



## Message from the EDC President: Eating Disorders Coalition Announces Two New 2019 Federal Initiatives to Improve Eating Disorders Coverage

January 24, 2019

Dear Eating Disorders Coalition Family,

The Eating Disorders Coalition (EDC) is proud to share its focus on two new federal policy initiatives in 2019—one centered on expanding Medicare coverage for persons with eating disorders, and the other concentrated on protecting provisions in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) affecting patients with the serious mental illness of eating disorders and their families.

After careful deliberation and extensive input from the eating disorders community, the EDC will focus its policy efforts to change federal Medicare law to include nutrition counseling benefits with outpatient treatment. Further, the EDC will continue to advocate for the protection of pre-existing condition protections and eating disorders coverage and decrease health insurance premiums for the millions of Americans who receive their insurance through the Affordable Care Act. **The May 7, 2019 EDC Capitol Hill Advocacy Day will center on both of these critical initiatives.**

Alongside the passage of the Anna Westin Act within the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act in December 2016 and two years of regulatory lobbying to implement those provisions, the EDC is pleased to have led the first funding for a federal Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders, changes to the Office of Women's Health's eating disorders public information, federal guidance on eating disorders mental health parity, securing funding to train health professionals, and conducting trainings of health professionals in pediatric medicine to identify and intervene in eating disorders.

As this advocacy transitioned to a close, we endeavored to identify our next policy initiative. In October of 2018, we surveyed the eating disorders community, including families, friends, and individuals affected by eating disorders as well as treatment providers, academics, public health experts, and other eating disorders advocacy organizations, to help identify our next steps. We were fortunate to receive over 300 responses from the community in the areas of early identification and training, research, and expanding treatment access. **With a majority of respondents identifying "cover all eating disorders in all insurance plans" as their number one priority.**

The EDC is pleased to advocate for these important steps toward a healthcare system wherein appropriate care for eating disorders is accessible for all who stand in need of it. We hope you will join us in Washington, D.C. on May 7, 2019 for Capitol Hill Advocacy Day. Together, we will share the vital message of need and hope. Together, we will save lives.

Yours in Hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Chase Bannister".

Chase Bannister, MDIV, MSW, LCSW, CEDS  
Board President,  
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action