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For Immediate Release

## **EDC Encourages the CDC to Enhance Eating Disorder Data Collection Efforts within the National Health Interview Survey**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 16, 2018) — On December 19, 2017 the Eating Disorders Coalition (EDC) submitted recommendations to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to enhance the quality and utility of the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), particularly encouraging the CDC to include surveillance questions on eating disorders within the NHIS survey.

Since 1957, the NHIS has monitored the health of Americans through personal household interviews. The Eating Disorders Coalition applauded the CDC for the decades of work collecting important health data to detect, track, assess and identify public health issues in order to better coordinate prevention efforts for at-risk populations. However, after over two decades of mandatory surveillance of eating disorders, the CDC and state level stakeholders voted to remove the mandatory eating disorders surveillance questions in 2015 with no comparable system in place.

Eating disorders affect over 30 million Americans during their lifetime and have the highest mortality rate of any psychiatric illness. Given the high prevalence and severity of this disorder, bipartisan Members in the [U.S. Senate](#) and [House of Representatives](#) sent a letter to the CDC Director encouraging the re-inclusion and inclusion of eating disorders surveillance in October 2017.

On August 21, 2017, CDC requested public comments on the data collection and recommendations for the National Health Interview Survey in [81 FR 69826](#), and extended the comment period on November 29, 2017 through Federal Registrar Notice Vol. 82, No. 228, #56604. To continue encouraging the heightened surveillance, the EDC submitted recommendations to CDC Director, Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald for the re-inclusion and inclusion of mandatory questions on the signs and symptoms of the serious and common mental illness of eating disorders. The full list of recommendations can be read [here](#). The Eating Disorders Coalition looks forward to continuing to work with CDC and improve surveillance systems related to eating disorders to provide comprehensive data that best informs our members, advocates and the nation.

**The Eating Disorders Coalition (EDC)** is a Washington, D.C.-based, federal advocacy organization comprised of treatment providers, advocacy organizations and entities, parents of children with eating disorders and people experiencing eating disorders nationwide. Additional resources can also be found at [www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org](http://www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org).

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