June 6, 2023

Dr. Lester Martinez-Lopez  
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs  
Department of Defense  
4000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

LTG Telita Crosland  
Director, Defense Health Agency  
Department of Defense  
4000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Dr. Martinez and LTG Crosland:

On behalf of the more than 270 undersigned organizations representing individuals, families, providers, researchers and advocates in the mental health and military communities, we are dismayed that the Department of Defense has not implemented Sec. 701 and request that the Department expeditiously implement to ensure servicemembers and their families can be early identified and have full access to eating disorders care. Within the Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Congress passed P.L. 117-81 Sec. 701 based on §194/H.R.2767, the bipartisan SERVE Act, to expand access to eating disorders care for military family members over 20 years old and improve eating disorders identification and treatment for servicemembers. The deadline to implement these provisions was September 30th, 2022, as specified by the law. However, the Department of Defense (DOD) neglected to implement these life-saving provisions, leaving military spouses and adult children without access to evidence-based care. In response to this, nine bipartisan Senators sent a letter to the DOD in March requesting clinical justification for the continued lack in coverage by April 31, 2023, but have received no such justification. Military family members with eating disorders have waited for 18 months for the DOD to act; there is no more time. We urge the Defense Health Agency to implement the law in Sec. 701 immediately to grant servicemembers and their families comprehensive eating disorders care afforded to them by law.

Eating disorders carry the second highest mortality rate of any psychiatric condition,1 with suicide occurring 23 times more often than in the general population.2 Servicemembers and their families are disproportionately affected by eating disorders,3 with the Defense Health Board revealing significant impacts on active-duty servicewomen’s health and readiness.4 Military spouses and children also suffer eating disorder symptoms at rates three times their civilian counterparts.5 According to the DOD, 19,468 military dependents were diagnosed with an eating disorder from FY 2014 through FY 2018.6 Despite these disturbing rates – which only worsened during the pandemic,7 the DOD has still not implemented Sec. 701 to provide residential eating disorders care for adult active-duty dependents between the ages of 21 and 64 years old. Residential treatment for eating disorders is a generally accepted medical standard of evidence-based care effective in weight restoration and reduction of disordered behaviors for

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8 Dave Little, MD, Adrianna Teriaxidis, PhD, Eric Lindgren, JD, Steven Allen, MD, Eric Barkley, Lily Rubin-Miller, MPH, April 2021, https://epicresearch.org/articles/increase-in-adolescent-hospitalizations-related-to-eating-disorders
adult patients.\(^8\) Private civilian health insurances typically cover all levels of care for eating disorders, including residential treatment, regardless of age. Congressional intent in Sec. 701 was for TRICARE to address this gap in coverage and to afford the same comprehensive care to active-duty dependents.

We urge the DOD to take immediate action to implement the provisions passed by Congress and signed by the President in P.L. 117-81 Sec. 701. The Biden Administration made a commitment in March to improve mental health care for military and veteran families but will not even execute existing law to prevent and treat eating disorders among servicemembers and dependents. Implementing Sec. 701 is necessary to fulfill the Administration’s commitment to bettering the health and wellbeing of service members and their families.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

REDC Consortium
Eating Disorders Coalition
2020 Mom
Academy for Eating Disorders
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)
Active Minds
Alabama – Alsana Birmingham
Alabama – Alsana Huntsville
Alaska Alliance for Eating Disorders
American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
American Art Therapy Association
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association of Suicidology

Please note the following references:


