MedChi
The Maryland State Medical Society

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MEDCHI URGES MARYLANDERS TO PRIORITIZE SUICIDE PREVENTION AND SUPPORT DURING SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

BALTIMORE – September 9, 2026 — During Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, MedChi is encouraging Marylanders to recognize the warning signs of suicide, reach out to those who may be struggling, and take action to connect individuals with appropriate support and resources.

Suicide prevention is a shared responsibility. MedChi is committed to breaking the stigma surrounding mental health and suicide, encouraging open conversations, and ensuring that no one feels alone or without access to help.

World Suicide Prevention Day, observed September 10, provides an opportunity to increase awareness and encourage meaningful conversations about suicide prevention. Checking in with a friend, family member, colleague, or patient can be an important first step in helping someone who may be struggling.

MedChi also recognizes National Physician Suicide Awareness Day on September 17, highlighting the importance of supporting the mental health and well-being of physicians and other healthcare professionals. Physicians face unique workplace pressures, including demanding schedules, burnout, emotional stress, and the responsibility of caring for others. Creating healthcare environments where physicians feel comfortable seeking help without fear of judgment or stigma is essential to strengthening the health of both healthcare professionals and the patients they serve.

"Suicide prevention begins with recognizing that every person matters and that asking someone how they are doing can make a difference," said Dr. Eric Wargotz, President of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society. "We must continue to create communities and healthcare environments where people feel safe speaking openly about mental health and seeking support. That includes making sure our physicians and healthcare professionals have the resources, support, and understanding they need."

MedChi encourages Marylanders to:

- **Check in:** Reach out to friends, family members, coworkers, and loved ones who may be experiencing emotional distress or significant life challenges.
- **Listen without judgment:** Give people an opportunity to talk openly and take their concerns seriously.
- **Recognize warning signs:** Changes in behavior, withdrawal from others, expressions of hopelessness, or talking about death or suicide can be signs that someone needs help.
- **Encourage professional support:** Help connect individuals with a physician, mental health professional, crisis counselor, or other trusted healthcare resource.

- **Know the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** Anyone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, or concerned about someone else, can call or text **988** for free, confidential support.
- **Support physicians and healthcare professionals:** Encourage a culture in which seeking mental health support is viewed as a sign of strength rather than weakness.

"Physicians spend their careers caring for others, but they also need to know that it is okay to ask for help when they need it," Wargotz said. "Reducing stigma and making support accessible can help ensure that no one feels that they have to face a crisis alone."

Suicide prevention requires continued awareness and action throughout the year—not only during September. By starting conversations, listening with compassion, recognizing when someone may need help, and connecting people with appropriate resources, Marylanders can play an important role in preventing suicide and supporting one another.

For immediate emotional support or crisis assistance, call or text **988** to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. In an emergency or when there is an immediate danger, call **911**.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. Formed in 1799, it is still the largest physician organization in Maryland today. 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.