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## **EDC APPLAUDS CONGRESS AND HHS FOR IMPLEMENTING ANNA WESTIN ACT TRAININGS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS THROUGH \$3.75M CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR EATING DISORDERS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 24, 2018) — Last Thursday, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [announced](#) and [released a solicitation](#) for a new federal program, providing \$3.75M over five years for a new Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders. SAMHSA states, “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. The grantee will help identify model programs and will ensure that high-quality training is provided to health professionals.” 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures’ (P.L. 114-255) Section 13006 “Education and Training on Eating Disorders”. After the passage of these provisions within 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures, advocates and Congress have urged HHS through two bipartisan House and Senate letters to fully implement these provisions. View the bipartisan letters here: [May 2017 Senate Letter](#), [May 2017 House Letter](#), [May 2018 Senate Letter](#), [May 2018 House Letter](#).

“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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.”

“Removing the harmful stigma too often related to eating disorders and ensuring those who struggle with them receive prompt, high-quality medical care can save lives,” **Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.)**

**said.** “I am thrilled that HHS is implementing bipartisan provisions we worked to secure in the *21st Century Cures Act*, and I will continue to work with my colleagues to improve mental health services.”

Currently, the Center for Excellence FY 2018 solicitation has opened, with a submission deadline of August 17, 2018. The [objectives](#) listed in the solicitation of the grant program are laid out as follows:

- 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.

“I am encouraged that HHS is taking real steps to implement our bipartisan *Anna Westin Act* so that the millions of Americans struggling with eating disorders can get the care they need. This new Center will provide critical resources to help health professionals better recognize behaviors that may lead to or signal the presence of an eating disorder. But, there is still more work to do to increase research and education, and expand access to care for mental illnesses like eating disorders,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “I will continue to work with my bipartisan partners Senators Capito and Klobuchar to ensure this law is fully implemented so we can help improve prevention, treatment and diagnosis to better support the 192,000 Wisconsinites struggling with an eating disorder.”

The Eating Disorders Coalition applauds 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.

“Thursday’s grant announcement is the culmination of many years of hard work by eating disorder advocates, including Kitty Westin and my constituent Johanna Kandel, and an important achievement for the 30 million Americans who will suffer from these diseases at some point in their lives,” said **Congressman Ted Deutch.** “I am confident that the new Center for Excellence for Eating Disorders will be part of a fundamental shift in how doctors recognize the symptoms of eating disorders in their patients and help get them the care they need.”

The EDC also applauds the House and Senate co-sponsors and signatories of these initiatives including:

**Senate Signatories/Co-Sponsors:** Sherrod Brown [D-OH], Tammy Duckworth [D-IL], Richard Blumenthal [D-CT], Debbie Stabenow [D-MI], Elizabeth Warren [D-MA], Edward Markey [D-MA], Mark Warner [D-VA], Chris Murphy [D-CT], Kirsten Gillibrand [D-NY], Corey Booker [D-NY], Lisa Murkowski [R-AK], former Sen. Al Franken [D-MN], Chris Coons [D-DE], and Chris Van Hollen [D-MD].

**House of Representatives Signatories/Co-Sponsors:** David Price [D-NC], Eleanor Holmes Norton [D-DC], Peter King [R-NY], Zoe Lofgren [D-CA], John Larson [D-CT], Grace Napolitano [D-CA], Betty McCollum [D-MN], Federica Wilson [D-FL], C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger [D-MD], G.K. Butterfield [D-NC], Debbie Wasserman Schultz [D-FL], Kathy Castor [D-FL], Steve Cohen [D-TN], Tim Walz [D-MN], Erik Paulsen [R-MN], Chellie Pingree [D-ME], Paul Tonko [D-NY], Lou Barletta [R-PA], Donald Payne, Jr. [D-NJ], Rodney Davis [R-IL], Lois Frankel [D-FL], Mark Pocan [D-WI], Keith Rothfus [R-PA], Kyrsten Sinema [D-AZ], Eric Swalwell [D-CA], Debbie Dingell [D-MI], John Katko [R-NY], Seth Moulton [D-MA], Val Demings [D-FL], Brian Fitzpatrick [R-PA], Brian Mast [R-FL], Jamie Raskin [D-MD], Lloyd Smucker [R-PA], Gus Bilirakis [R-FL], Don Young [R-AK], former Rep. Tim Murphy [R-PA], F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. [R-WI], Marcy Kaptur [D-OH], John Lewis [D-GA], Collin Peterson [D-MN], Anna Eshoo [D-CA], Alcee Hastings [D-FL], James McGovern [D-MA], Tim Ryan [D-OH], former Rep. Patrick Meehan [R-PA], Suzanne Bonamici [D-OR], Tony Cardenas [D-CA], Joseph Kennedy III [D-MA], Donald Beyer, Jr. [D-VA], Barbara Comstock [R-VA], Ryan Costello [R-PA], Jackie Speier [D-CA], Richard Nolan [D-MN], Gerald Connolly [D-VA], Ro Khanna [D-CA], and Lisa Blunt Rochester [D-DE].

“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.”

Eating disorders affect over 30 million Americans during their lifetime and have the highest mortality rate out of any psychiatric illness. Given the high prevalence and severity of this disorder, specialized training in early identification and treatment of eating disorders is needed.

**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](http://www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org).

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