



## Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (LHHS) FY 2022 Appropriations Bill – Eating Disorders Coalition Requests

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 25, 2021) – The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action (EDC) recently helped organize a [letter](#) to the leadership of the U.S. House of Representatives Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations Subcommittee, in an effort to secure support and funding for a set of eating disorders initiatives in the upcoming LHHS Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations bill. This letter was led by Representatives Ted Deutch (D-FL-22), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01), Paul Tonko (R-NY-20), and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA-07), and signed by an additional 47 bipartisan Members of Congress.

The first request to the Committee is for the provision of robust funding for the Primary Care Training and Enhancement Grant Program under the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Specifically, the letter calls for enhanced funding for the Education and Training on Eating Disorder program, which was authorized under the Anna Westin Act provisions in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century CURES Act ([P.L. 114-255](#)). The letter urges the Committee to include language in the upcoming appropriations bill that would dedicate up to \$1M in funding for this program, which would provide training opportunities for primary care health providers to screen, intervene, and refer patients to treatment for an eating disorder.

The second request calls for enhanced public health surveillance measures to monitor and gain detailed data on the prevalence rate of eating disorders in the United States. The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), operated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is a health-related behaviors surveillance survey for students. The YRBSS used to include questions on disordered eating behaviors, however these questions were removed in 2015. Further, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a similar survey for adults which has never included questions related to disordered eating behaviors. The lack of public health data collection impedes the ability of public health officials to create programs and policies to address the prevention and early intervention of eating disorders in the United States. The letter requests that the Committee direct the CDC to reinclude standard questions on unhealthy weight control practices for eating disorders, including binge eating, in the YRBSS, and include these questions within the BRFSS as well.

The third request calls for the highest possible level of funding for eating disorders research across the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) various institutes and centers. It also urges the Committee to direct the NIH to create a task force of researchers, advocates, as well as NIH institutes and centers including the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), to focus on eating disorders. This task force would be responsible for creating a Strategic Plan to tackle research gaps in genetics, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of eating disorders.

“We are so grateful for the 51 Members of Congress that sent this important letter to help secure funding and support for these essential initiatives,” said Johanna Kandel, Founder and CEO of The Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness and Board Member of the EDC. “With approximately 9% of the U.S. population experiencing an eating disorder in their lifetime, it is evident that research, surveillance, and early intervention will save lives.”

As the appropriations process moves forward, the EDC will make sure to keep the community up-to-date on the progress of these requests.

*The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action (EDC) is a Washington, DC-based, federal advocacy organization made up 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](http://eatingdisorderscoalition.org).*

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