

Governor gives press conference at the School of Medicine

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Suicide in Nevada will be the topic when Governor Bob Miller holds a press conference at the University of Nevada School of Medicine on Wednesday, Feb. 8, at 1:00 p.m. in the school's Manville Auditorium.

The governor will be joined by School of Medicine Dean Robert M. Daugherty, M.D., Ph.D., and Dr. Patrick O'Carroll from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Division of Injury Epidemiology. Dr. O'Carroll will be giving a presentation, "A Proposed Community Plan For Suicide Cluster Control," at 12:15 p.m., just prior to the press conference in the same auditorium.

Over a six-year span (1982-1987), 1,631 Nevadans committed suicide. The suicide mortality rate for Nevadans aged 14-24 is 29 per 100,000 persons per year; a figure substantially higher than the comparable U.S. rate, which is 13 per 100,000. In fact, Nevada has the highest youth suicide rate, per capita, in the country. These figures are of particular concern to the governor because he chairs the Nevada Youth Suicide Prevention committee. Although the youth figures are high, the suicide rates for older age groups are even higher.

Because of these alarming statistics, the Nevada State Health Division requested that a CDC investigative team come to Nevada and help study the problem, as they have in other states such as Wyoming, Massachusetts and New Jersey. Dr. O'Carroll is the senior epidemiologist of that team.

In the beginning, the study will focus on identifying characteristics of suicide victims. Then, comparisons will be made between those victims and their neighbors who have not attempted suicide.