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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The National Initiative for Eating Disorders Propels ‘*Can’t Afford to Wait*’ Message with Generous Donation for Cutting-Edge e-Learning Platform

(May 28, 2019 – Toronto, Ontario) - The message at this year’s fourth annual World Eating Disorders Action Day on June 2nd is, “*Eating Disorders Can’t Afford to Wait*,” and the National Initiative for Eating Disorders (NIED) is taking-action **now**.

To show their support, NIED, a not-for-profit organization has gifted a generous \$15,000.00 donation to drive the development of an innovative national e-learning platform aimed at addressing the gaps in the Eating Disorders field. The donation will fund the identification and adaption of existing evidence-based research related to low-intensity, rapid early treatment of Eating Disorders into online education resources aimed at caregivers, primary care providers and individuals recovering from Eating Disorders.

Sonia Kumar-Sequin, Executive Director of Body Brave, a non-profit that offers community treatment and support for those struggling with body image, disordered eating and eating disorders states: "Using technology and innovation, we can drive systemic change in the Eating Disorder world. Virtual approaches, both in healthcare and education spaces, are changing the way our world works. Why shouldn't we adopt these technologies to change the way Eating Disorders are approached? The time has come for pioneering action. Eating Disorders can't afford to wait."

“We all want to have a positive impact,” says Academy for Eating Disorders (AED) president, S. Bryn Austin, “but one of the biggest set of hurdles we face as a community is that, because of myriad problems with healthcare delivery systems around the globe, the majority of people with Eating Disorders — or mental health conditions of any type, for that matter — do not get diagnosed or receive treatment.” AED is a global professional association committed to leadership in eating disorders research, education, treatment, and prevention.

The intent of the donation is to fulfill this need for immediate and accessible training for healthcare professionals and resources for those struggling and their caregivers. In 2014, 70% of doctors reported to receiving five hours or less of Eating Disorder specific training in medical school. Currently, Eating Disorders have the highest mortality rate of all mental illness and the incidence of children with eating disorders is rising at an alarming rate.

The development of the e-learning platform is a collaborative project made up of key stakeholders. In addition to NIED, Body Brave, two community-based organizations (Eating Disorders Nova Scotia and Bridgepoint Centre for Eating Disorders Saskatchewan), a treatment program in Ontario, researchers from Hamilton and Niagara, have pledged their support through commitments to provide content and promote the e-learning platform within their networks.

In the lead up to the release of the e-learning platform, NIED, in collaboration with Body Brave, will be hosting the **first-ever** virtual Body Image and Eating Disorders Conference, Body Peace, from October 4-6, 2019. The conference will feature presentations from Eating Disorders survivors and professionals. Attendees will also be given the opportunity to preview components of the e-learning platform, such as the “caregiver classroom”.

Join over 250 organizations in showing support on World Eating Disorders Action Day. Use social media to engage with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram on June 2nd by using the hashtags: #ShowUsYourPurple, #WorldEatingDisordersActionDay, #EatingDisordersCantAffordtoWait and #WeDoActNow2019. Wear purple to show your support, attend workshops and advocate openly for education and treatment.

The National Initiative for Eating Disorders is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to filling the gaps in Eating Disorders care through education. NIED works with caregivers, healthcare professionals and social services to highlight best practices in prevention, health promotion and treatment. To learn more about NIED and Eating Disorders in Canada, visit: <https://nied.ca/>

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