Be Real USA
California – Alsana Monterey
california – Alsana Santa Barbara
California – Alsana Thousand Oaks
California – Alsana Westlake Village
California - BALANCE Treatment Center Calabasas
California - BALANCE Treatment Center Fresno
California - BALANCE Treatment Center Monterey
California - BALANCE Treatment Center San Luis Obispo
California - BALANCE Treatment Center Santa Maria
California - BALANCE Treatment Center Ventura
California - BALANCE Treatment Center Visalia
California - Bay Area Nutrition
California - Center for Discovery Northern California
California - Center for Discovery Southern California
California - Central Coast Treatment Center
California - Eating Recovery Center Sacramento
California - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Calabasas
California - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center East Bay
California - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Los Angeles
California - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Malibu
California - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Mountain Nest
California - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Newport Beach
California - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Vista
California – Montecatini Eating Disorder Treatment Center
California - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Sacramento
California - Reasons Eating Disorder Center
California - Renfrew Center
California - Rogers Behavioral Health Los Angeles
California - Rogers Behavioral Health San Diego
California - Rogers Behavioral Health San Francisco
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)
Clinical Social Work Association
Coalition for the Advancement and Application of Psychological Science (CAAPS)
Colorado - ACUTE Center for Eating Disorders
Colorado – EDCare Colorado Springs
Colorado – EDCare Denver
Colorado - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Denver 1st Ave
Colorado - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Denver 5th Ave
Colorado - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Denver Lowry St
Colorado - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Denver Spruce St
Colorado - Rogers Behavioral Health
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc.
Connecticut - Center for Discovery
Connecticut - Walden Behavioral Care
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Eating Disorder Hope
Employees Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA)
EQUIP
Exceptional Families of the Military
FedUp
Florida - Center for Discovery
Florida - Heroes’ Mile Veterans Treatment Center
Florida - Renfrew Center Coconut Creek
Florida - Renfrew Center Orlando
Florida - Renfrew Center West Palm Beach
Florida - Rogers Behavioral Health Miami
Florida - Rogers Behavioral Health Tampa
Georgia - Center for Discovery
Georgia - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Atlanta
Georgia - Renfrew Center
Georgia - Rogers Behavioral Health
Georgia - Veritas Collaborative Atlanta
Georgia - Walden Behavioral Care
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Hawaii - 'Ai Pono
IAEDP
Idaho - Center for Change Boise

IFEDD, The International Federation of Eating Disorder Dietitians
Illinois - Acadia Healthcare/Timberline Knolls
Illinois - Center for Discovery
Illinois - Eating Recovery Center Northbrook
Illinois - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Chicago
Illinois - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Chicago
Illinois - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Erie
Illinois - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Oak Brook
Illinois - Renfrew Center
Illinois - Rogers Behavioral Health Hinsdale
Illinois - Rogers Behavioral Health Skokie
Illinois - SunCloud Health Chicago
Illinois - SunCloud Health Naperville
Illinois - SunCloud Health Northbrook Lake Cook Rd
Illinois - SunCloud Health Northbrook Skokie Blvd
Indiana - Farrington Specialty Centers
Indiana - Selah House
International OCD Foundation
International Society for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurses
Iowa - Eating Disorder Coalition of Iowa
Kansas - Center for Discovery
Kansas – EDCare
Kansas - McCallum Place Overland Park
Kentucky - Louisville Center for Eating Disorders & Eating Anxiety Treatment Laboratory and Clinic
Kentucky Eating Disorders Council
Louisiana - CHNOLA Feeding and Eating Disorders Clinic
Louisiana - The Eating Disorders Treatment Center at River Oaks Hospital
Maryland - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Roxbury Mills
Maryland - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Baltimore
Maryland - Renfrew Center Baltimore
Maryland - Renfrew Center Bethesda
Maryland - SunCloud Health Gaithersburg
Maryland – the Eating Disorder Center
Massachusetts - Cambridge Eating Disorder Center
Massachusetts - Center for Discovery
Massachusetts - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Boston
Massachusetts - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Laurel Hill
Massachusetts - Renfrew Center
Massachusetts - Walden Behavioral Care Braintree
Massachusetts - Walden Behavioral Care Dedham
Massachusetts - Walden Behavioral Care Peabody
Massachusetts - Walden Behavioral Care Waltham
Massachusetts - Walden Behavioral Care West Borough
Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
Mental Health America
Michigan Eating Disorders Alliance

