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**For Immediate Release**

## **WVU and CAMC Spearhead Innovative Learning for State Eating Disorder Treatment Providers**

***Senator Shelley Moore Capito kicks-off West Virginia Eating Disorder Network Conference focused on improving care for people with disordered eating and co-occurring conditions***

**WASHINGTON, DC.** (March 17, 2017) — Today marks the Fourth Annual West Virginia Eating Disorder Network Conference, sponsored by the West Virginia University Disordered Eating Center of Charleston, CAMC Foundation, and the CAMC Institute, where over 100 providers from around the state will flock to Charleston to learn about new strategies for treating eating disorders, including innovative new interventions and methods for addressing co-occurring substance use disorders.

Eating disorder champion, Senator Shelley Moore Capito [R-WV] will kick off the conference by discussing her great work in expanding treatment access to people with eating disorders through the recent passage of the Anna Westin Act of 2015 within 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures as well as discuss her current work to continue to help people with eating disorders and substance use disorder across the state during the Affordable Care Act discussion within Congress.

“The dangers of eating disorders are serious. While thousands of West Virginians are currently affected by this disease, few are receiving all the treatment they need. I have worked hard in Congress to expand access to treatment and enhance awareness and prevention efforts – but the work does not stop there. We are lucky to have the WVU DECC right here in Charleston collaborating with a wide range of medical professionals to treat those affected by eating disorders, and develop innovative solutions to combat this problem,” said Senator Capito.

Over 30 million Americans will experience a clinically significant eating disorder during their lifetime including anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating disorder; based on these prevalence estimates, over 61,000 West Virginians currently experience an eating disorder. Eating disorders are serious and complex mental health conditions that affect people of all genders, ages, body sizes, races, sexual orientations and socioeconomic statuses, and have a notably higher prevalence rate in women. This disorder has the highest mortality rate for any mental illness, higher than prostate cancer, melanoma cancer, and equal to acute leukemia; studies show that 50% of people with an eating disorder also experience a co-occurring substance use disorder.

Jessica Luzier, Ph.D., ABPP, and Chair of the WV Eating Disorder Network explains the goal for this conference has been to improve access to specialized, effective care for people with eating disorders in West Virginia by offering a local, low-cost training opportunity for healthcare professionals. She notes, “We include providers of all types, from nursing to psychologists to dietitians. Just in the past few years, more treatment teams have developed across the state. With the passage of the AWA, and with Senator Capito’s support, we are more motivated than ever to continue this great work”.

*The Eating Disorders Coalition is a Washington, D.C.-based, federal advocacy organization comprised of treatment providers, advocacy organizations and entities, parents of children with eating disorders, and people experiencing eating disorders nationwide. For more information contact Katrina Velasquez at the Eating Disorders Coalition at [kvelasquez@eatingdisorderscoalition.org](mailto:kvelasquez@eatingdisorderscoalition.org). Additional resources can also be found at [www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org](http://www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org).*

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