

September 28, 2011

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

The Hon. Benjamin L. Cline  
Chair, Joint Commission on Health Care  
c/o Ms. Sylvia Reid  
Joint Commission on Health Care  
P.O. Box 1322  
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Dear Chairman Cline:

On behalf of the National Eating Disorders Association (“NEDA”), we are writing to ask the Joint Commission on Health Care (“JCHC”) to adopt policy options to improve education, awareness, and treatment of eating disorders in Virginia.

NEDA is the leading not for profit organization representing millions of individuals and families affected by eating disorders. Presently, over 1500 NEDA members reside in Virginia. Enclosed with this letter, please find a roster of Virginia NEDA members who have indicated their support for the policy positions detailed below.

NEDA respectfully calls upon the JCHC to amend and, subsequently, adopt JCHC staff’s policy options 2, 3, and 4. These proactive, yet restrained, actions will improve prevention, education, and awareness of eating disorder symptoms among Virginia’s health care providers, teachers, school nurses, and students. NEDA requests that policy options 2, 3, and 4 be amended to call upon the Department of Education, the Medical Society of Virginia, and the Virginia Nurses Association to work with NEDA, and other interested parties, to implement the JCHC’s directives. Further, NEDA respectfully requests that the JCHC direct staff to report back to the JCHC in 2012 on the progress made during implementation of options 2, 3, and 4 as well as any additional recommendations arising out of implementation.

Additionally, NEDA respectfully requests that the JCHC adopt a fifth policy option. Building on the JCHC’s Healthy Living Subcommittee’s valuable discussion on September 19<sup>th</sup>, NEDA suggests a policy option be developed calling upon the Department of Health and the Department of Education to jointly develop an evidence-based program for eating disorder screenings in Virginia’s schools. NEDA is excited to assist the Commonwealth of Virginia in developing this screening process. Virginia already successfully implements a scoliosis screening process in its school systems. With thoughtful development, perhaps guided by recent studies on eating disorder screening techniques by Harvard’s School of Public Policy, an eating disorders screening program could provide the best defense yet for Virginia’s young people. NEDA requests that staff report back to the JCHC in 2012 regarding progress made on developing an evidence-based school screening program and staff’s policy recommendations for implementation.

NEDA is grateful to you, to Vice-Chair Puller, and to the Joint Commission on Health Care and its staff for undertaking this important study. Our hope is that Virginia will now build on the information illuminated by JCHC's report and will implement effective measures to curb the terrible effects of eating disorders in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Lynn S. Grefe  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Eating Disorders Association

Lara Gregorio, LCSW  
STAR Program Manager  
National Eating Disorders Association

Seen and Agreed:

Virginia Member\_Hometown