



News Release

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Trillium hosts “Let’s Chalk about Mental Health” event

Messages of hope and resources available to encourage treatment

GREENVILLE, NC-Trillium Health Resources announces a special event hosted for [Suicide Prevention Awareness Month](#) in September. On Tuesday, August 27, Trillium staff held a “Let’s Chalk about Mental Health” event to support understanding, reduce stigma, and encourage sharing through chalk artwork drawn on sidewalks and pavement.

North Carolina Vital Statistics (2017) lists that 235 individuals died by suicide in the Trillium catchment area that year. Data from the [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) states that suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States and there were 1,400,000 attempts in 2017. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), age-adjusted suicide rates for all ages 15-64 rose 33% from 1999 to 2017.

On August 27, we shared a short presentation of the statistics related to suicide and resources available, and a family member impacted by a death by suicide shared their story. Trillium also would like to remind the public about [Mental Health First Aid](#) training so anyone can learn to recognize the warning signs of a potential suicide. Trillium staff then drew images [pictures attached] that encompass messages of hope along with the broad impact of suicide. We want to show that no matter the situation, there is always someone to listen and treatments available.

“We want this to be a challenge not just to us but the rest of our community...we want to make sure this message continues. We can make a difference, we can help others who are hurting. We can use our words, our positions, and our platform to make a difference in other people’s lives,” shared Dr. Michael Smith, Chief Medical Officer with Trillium.

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The guest speaker, Matthew, shared his personal experience related to suicide after losing his younger brother, Jeremy, in June. “[He] was a fun-loving guy who enjoyed life and always had a smile on [his] face. In our minds I think no one believes a person’s life is meaningless or less important than others. [But] when [someone is] under the influence [of drugs] we don’t think how our actions will affect our friends and family. The symptoms and signs are often difficult to read. Even the most positive of us have negative thoughts from time to time. Even the sanest of people may deal with thoughts on suicide.”

Throughout the month of September, we will post on [our social media](#) using the hashtag #ChalkaboutMH. We welcome any community agency, school, organization, business, religious group, and more to join us in the conversation...all you need is a willingness to be involved and a piece of chalk. Trillium will share all posts with #ChalkaboutMH. We do suggest following any local ordinances regarding public artwork if participants are not the property owner, and be sure to use chalk supplies that are easily washed away.

ABOUT TRILLIUM HEALTH RESOURCES

Trillium Health Resources is a leading specialty care manager (LME/MCO) for individuals with substance use, mental illness and intellectual/developmental disabilities in 26 counties in eastern North Carolina. Trillium’s mission is to transform the lives of people in need by providing them with ready access to quality care. We take a person-centered approach to health and wellbeing, coordinating care across multiple systems to achieve improved health outcomes, quality of care and efficient use of resources. Trillium is investing in innovation to meet the unique needs of the individuals and communities we serve, and remains focused on delivering the right services, in the right amount, at the right time. For more information, visit www.TrilliumHealthResources.org.

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