

Use your local media to help spread the word about your work. Write letters to the editors on behalf of board members and constituents and share them with the media. You can find out who to submit letters to, letter length requirements, etc. on the papers' websites. Localize and share. The following are two letters that were written and distributed via SPCC to support advocacy efforts and statewide mental health efforts.

Example Letter One

Colorado has the sixth highest rate of suicide in the nation; 867 Coloradans died by suicide in 2010. The largest number of suicides is among men of working age, 35 to 54. These men are sons, husbands, fathers, wage earners. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people, ages 10 to 34. A death by suicide affects the entire community; it has a profound impact on family and friends, and the workplace, and results in an untold loss of productivity.

House Bill 1140, sponsored by Rep. Matt Jones and Sen. Linda Newell, will help prevent suicide. If passed, it will ask hospitals to provide information about suicide (risk factors, signs and sources of help) to family and friends to whom a suicidal person is being discharged. Suicidal persons who go to the hospital are often those who have attempted suicide, and these individuals are at serious risk for eventually dying of suicide. Any effort that gets information into the hands of those closest to suicidal persons will help save lives.

Please urge members of the Health and Environment Committee to support this bill.

Example Letter Two

The catastrophic wildfires and dangerously hot temperatures create the perfect opportunity for depression to set in. By now, many of us know someone who has been touched by one of the fires in Colorado. Simply turning on the news can be draining.

If you or someone you know are demonstrating signs of depression -- feeling of hopelessness or helplessness, loss of appetite, overwhelming sadness, uncontrollable crying, sleeping too much or too little, or other symptoms -- please contact Metro Crisis Services at 888-885-1222 or go to metrocrisiservices.org. Asking for help when you need it is a sign of courage.