Military Child Education Coalition® (MCEC®)
Minnesota - Rogers Behavioral Health Minneapolis
Minnesota - Rogers Behavioral Health St. Paul
Minnesota - The Emily Program Treatment Duluth
Minnesota - The Emily Program Treatment Minneapolis
Minnesota - The Emily Program Treatment St. Louis Park
Minnesota - The Emily Program Treatment St. Paul - Cleveland Ave
Minnesota - The Emily Program Treatment St. Paul - Como Ave
Missouri – McCallum Place St. Louis
Missouri Eating Disorders Association
Moonshadow's Spirit
Multi Service Eating Disorders Association Inc
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
National Alliance for Eating Disorders
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association for Behavioral Healthcare
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association for Rural Mental Health
National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance
National Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders
National Eating Disorders Association
National Federation of Families
National League for Nursing
National Military Family Association
National Register of Health Service Psychologists
Nebraska – EDCare
Nebraska Eating Disorders Network
New Hampshire - Cambridge Eating Disorder Center
New Jersey - Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, Center for Eating Disorders & Body Positivity
New Jersey - Center for Discovery
New Jersey - Renfrew Center Mount Laurel
New Jersey - Renfrew Center Paramus
New York - Center for Discovery
New York - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Glen Cove
New York - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Manhattan
New York - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center River Towns
New York - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Rockland
New York - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Westchester County
New York - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Western New York
New York - Mount Sinai Center of Excellence in Eating and Weight Disorders
New York - Renfrew Center New York City
New York - Renfrew Center White Plains
North Carolina – Carolina Resource Center for Eating Disorders
North Carolina - Renfrew Center
North Carolina - Veritas Collaborative Charlotte
North Carolina - Veritas Collaborative Durham Douglas St
North Carolina - Veritas Collaborative Durham Douglas St
North Carolina - Veritas Collaborative Durham Stirrup Creek Drive
Ohio - Akron Children’s Hospital ED Program
Ohio - The Emily Program Treatment Beachwood
Ohio - The Emily Program Treatment Cleveland
Ohio - The Emily Program Treatment Columbus
Ohio - The Intuitive Eating Center
Oklahoma - Laureate Eating Disorders Program
Oklahoma - Living Hope Eating Disorder Treatment Center
Oklahoma Eating Disorders Association
Oregon - Center for Discovery
Oregon - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Eugene
Oregon - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Portland
Oregon - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center RainRock
Oregon - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center West Linn
Pennsylvania - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Philadelphia
Pennsylvania - Renfrew Center Philadelphia Center City
Pennsylvania - Renfrew Center Philadelphia Spring Lane
Pennsylvania - Renfrew Center Pittsburgh
Pennsylvania - Renfrew Center Radnor
Pennsylvania - Rogers Behavioral Health
Pennsylvania - The Emily Program Treatment Wexford
Project HEAL
Project Maria
Psychotherapy Action Network
RI International
Roots Nutrition, FLG
SMART Recovery
South Carolina - Village Counseling Mount Pleasant
South Carolina Eating Disorders Association
Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders
Tennessee - Focus Treatment Center
Tennessee - Renfrew Center
Tennessee - Rogers Behavioral Health
Texas - Center for Discovery
Texas - Eating Recovery Center San Antonio
Texas - Eating Recovery Center The Woodlands
Texas - Monte Nido Eating Disorder Treatment Center Houston
Texas - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Austin
Texas - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Fort Worth
Texas - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Round Rock
Texas - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center San Antonio
Texas - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center The Woodlands
The Body Activists
The Eating Disorder Foundation
The Kennedy Forum
The Mental Health Strategic Impact Initiative (S2i)
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
Treatment Communities of America
Tricare for Kids Coalition
Utah - Center for Change Cottonwood Heights
Utah - Center for Change Orem
Virginia - Center for Discovery
Virginia - Prosperity Eating Disorders and Wellness Herndon
Virginia - Prosperity Eating Disorders and Wellness Norfolk
Virginia - Stay Strong VA
Virginia - The Barry Robinson Center
Virginia – the Eating Disorder Center
Washington - Center for Discovery
Washington - Opal: Food + Body Wisdom
Washington - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Seattle Boren Ave
Washington - Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center Seattle Madison St
Washington - Rogers Behavioral Health
Washington - The Emily Program Treatment
Seattle Nickerson Street

Washington - The Emily Program Treatment
Seattle Westlake Ave North

Washington - The Emily Program Treatment
South Sound

Washington - The Emily Program Treatment
Spokane

Washington Association for the Education of Young Children

Washington University School of Medicine

West Virginia - WVU School of Medicine
Charleston Division; CAMC Institute of Academic Medicine

Wisconsin - Rogers Behavioral Health Appleton

Wisconsin - Rogers Behavioral Health Brown Deer

Wisconsin - Rogers Behavioral Health Kenosha

Wisconsin - Rogers Behavioral Health Madison

Wisconsin - Rogers Behavioral Health Oconomowoc

Wisconsin - Rogers Behavioral Health Sheboygan

Wisconsin - Rogers Behavioral Health West Allis

Within Health

WithAll

Wounded Warrior Project