

January 27, 2016

Wyoming Department of Health,

I would like to express my strong support for Prevention Management Organization's work in Teton County. As a member of the Teton Country Suicide Coalition, I have seen first-hand what Matt Stech and Jacob Richins have accomplished in the last year. In response to the high suicide rate in Teton County and all of Wyoming, they have distributed over 1500 gun locks to the community. Prominent locations in town, including medical offices, the recreation center, and sporting goods stores now allow patrons to take home a free gun lock. As a family doctor, gun safety is a topic I discuss with all parents bringing their children in for preventative visits. The message is much more effective when I can offer them a free gun lock.

Jacob and Matt have also become QPR trainers, effectively training nearly 200 community members in suicide prevention since September 2015. I attended a training myself and found it very informative and useful. Our community has lost several people to suicide in the last year. These trainings encourage people to confront the problem directly, giving people the tools to talk to their friends and neighbors that are struggling.

Currently, the coalition is working to improve the skills of its medical and mental health providers. We are spreading the word about a free online CME course that helps clinicians talk to their patients about suicidal thoughts and intentions. Many clinicians find this sensitive topic difficult to discuss. They will benefit from engaging in online patient encounters, and learning the most effective ways to ask difficult questions.

I am impressed with the level of collaboration and teamwork PMO has demonstrated. They have reached out to the public health department, the school district, the hospital, medical provider clinics, and the public to develop and coordinate suicide prevention strategies. I urge you to continue your support of PMO at the highest level possible.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Noyes, MD  
Member of the Teton County Suicide Prevention Coalition