



**Written Submission for the Pre-Budget
Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming
Federal Budget**

**National Youth Council of the
National Initiative for Eating Disorders (NIED)**

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Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The federal government invests \$5.2 billion into the formal creation of a Canada Mental Health Transfer to the Provinces and Territories.

Recommendation 2: The federal government increases support and support services offered through federal health partners for caretakers.

Recommendation 3: The federal government directs Health Canada, with investments of \$25 million over 5 years, to increase and support research into disordered eating, eating disorder treatments, and caretaker impacts, and marginalized impacts.

Recommendation 4: The federal government provides funding, as required, to Health Canada to revisit and update the Canadian Eating Disorders Standards in partnership with the applicable commissions, committees, and other federal and provincial agencies.



Background

Eating disorders and mental health challenges are among the most urgent and under-addressed health issues facing people in Canada today and they continue to have a profound impact on individuals, families, and the health-care system.

These conditions often begin early in life, intersect with anxiety, depression, and trauma, and can persist for years without timely, specialized care. Yet, access to evidence-based treatment remains uneven across the country, with long wait times, regional gaps, and insufficient community support leaving too many people without help when they need it most.

Investing in prevention, early intervention, and comprehensive treatment for eating disorders is not only a matter of compassion and equity but is a sound economic choice that reduces long-term health costs and strengthens the well-being and productivity of communities nationwide. As the federal government prepares the next budget, targeted, sustained funding in this area is both necessary and overdue.

Recommendation 1: The federal government invests \$5.2 billion into the formal creation of a Canada Mental Health Transfer to the Provinces and Territories.

In 2021, the governing Liberal Party of Canada under then Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau PC committed to the creation and implementation of a Canada Mental Health Transfer (CMHT) in the amount of \$4.5 billion over 5 years (A comprehensive plan for mental health care across Canada, 2021). This commitment for mental health and wellness support in Canada has since not been fulfilled in the last 5 years.

A dedicated CMHT of \$5.2 billion, adjusted to 2026 inflation, would help address significant gaps in mental health services across the country, including the shortage of care for individuals living with eating disorders. Eating disorders are serious and complex mental health conditions that require timely, specialized, and multidisciplinary treatment. However, many individuals in Canada face long wait times and limited access to appropriate services, with availability varying widely across provinces and territories.

Targeted federal funding would enable provinces and territories to expand evidence-based eating disorder services across the full continuum of care, including early intervention, outpatient supports, intensive treatment programs, and inpatient care where necessary. It would also support the recruitment and training of specialized clinicians, helping to reduce wait times and ensure individuals receive timely care.

By providing stable and predictable funding, a Canada Mental Health Transfer would strengthen mental health systems and improve equitable access to specialized treatment for eating disorders across Canada.

Recommendation 2: The federal government increases support and support services offered through federal health partners for caretakers.

Eating disorders affect an estimated 1.4 million youth in Canada, including anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder, and other related conditions. Caregivers play a critical role in supporting recovery, particularly for adolescents receiving family-based treatment (FBT), the leading evidence-based approach for youth. In this model, parents and caregivers take on significant responsibility for supporting their child's recovery, including supervising nutrition and helping manage eating disorder behaviours. These responsibilities can place



substantial emotional, financial, and practical strain on families (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2025).

The federal government should provide dedicated funding to expand caregiver support programs across Canada. Increased investment would improve access to caregiver training and education, including virtual and telehealth options that can reach rural and underserved communities. Funding could also support financial assistance measures to help offset the economic burden many families experience while caring for a loved one with an eating disorder.

Strengthening caregiver support would also enable further research on the impacts of caregiving and support broader public education initiatives. As the number of youth affected by eating disorders continues to rise, strengthening support for caregivers is essential to improving recovery outcomes, reducing burnout, and ensuring families have the resources needed to support those experiencing eating disorders.

Recommendation 3: The federal government directs Health Canada, with investments of \$25 million over 5 years, to increase and support research into disordered eating, eating disorder treatments, and caretaker impacts, and marginalized impacts.

