizations with a mission of improving medical care and education throughout the region.
- The Northstar Physicians Network administrative offices are located in Duluth.

**"I see the basic concept of being only about the patient has wandered far away from where it was intended to be.**

**With Northstar Physicians, we hope to bring it back."**

– Edmund Draper, Mb, ChB, Iron Range Clinic