

# Writing for *Pathlight*

---

*Pathlight* depends on the voice of the community. We so appreciate the enthusiasm of our contributors and we are thrilled to hear your story. Because writing for publication can be a daunting endeavor, we've put together a few hints and guidelines to help you get started and make sharing your story with the PH community a breeze.

**1. Deadlines** If you are working with a staff member to report on an event or to share a story, he or she should provide you with a deadline and target length. If you don't get one, it is important to ask. It's just as important to make sure that you leave enough time to complete the article, or talk to your contact at PHA and let them know if your article will be delayed and by how much.

**2. Organization** Try to organize your article so that the most important and compelling information comes first. This is the best way to present your story so that others are easily informed and engaged, but it also makes it easier to publish when space gets tight. We may have to edit the piece for clarity or length, and if you prioritize your information, and keep your story concise, we can be sure that we aren't losing the heart of the piece.

**3. The Big Picture** Be sure to let readers know why your topic is exciting and **why** it matters. Try to think about your article from the perspective of someone who doesn't know a thing about the subject, and convince them that they want to know more. Don't just share the little details, but the big picture as well. If you're ever struck by writer's block, short on time, or drained in creativity, try talking it through with an interested but uninformed friend, or call your PHA contact and see if you can arrange a time to tell your story over the phone. This might help you gain focus or refine your ideas.

**4. Headlines & Bylines** Don't forget to give your article a relevant and exciting headline. It should grab the reader's attention and draw them into the rest of your story. Include your name and any pertinent information you would like included in your byline—if you are a PH patient for example, an R.N., B.S.N., M.D., or a Timbuktu Support Group Leader. Your byline will attribute your article and let everyone know who you are. It will look like this:

***By Jane Smith, M.D.***

***PHA board member and PH patient***

**5. Photographs** Please make sure that your event photographer sets his or her camera to a high resolution. In order to look crisp in print, photos need to have higher resolution (300 dpi) than they do when viewed on the internet (72 dpi). You can set the resolution on most digital cameras as you are preparing to take a picture, but once you get home, a low resolution picture cannot be fixed. If you aren't sure what any of this means, try taking some practice pictures before the event and load them onto your computer. The imaging software that came with your camera should tell you the **size** of the image, or its **resolution**.

**6. The Bottom Line** **Have fun!** Congratulate yourself! Every day, with your story and with your action, *you* are making a difference in the lives of PHers everywhere.

*Thank you!*

If you run into problems or come up with questions about writing for *Pathlight*, contact Christine at 301-565-3004 x114, or e-mail [Christine@PHAssociation.org](mailto:Christine@PHAssociation.org).