



EDC Celebrates Multiple Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations Successes for Eating Disorders Research, Prevention and Treatment

(Washington, DC) March 11, 2022- The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action celebrates the inclusion of multiple eating disorders provisions in the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Appropriations package. The package passed Congress and now on the way to President Biden's desk to be signed into law. We are honored to have worked with Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Mike Rounds (R-SD), and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Representatives Ted Deutch (D-FL-22), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01), Paul Tonko (D-NY-20) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA-07) who championed these lifesaving requests. These provisions will improve eating disorders research, early identification, and influence public health strategies to combat this mental illness.

Among the many provisions included in the FY22 Appropriations package is the training of health care providers in eating disorders under the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Primary Care Training and Enhancement Grant program. The identification and treatment of eating disorders is the most important factor in an individual's recovery, yet most primary care health professionals lack evidence-based training and education in eating disorders screening and care. This program will work in coordination with SAMHSA's Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders, to provide training for primary health professionals to screen, briefly intervene, and refer patients to treatment for the severe mental illness of eating disorders.

The second provision included within this package includes language addressed to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to include standard questions on unhealthy weight control practices for eating disorders in the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). This surveillance provides critical data for tracking unhealthy weight control behaviors in youth and adults that can inform public health strategies.

The third provision urges the NIH to continue their support for eating disorders research through additional Institutes and Centers within NIH including the National Institute of Mental Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, and National Institute on Drug Abuse. Additionally, NIH is directed to create a strategic plan to address gaps in research related to genetics, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of eating disorders.

In addition to the successes above, we worked with our U.S. Senate colleagues to maintain eating disorders as a topic area in the Department of Defense Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program, funded at \$370 Million. Eating disorders research will improve the health, care, and well-being of all military service members, veterans and beneficiaries by encouraging, identifying, selecting and managing medical research projects of clear scientific merit and direct relevance to military health. In addition, eating disorders language has been included in the Defense Combat Readiness Medical Research Program. This funding will help address the medical needs of our servicemembers, who are at higher risk for eating disorders.

Lastly, we were pleased to see eating disorders language included in the Veterans Affairs Appropriations Report. The committee report stated continued concerns about the prevalence of sexual assault among servicemembers of all genders during their service. Effects from an assault can lead to mental health conditions, including eating disorders. The committee report recommends that all veterans seeking treatment services be screened for sexual assault using an evidence-based screening tool in order to successfully treat any ongoing mental health conditions.

“The funding and training included in the FY22 Appropriations package will aid further education for the nation and save countless lives,” **said Chase Bannister, MDIV, MSW, LCSW, CEDS, Board President of the EDC.** “Congress has come a long way in acknowledging and discerning the gravity of eating disorders. The Eating Disorders Coalition will remain steadfast in pushing Congress to continue these investments in future fiscal years.”