



The Maryland State Medical Society

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MEDCHI TAKES ACTION TO PREVENT PHYSICIAN SUICIDE

BALTIMORE, September 16, 2024 – September 16 is [National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month](#), and September 17th is the seventh annual [National Physician Suicide Awareness Day](#). The day is dedicated to honoring the memory of colleagues who have died by suicide and to continue to raise awareness on how to prevent it. It also serves as a reminder that suicide can affect us, our friends, and our colleagues.

According to the [American Federation for Suicide Prevention](#), more than 49,000 individuals died by suicide in 2022. Per the [National Physician Suicide Awareness Day website](#) physicians have one of the highest suicide rates of any profession. More than half of physicians know a physician who has either considered, attempted or died by suicide in their career, and it is estimated that a million Americans lose their physician to suicide each year.

Dr. Benjamin Lowentritt, MedChi President, when speaking about physician suicide states “as a society and a professional community, it is important to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and establish self-care and help-seeking as being normal and ok.”

We can all help prevent suicide. Anyone could be struggling. The [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) provides free, confidential support and resources for people in distress. If you or someone you know needs support now, **call or text 988 or chat [988lifeline.org](#)**. The local 24/7 suicide prevention hotline is 316-660-7500.

[The Maryland Physician Health Program](#) is where Maryland Physicians and other healthcare professionals can receive assistance with potentially impairing conditions in a private, non-disciplinary setting while protecting both the confidentiality of the participant and the safety of the public.

Spotting warning signs

Talking or thinking about suicide, feelings of hopelessness or helplessness, increasing substance abuse, withdrawing from others, and extreme mood swings are some of the warning signs of suicide. Learn more about how to [spot warning signs](#).

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit [www.medchi.org](#).