

## The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research Policy & Action (EDC) Announces New Policy Director

**WASHINGTON, DC, April 18, 2014** – The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action ("EDC") announced Kathleen MacDonald as the new Policy Director of the EDC. MacDonald has a ten-year history of working in the field of eating disorders and has expertise in the areas of education and prevention, insurance advocacy and policy related to eating disorders and mental health parity. MacDonald brings not only her professional strengths to the EDC, but also a personal perspective on eating disorders; she recovered from a long battle with the very diseases for which the EDC advocates. "My struggle with eating disorders was in part prolonged because I did not have access to medically necessary treatment," said MacDonald. "When I was sick, the EDC provided a beacon of hope when I thought no one cared about people suffering with eating disorders. During my recovery process, I became a citizen advocate at the EDC's National Lobby Days. It was through EDC National Lobby Days that I learned the power of advocacy, the power of using my voice and the power of policy."

"We are so thrilled to have Kathleen join our organization as Policy Director. She is a beacon of hope to so many struggling, a fierce advocate, and a respected professional. She brings a voice to the voiceless," said Johanna Kandel, EDC Board President. "We look forward to this new chapter for the Eating Disorders Coalition and to continuing our work bring recognition of eating disorders as a public health priority."

In 2004, MacDonald partnered with EDC Member Organization [The Gail R. Schoenbach F.R.E.E.D. Foundation \(For Recovery and Elimination of Eating Disorders\)](#) as Education and Prevention Coordinator, and Insurance Advocate. In 2008, after many years of volunteering with the EDC, MacDonald became the Policy Assistant of the EDC and worked on legislative efforts on Capitol Hill, including [EDC National Lobby Days](#) and strategic policy planning such as helping develop the "Education and Prevention" section of The FREED Act, the first comprehensive federal bill in the history of Congress to address eating disorders research, treatment and education and prevention. In 2012, MacDonald joined [Kantor & Kantor, LLP](#), as a Health Insurance Advocate where she authored appeals to insurance companies from the denial of benefits for treatment of eating and other mental health disorders. "My time at Kantor & Kantor (K&K) was invaluable and I will be forever grateful to everyone at the firm, especially the Health Team. Lisa Kantor, founding partner of K&K and EDC Board Member, has been a boss, mentor and friend to me and I appreciate her encouragement to accept the Policy Director position. Though I will no longer work for Lisa or the firm, we will still work closely together as we raise awareness of the barriers to insurance coverage people with eating disorders face when seeking treatment," said MacDonald.

On her goals as the Policy Director, MacDonald said, "I look forward to helping advance the [Truth in Advertising Act of 2014](#), the [Federal Response to Eliminate Eating Disorders \(FREED\) Act of 2013](#), furthering the EDC's legislative priorities and working with EDC [Member Organizations](#) and advocates from across the country to collaboratively demonstrate to Congress that they *can* make a difference by passing legislation that will benefit all those impacted by eating disorders. I feel blessed, humbled and

excited to take forward the EDC's mission of influencing policy to ensure positive and long-lasting change in the lives of all those affected by these insidious and deadly brain disorders."

### **About The Eating Disorders Coalition**

Since 2000, the Eating Disorders Coalition's mission has been to bring recognition of eating disorders as a public health priority at the federal and state level. The EDC raises awareness among policy makers and the public at large about the serious health risk posed by eating disorders; promotes federal support for improved access to care; increases resources for research, education, prevention, and improved training; increases funding and support for scientific research on the etiology, prevention, and treatment of eating disorder; promotes initiatives that support the healthy development of children; and mobilizes concerned citizens to advocate on behalf of people with eating disorders, their families, and professionals in the field. To learn more and to become involved with the EDC visit:

[www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org](http://www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org) or visit their FB page at: [www.facebook.com/EatingDisordersCoalition](https://www.facebook.com/EatingDisordersCoalition)