



## Message from EDC President: Legislative Achievements for Eating Disorders in the time of COVID-19— the CARES Act and Beyond

April 9, 2020

Dear Eating Disorders Coalition Family,

During this unprecedented time in our nation's history, the Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action remains energetic, strident, and whole-hearted in our mission to serve the eating disorders community. As your voice on Capitol Hill, we work each day to ensure that federal policy advances critical access to eating disorders treatment and ensures continuation of health insurance coverage. We continue to work on these important provisions in subsequent federal relief packages.

The EDC is proud to share some of the many successes coming to fruition through the leadership of the EDC and our strong advocate network in the context of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), passed into law on March 27, 2020. In the days prior to the final CARES Act vote, our network of advocates sent over **five thousand** emails to Members of Congress calling for expanded access to eating disorders care. This extraordinary campaign is testament to our collective strength and power of our unified voice. Here are a few of the key legislative victories we secured:

- **Expanded telehealth coverage**
  - Co-led a letter with the support of 53 mental health and substance use disorder organizations to all 50 Governors and State Insurance Commissioners advising them for the immediate expansion of telehealth services. Several states have acted in broadening telehealth services during the national emergency.
  - Advocated for additional flexibilities for telehealth services that resulted in the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) expanding telehealth coverage for 80 services and temporarily waiving requirements that physicians and non-physician practitioners be licensed in the state where they are providing services.
- **Secured \$150 billion in direct aid for states, territories, and tribal lands to assist in addressing the health needs unique to each state's demographic and the economic impact of COVID-19.**
- **Guaranteed eligibility for non-profits receiving Medicaid funds to access small business loans**
  - Successfully removed restrictions barring non-profits that accept Medicaid funding from eligibility for small business loans.
  - Many non-profit organizations are experiencing significant losses due to difficulties in billing, cancelled appointments and increased infrastructure costs. Additional funding through the Small Business Loan Program will continue to support mental health providers.

- **Reauthorized the pediatric subspecialty loan repayment program**
  - Funding secured for five years to address the workforce shortage of child and adolescent psychiatrists, pediatric surgical subspecialties, and pediatric medical subspecialties.

More work is ahead of us. The EDC will remain on the front lines advocating for the needs of individuals, partners, and families with eating disorders. Congress has already begun negotiating its fourth relief package, so we are already at work. It is a privilege to represent you, and we cherish the opportunity to advocate for you and with you, both now and the days to come. Together, we will save lives.

Yours in Hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chase Bannister', written in a cursive style.

Chase Bannister, MDIV, MSW, LCSW, CEDS  
Board President, Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action