

## Questions to Ask Providers/ Facilities When Seeking Treatment

It can feel overwhelming to ask for help from a professional in your eating disorder recovery process. Despite this, seeking professional help by someone specializing in eating disorder care is often critical for long-term recovery. Research shows that receiving therapeutic treatments with protocols specific to eating disorders results in better treatment outcomes. Selecting a treatment provider can be difficult and it is important to find the right option for you. To make this choice, it may be useful to come prepared with questions to ask a provider or facility about their experience or approach. Below are recommendations of areas to assess during your selection process.

### Selecting a Treatment Provider

#### Training, Background, and Experience

- Examples of questions: *How long have you been practicing psychotherapy? How long have you been treating eating disorders specifically? What has been your eating disorder treatment training? Ask specific questions about your specific needs (e.g., how many adolescents with bulimia nervosa have you treated?).*

#### Treatment Approach

- Examples of questions: *What is your treatment approach? Do you provide evidence-based therapy (e.g., cognitive-behavioral therapy, family-based therapy)? What is the typical length of treatment? Do you create treatment plans with specific goals related to eating disorder recovery? How often do you reassess progress and discuss changes to the treatment approach? How do you determine if/ when it is appropriate to refer to a higher level of care?*

#### Collaboration

- Examples of questions: *What other providers do you consult with? Will you be working closely with my other providers (e.g., PCP, psychiatrist, family therapist) and how often will you be in consultation with them? How do you include support people in treatment and recovery? How often do you check in with parents/ guardians during adolescent individual therapy? How will insurance work?*

### Selecting a Treatment Facility

Many of the questions above also would be recommended to ask a facility. Some additional areas to assess are listed below.

#### Treatment Outcomes/ Expectations

- Examples of questions: *What are your typical treatment outcomes and treatment goals for patients with eating disorders? What are the measurable criteria you use to assess how well treatment is working? Does your program have weight change goals? What is the typical length of stay?*

#### Treatment Team

- Examples of questions: *Who are the primary therapists in your program, how long have they been trained in treating eating disorders, and often would I see them? How long are my sessions with my primary therapist? What other treatment providers are a part of your treatment team*

*and how often would I have contact with them? Is family therapy offered? Are there meal support staff and what is their training in eating disorder treatment? Is a physician an integral part of the team?*

#### Discharge Planning

- Examples of questions: *Does your program connect individuals with an outpatient treatment team when it is time to discharge from the program?*

Regards,

Eating Disorders Association of Maine (EDAM)

