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For Immediate Release

EDC APPLAUDS SAMHSA’S RECENTLY ANNOUNCED CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR EATING DISORDERS AWARDEE- UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. (September 21, 2018) — Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) awarded the first grant for a new federal program that would provide \$3.75M over five years for a Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders. SAMHSA awarded the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as its Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders**, led by **Dr. Christine M. Peat**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Clinical Instructor in the Department of Neurosurgery at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. SAMHSA made the [official announcement](#) of this grant utilizing discretionary funds on July 18, 2018 and [released a solicitation](#) for a new federal program with a deadline of August 17, 2018.

“Our team at UNC is thrilled to lead the charge in establishing a national Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders. To do so, UNC will partner with the [3C Institute](#) to develop the Eating Disorders Information and Training Network (EDIT-NET) – a web-based platform that will train healthcare providers across disciplines in the evidence-based identification and management of eating disorders and become [the](#) national resource for eating disorder literacy,” **said Dr. Christine M. Peat**. “EDIT-NET is truly a multidisciplinary effort as our team has expertise across healthcare disciplines (e.g., psychology, psychiatry, adolescent medicine), in various eating disorder interventions (e.g., couple-based interventions, tailored interventions for underrepresented/underserved communities), and in providing trainings across settings (e.g., residency directors, [AHEC](#) leaders). We are confident that EDIT-NET will effectively train the next generation of healthcare providers and improve eating disorder literacy among the public.”

The purpose of the [Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders grant program](#) is to establish a national hub for the development and dissemination of training and technical assistance for health care practitioners. This Center of Excellence falls directly in line with what eating disorders advocates and EDC Congressional Champions Sen. Amy Klobuchar [D-MN], Shelley Moore Capito [R-WV], Tammy Baldwin [D-WI] and Rep. Ted Deutch [D-FL], Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen [R-FL], Rep. Leonard Lance [R-NJ] and Rep. Doris Matsui [D-CA] have been advocating for years within the Anna Westin Act of 2015 (S. 1865 / H.R. 2515), passed in December 2016 within 21st Century Cures’ (P.L. 114-255) Section 13006 “Education and Training on Eating Disorders”.

The [objectives](#) of the Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders include:

- Provide the most up-to-date information on strategies related to addressing eating disorders;
- Promote the public awareness of eating disorders; and
- Educate and train health professionals in effective strategies related to eating disorders including effective treatment of eating disorders, physical health needs in individuals with eating disorders,

frequently co-occurring medical and mental health conditions in those with eating disorders, integrated treatment of co-occurring eating disorders, other mental disorders, substance use disorders and physical health disorders, and implementation approaches for programs to address the needs of individuals living with eating disorders.

“More than 30 million Americans suffer from an eating disorder during their lifetime, and only one-in-ten people receive treatment,” **said Senator Amy Klobuchar.** “That’s why I fought to pass the bipartisan Anna Westin Act as part of the 21st Century Cures Act to enhance education and training for health care professionals to identify these conditions early and get patients the care they need. The new Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders is a critical step forward in achieving this important goal.”

The Eating Disorders Coalition applauds the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, our advocates for their persistence, our Senate and House of Representatives Champions Sen. Klobuchar [D-MN], Sen. Capito [R-WV], Sen. Baldwin [D-WI], Rep. Deutch [D-FL], Rep. Ros-Lehtinen [R-FL], Rep. Lance [R-NJ] and Rep. Matsui [D-CA], as well as HHS Secretary Azar and SAMHSA Assistant Secretary McCance-Katz, for pushing these Anna Westin Act provisions into full fruition.

“I can only wonder if the outcome would have been different for Anna if training on eating disorders for health care professionals had been available when Anna was first showing symptoms of anorexia,” **said Kitty Westin, the mother of Anna Westin and former Board Member of the Eating Disorders Coalition.** “I’ll never know. However, I am certain that with implementation of the Anna Westin Act within CURES the outcome for countless others will be early identification, proper treatment and successful recovery. This is a day to celebrate the progress that has been made towards making certain that eating disorders are no longer misunderstood and misdiagnosed, this is a day to celebrate a victory for the millions of people affected by eating disorders.”

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