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National Initiative for Eating Disorders (NIED) announces Canada's first Strategy dedicated to improving outcomes related to Eating Disorders

(November 7, 2019 – Toronto, Ontario) – NIED joins three national not-for-profits in releasing Canada's first strategy aimed at improving outcomes for people affected by Eating Disorders (EDs) over the next 10 years.

Following the publication of a report entitled¹ *Eating Disorders among Girls and Women in Canada* by the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women on November 17, 2014, four national organizations dedicated to supporting care for and recovery from Eating Disorders came together in 2015 to discuss how to meaningfully improve outcomes for people living with EDs in Canada.

The *Canadian Eating Disorders Strategy: 2019-2029* is the result of extensive work and listening carefully to stakeholders across Canada in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, through direct conversations and surveys targeted at the general public, professionals, caregivers and people with lived experience.

The *Strategy* contains 50 recommendations under six pillars of activity: 1) Prevention; 2) Public Education and Awareness; 3) Treatment; 4) Caregiver Support; 5) Training; and 6) Research.

Wendy Preskow, President of NIED, remarked, "When we started this journey seven years ago as a national not-for-profit, we could never imagined stakeholders from across Canada coming together to provide insights about what has worked well for them or their loved ones; what challenges they experienced in trying to access evidence-based and evidence-informed care; and what different stakeholders need to do to improve outcomes for people at-risk and people recovering from an Eating Disorder or related mental illness. We are extremely grateful for the input we have received to this *Strategy*, from hundreds of stakeholders over the last five years".

In addition to providing a snapshot of the current state of Eating Disorders in Canada, the *Strategy* also aims to respond to what we heard from a wide-range of stakeholders, including people in recovery, caregivers, family members, professionals and providers, each of whom identified gaps in research, education, care and support about and for Eating Disorders in Canada.

¹ Standing Committee on the Status of Women (2014), *Eating Disorders among Girls and Women in Canada*. Accessed September 10, 2019. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/41-2/FEWO/report-4>.

NIED recognizes that the publication of this *Strategy* is only a first, but crucial step to identifying practical ways in which diverse stakeholders can work together to leverage recent, historic investments in mental health and mental illness by all levels of government. NIED expects that the implementation of the *Strategy's* recommendations, over time, will improve health care, social services and supports for individuals and will lead to better methods of preventing illness, promoting better health and supporting recovery from Eating Disorders.

Mark Ferdinand, Executive Director of NIED, added, "This 10-year *Strategy* provides us all with a blueprint to co-develop local as well as pan-Canadian actions that will make a difference in so many people's lives: from professionals who want to increase their confidence and knowledge about how to best prevent or treat an Eating Disorder; to administrators and policy makers who have been updating national mental health and primary healthcare standards aimed at improving communication between care teams and family members."

NIED will use this first *Strategy* to expand its dialogue with stakeholders and refine specific recommendations prior to their implementation. NIED will also develop action plans over the next three years aimed at implementing select recommendations in support of NIED's educational mission.

About NIED

NIED uses education to help people cope with the effects of Eating Disorders. We develop and deliver educational, informational and other recovery-oriented resources related to the prevention and treatment of Eating Disorders and related mental illnesses. Through education, NIED highlights better practices in prevention, health promotion, and treatment, and empowers caregivers, healthcare professionals, and social services providers support recovery from Eating Disorders.

To consult the *Strategy*, please visit <http://nied.ca/canadian-eating-disorders-strategy/>

For further information about the *Strategy*, please contact:

Mark Ferdinand,
Chairman and Executive Director,
National Initiative for Eating Disorders
(613)-979-8482

BACKGROUNDER
CANADIAN EATING DISORDER STRATEGY: 2019-2029 OBJECTIVES

Pillar	Objectives	Number of Recommendations
1) Prevention	<i>1.1 To reduce the prevalence and severity of (EDs) in Canada.</i>	8
2) Public Education and Awareness	<i>2.1 To reduce stigma and shame associated with EDs; and 2.2 To better support ongoing awareness and education about EDs in Canada.</i>	3
3) Treatment	<i>3.1 To improve access to appropriate care in Canada; 3.2 To reduce barriers to care across the country; 3.3 To reduce variation in continuum of care for EDs across Canada; and 3.4 To support outcomes evaluation of care and the development of indicators of recovery.</i>	13
4) Caregiver Support	<i>4.1 To connect caregivers with evidence-based and evidence-informed resources and information to - help them better navigate health care system and social services; - support their own health; - support the recovery of the person they are caring for; and 4.2 To develop and propose improvements to existing health, workplace and social policies and programs so that they are more responsive to caregiver needs.</i>	7
5) Training	<i>5.1 To identify post graduate and continuing professional development training pathways for EDs; 5.2 To develop clinical competencies related to the provision of health services to individuals with EDs and to their families; and 5.3 To encourage future graduates to pursue research careers in the area of EDs.</i>	8
6) Research	<i>3.1 To identify research priorities, needs and gaps in the field of EDs in Canada; 3.2 To enhance Canadian collaborative research and support for EDs research in Canada; and 3.3 To enhance ongoing surveillance, performance measures and data related to EDs.</i>	11