



# COMMISSIONERS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY

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**September 11, 2017**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***County Mental Health Works to Decrease Suicides***

**Cumberland County, PA** – Anyone can feel the impact of suicide, include those we may least expect. National Suicide Prevention Week is September 10 – 16, 2017. The Cumberland Perry Mental Health, Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Department (MH/IDD) is working to prevent suicide and provide support to those who have lost a loved one through suicide.

MH/IDD offers a free training course, “Question, Persuade, Refer” (QPR), which is designed to provide information on recognizing the warning signs of a person who may be feeling suicidal. The training is no more than two hours and is open to all businesses, community groups and organizations in Cumberland and Perry counties.

In addition to the QPR training, a Suicide Prevention Taskforce, Preventing Unnecessary Loss through Suicide Education, (PULSE) has also been developed by MH/IDD and a group of community stakeholders. This taskforce is focused on providing education, information and support to the community. The taskforce meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 5-6:30 p.m. at STAR (Steps Toward Advocacy and Recovery), 253 Penrose Place, Carlisle.

Additionally, the taskforce hosts a Support Group meeting for survivors. This group is for those that have lost a loved one to suicide and provides a safe place to express your feelings and grief. The support group also meets at STAR on the third Wednesday of each month, from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

“Suicide impacts so many more people than just immediate family members,” said Annie Strite, senior human services manager for MH/IDD. “It impacts co-workers, friends and entire communities.”

According to the most recent health statistics from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, on average, one resident dies in Pennsylvania every five hours due to suicide. In Cumberland County, 165 people died from suicide in 2014.

MH/IDD recommends anyone contemplating suicide call Crisis Intervention at 1-866-350-HELP (4357). For more information on any of MH/IDD’s suicide prevention and support programs, contact Strite at [astrite@ccpa.net](mailto:astrite@ccpa.net).

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