Increased federal investment in research on disordered eating and eating disorders is essential to improving prevention, treatment, and long-term recovery outcomes in Canada. Despite the serious health risks associated with eating disorders, including high rates of physical complications and mental health impacts, research in this area remains significantly underfunded compared to other health conditions. A dedicated federal investment would help strengthen Canada's research capacity and support the development of more effective and accessible care.

Targeted funding through Health Canada would support critical research on evidence-based treatments, early identification and intervention strategies, and innovative models of care. It would also support research that examines the broader social, psychological, and economic impacts of eating disorders on caregivers and families, who often play a significant role in supporting recovery but may face substantial emotional and financial strain themselves.

Dedicated research funding would also help address major gaps in understanding how eating disorders, often affecting marginalized and underserved populations at higher rates, including individuals in rural or remote communities, Indigenous populations, racialized communities, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, and those who face systemic barriers to diagnosis and treatment (Mental Health Research Canada, 2025). Improving data collection and research in these areas would help ensure that prevention strategies and treatment approaches are inclusive, culturally informed, and responsive to diverse experiences.

Strengthening the national evidence base will support more effective policies, programs, and clinical practices. Over time, this investment would help guide the development of targeted interventions, improve service delivery, and expand access to equitable, evidence-based care for individuals and families affected by eating disorders across Canada.



Recommendation 4: The federal government provides funding, as required, to Health Canada to revisit and update the Canadian Eating Disorders Standards in partnership with the applicable commissions, committees, and other federal and provincial agencies.

Updating the Canadian Eating Disorders Standards is an important step in ensuring that care across the country reflects current evidence and best practices. As research and clinical understanding of eating disorders continue to evolve, national standards must be regularly reviewed and refined to ensure they provide clear, up-to-date guidance for clinicians, service providers, and policymakers. Regular updates also help ensure that emerging approaches to prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery support are reflected in the national framework.

Providing federal funding for Health Canada to lead a coordinated review process, while working in partnership with relevant commissions, committees, and federal and provincial partners, would help strengthen national alignment in treatment approaches and service delivery. A collaborative approach would allow for input from experts, practitioners, and people with lived experience, ensuring that updated standards are both evidence-based and responsive to the needs of those directly affected by eating disorders.

Updated standards would support improved clinical guidance, promote greater consistency in care, and help reduce disparities in service access across provinces and territories. They would also provide a clearer foundation for program development, workforce training, and system planning. Ultimately, revisiting and strengthening these national standards would help ensure that individuals experiencing eating disorders receive timely, coordinated, and evidence-based support regardless of where they live in Canada.



Notes and References

NIED exists to give hope and support to individuals with an eating disorder and their caregivers. We do this by developing and sharing educational resources and information, conducting, or participating in research, and taking action to address the needs of Canadians impacted by eating disorders. For more information on the work of NIED, visit nied.ca.

The following, in full or in part, were used throughout the creation of this Pre-Budget Submission and for general background information:

A comprehensive plan for mental health care across Canada. Liberal Party of Canada. (2021). <https://liberal.ca/our-platform/a-comprehensive-plan-for-mental-health-care-across-canada/>

Canadian Institutes of Health Research. (2025, September 8). More than 1.4 million Canadian youth have an eating disorder—but better data and early interventions are fighting back. Government of Canada. <https://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/54456.html>

Canadian Mental Health Association. (2026, January 28). Eating Disorders Awareness Week: When care is too far away. <https://cmha.ca/news/eating-disorders-awareness-week-when-care-is-too-far-away/>

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National Eating Disorder Information Centre. (n.d.). Eating disorder statistics. <https://nedic.ca/know-facts/statistics/>

UHN Foundation. (2026). Forty years of support, connection and hope: Celebrating the National Eating Disorder Information Centre. <https://uhnfoundation.ca/stories/forty-years-of-support-connection-and-hope-celebrating-the-national-eating-disorder-information-centre/>