

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

WHITE HOUSE FOCUSES ON MENTAL HEALTH PARITY INCLUDING BETTER AWARENESS NEEDED FOR EATING DISORDERS COVERAGE

Press Release

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Eating Recovery Center
The Emily Program
The Emily Program Foundation
Kantor & Kantor, LLP
Oliver-Pyatt Centers
Residential Eating Disorders Consortium
Veritas Collaborative

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Professionals Foundation (iaedp)
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Cambridge Eating Disorder Center
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Eating Disorder Center of Denver
Eating Disorder Hope
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Inner Door Center
Mirasol Eating Disorder Recovery Centers
Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association
Park Nicollet Melrose Center
Rosewood Centers for Eating Disorders
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Hope Circle

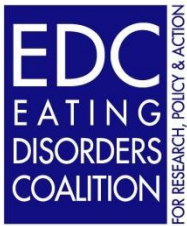
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The National Association of Anorexia
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Washington, D.C- November 1, 2016 – Last week, the White House Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Task Force (Task Force) released their final report identifying a series of actions and recommendations to help ensure better implementation of parity; to help consumers and providers understand how parity works; and to ensure appropriate oversight and enforcement of parity protections. The White House intends for these recommendations to be current action items, as well as action items for the new administration to take into consideration during the transition.

On March 29th, President Obama formed the Task Force, acknowledging, “...the promise of coverage expansion and parity protections in helping individuals with mental health and substance use disorders, executive departments and agencies need to work together to ensure that Americans are benefiting from the Federal parity protections the law intends.”

In August, the Eating Disorders Coalition submitted a [comment letter](#) along with 1,200 other stakeholders, highlighting the lack of financial parity with respect to insurance coverage, parity with respect to non-quantitative treatment limitation, more transparency from health plans and insurance companies to providers and consumers, and a clear path for families to both understand when their rights have been violated and voice concerns regarding parity non-compliance. Following the comment period, members of the eating disorders community met with stakeholders to discuss further partnership and collaboration to help in the area of mental health parity compliance. In a [letter](#) to the White House following this meeting, the Eating Disorders Coalition provided a mapping and analysis of mental health parity for eating disorders, guidance on treatment standards used by eating disorder medical professionals, and training for health insurance reviewers to better understand eating disorders.

Within the report, the Task Force identified a general lack of awareness of the need for mental health and substance use disorder services, and in particular the need for services related to certain conditions such as eating disorders, autism, and substance use disorders, which was the direct result of a continuing discussion



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between the White House, Federal Agencies, and the Eating Disorders Coalition. The Task Force also included input from the Eating Disorders Coalition with regards to parity requirements in reference to quantitative treatment limitations (QTLs) and non-quantitative treatment limitations (NQTLs), clarification of the appeals process for claims denials, recommendations to clarify what is covered under health insurance plans and a requirement for plans to be more transparent, clear guidelines for insurance companies with regards to prior authorizations, utilization reviews, “fail first” therapy, and reimbursement rates, the creation of a portal where consumers can identify suspected parity violations, the identification of best state-level practices with respect to mental health parity, and expanded access to mental health services under TRICARE for military members and their families.

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 EDC Policy Director Katrina Velasquez, Esq. at kvelasquez@eatingdisorderscoalition.org. Additional resources can also be found at www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org.

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