



Eating Disorders Coalition Holds First Virtual Advocacy Day

WASHINGTON, D.C. (September 24, 2020) – Yesterday, 185 advocates from 35 states and the District of Columbia took part in the Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action’s (EDC) Virtual Advocacy Day. Advocates encouraged Members of Congress to co-sponsor the bipartisan Nutrition CARE Act ([H.R. 3711/S. 2907](#)), as well as telehealth access/coverage improvement bills, including the bipartisan Health Care at Home Act ([H.R. 6644](#)) and Tele-Mental Health Improvement Act ([S. 3792](#)).

Advocacy activities began on Tuesday with uplifting welcoming remarks delivered to advocates from Nutrition CARE Act co-leads, Representative Judy Chu (D-CA-27) and Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK). The next day, advocates from 30 teams met virtually with 159 Congressional offices. The day concluded with a facilitated group discussion and closing remarks from Senator Tina Smith (D-MN), co-lead of the Tele-Mental Health Improvement Act, and Representative Jackie Walorski (R-IN-2), co-lead of the Nutrition CARE Act.

“Our virtual EDC Advocacy Day was a success because of our advocates who volunteered their time to make their voices heard,” said Molly Perlman, MD, MPH, CEDS, Board Vice President of the Eating Disorders Coalition. “We educated our legislators on the importance of improving access to eating disorder treatments, specifically medical nutrition therapy and telehealth. We are empowered by receiving positive feedback and support from Congressional offices on both sides of the aisle. Together, we are making a difference.”

This advocacy day saw one of the biggest turnouts in EDC advocacy day history with advocates from states all across the country joining, in large part due to the accessibility of the virtual format.

“By any measure, our 2020 EDC Advocacy Day was at once successful, impactful, and profoundly meaningful,” said EDC Board President Chase Bannister, MDIV, MSW, LCSW, CEDS. “Buttressed by both data and determination, our advocates brought the urgent needs of persons with eating disorders directly to our federal policy-makers—and got results. This is the power of speaking with one accord on Capitol Hill. This is the embodiment of EDC’s prime directive. When all of us—researchers, clinicians, persons with lived experience with eating disorders, families, friends, educators, and caregivers alike—when we band together, we can spark real change. Together, we can advance the recognition of eating disorders as federal public health priority. And, frankly, we must—lives depend on it.”

The Eating Disorders Coalition offers our sincere gratitude to every individual who joined us this year and shared their story and support—together, you have truly made a difference. As we look toward the next EDC Advocacy Day in the Spring of 2021, we encourage our community to stay connected and engaged with us through our Phone2Action grassroots system, found [here](#). We are proud to be your partner in federal advocacy and honored to serve alongside you as ambassadors of hope.

The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action (EDC) is a Washington, DC-based, federal advocacy organization comprised of advocacy organizations, academics, treatment providers, family/loved ones of children with eating disorders and people experiencing eating disorders nationwide. The EDC advances the recognition of eating disorders as a public health priority throughout the United States. Additional resources can also be found at eatingdisorderscoalition.org.

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