

Letters to the Editor

Writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper is one of the best ways to influence health care reform. Letters to the editor allow you to voice your opinion, draw attention to an issue, bring issues to the attention of your legislators, and correct or interpret facts in response to an inaccurate or biased article.

We encourage board members and supporters to submit letters or opinion articles, and the Communications Committee can help with your letters and give you some examples to follow. Generally, these letters should come from you, acting in your private capacity, NOT as a spokesperson for Maine Allcare. If you mention Maine Allcare, the Maine Allcare Communications Committee chair would like to see your letter in advance of publication to be certain it follows our guidelines and is consistent with our positions and principles.

Here are some tips:

- Keep it short - check the paper's guidelines and don't exceed them.
- "Speak your truth", and add personal stories.
- Use local statistics if you can.
- Relate your letter to a recent article or op-ed, if possible.
- Include your phone numbers and address, as the publication will need to confirm that you wrote the letter before they publish it.

OpEds

- Opinion/editorials are longer than letters to the editor (between 500 and 800 words.)
- Be newsworthy: Tie your topic into an upcoming vote, appropriate holiday, anniversary, community event, the release of a new report, a recent article, or a popular movie.
- The Maine Allcare Newsletter can be a source of articles and reports.
- Consider inviting a respected or influential member or your community to co-sign or co-author the Op-Ed with you.
- Use local statistics to capture people's attention.
- It usually takes editorial boards two weeks to review submission.