**Oregon CLHO LTE Toolkit**

**What is a Letter to the Editor (LTE)?**

A Letter to the Editor (LTE) is a brief communication to a journal's editor or editorial team. It is usually written in response to a recent publication within the journal, but can also be on an unrelated topic of interest to the journal's readership. Generally speaking, LTEs are about 200-250 words. LTEs can be submitted to local papers, or statewide outlets. They can be used in a strategic manner at a specific time, or by running multiple pieces to send an overarching message with the community.

**Where & How to Submit**

Every news outlet has different requirements for letters-to-the-editor. Below you will find the link to the submission forms & instructions for a few prominent statewide Oregon news sources.

[*Statesman Journal*](https://gannett-nxuao.formstack.com/forms/statesmanjournal_letters_to_editor)

[*The Oregonian*](https://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/2019/09/submitting-a-commentary-piece-or-letter-to-the-editor-to-the-oregonianoregonlive.html)

**The Basics:**

* Introduce yourself
* Share a very brief detail about yourself and your relation to the public health system
* Briefly use some of our talking points
* Close emphasizing the importance of supporting public health workers and systems

**Messaging**

* **Top Message (Values):** All Oregonians, regardless of where they live, deserve to be healthy. Public health plays a major role in protecting communities, and preventing disease.
* **Second Message (Economic):** Healthy communities improve the economy, and we know that prevention costs less than response.

**Example:**

***INTRODUCTION:*** *My name is\_\_\_\_\_\_. I’m a [public health worker role- provide some details of your career], and have lived in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County/City/town for \_\_\_\_\_\_ number of years.*

***KEY MESSAGES:***

*When public health is working as it should, it tends to be invisible, despite the fact that we prevent communicable diseases, ensure access to healthy drinking water, and work to maintain clean air. While COVID-19 displayed to the public the important emergency response roles that public health workers take on, much of the work we do helps our communities prevent health issues before they occur.*

 *[Insert personal story from being a public health official]. This important work cannot be done as effectively when public health is understaffed and under-resourced. We need to be able to invest in our workers and invest in the people we serve.*

***CLOSING:*** *As a [affiliation], public health is of the utmost importance to continue to prevent health emergencies. This year, we’re asking the Legislature to support public health by investing in public health. Will you join us?*

**Letters to the Editor- Practice**

* Share your brief history working in public health.
* Use your storytelling skills- what stories from your work highlight the importance of funding public health?
* How will you connect your role as a public health worker and the community members you have served to the persuasive arguments you are trying to present on behalf of public health funding?

Now, put all the pieces of your answers together for a draft letter to the editor.