



Tips for Writing a Letter to the Editor

Writing a letter to the editor – especially to a local community paper – is an excellent way to share information about pulmonary fibrosis and what people can do to help. Here’s how to get started:

1. **Know the rules.** Check the newspaper for guidelines, including length limitations, where the letter should go, as well as other information they require in order to consider a letter for publication, such as your contact information (many papers will publish letters only after verifying the author). Know the date that your paper is published – both print and online – so that you can keep an eye out for your letter.
2. **Keep it short and to the point.** Newspapers have word limits, so keep your letter short. If a limit isn’t stated, aim for 150 words. Letters that are too long will be edited by the paper without your input.
3. **Be accurate.** Support your letter with facts, statistics, and citations from the Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation website at pulmonaryfibrosis.org.
4. **Write for your audience.** Don’t use slang or jargon. Your letter needs to be understood by people who don’t know anything about pulmonary fibrosis. Most readers won’t know much about the disease or many of the medical terms associated with it.
5. **Be yourself.** Include your personal connection with pulmonary fibrosis and to the Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation. Write using your own voice.
6. **Include a call to action.** Let the reader know how they can help and provide specific examples, such as how to participate with the Foundation on social media, or ask readers to host a Team PFF event, such as a bake sale or car wash. Refer them to pulmonaryfibrosis.org.
7. **Recruit help.** Ask a family member or friend to proofread your letter, checking for correct grammar, typing errors and that the letter sounds like it’s coming from YOU, in your voice.
8. **Send letters to smaller newspapers.** Small newspapers, such as your local weekly paper, are more likely to print your letter than major metropolitan dailies.
9. **Share your publication.** Did your letter get published? Congratulations and let us know! Send to a link to socialmedia@pulmonaryfibrosis.org so that we can share it on our social media platforms!