



Continuing Governor Christie's Commitment To Increasing Access To Care For Those In Need

Historic Financial Investment Towards Expanding Mental Health And Substance Use Treatment

*"By providing more competitive reimbursement rates for services and providers, we have a chance to dramatically increase access to treatment."
- Governor Chris Christie, New Jersey State Budget Address, February 16, 2016*

The Governor is making an historic financial commitment to raise reimbursement rates and increase access to substance use and mental health treatment. This is the first significant behavioral health rate increase in more than a decade and will allow the State to provide more competitive reimbursement rates for services and providers and extend access to care for behavioral health needs.

- **Historic Financial Commitment & Largest Rate Increase Ever.** A combined State and federal investment of over \$127 million in fiscal 2017 will increase mental health and substance use treatment rates and expand access to care.
 - A \$127 million increase in rates for mental health and substance use treatment providers includes a new State investment of \$20 million as well as an increase of \$107 million in federal funding generated from new and existing State dollars in the system.
 - The \$127 million investment into increasing reimbursement to providers through enhanced rates is comprised of **\$53 million** for mental health services and **\$74 million** towards substance use services.
 - Rates will vary by service, but overall the new rates are expected to increase reimbursement by about 20% and in some cases as much as 50%. This represents a significant reinvestment of state savings and federal funds, and the largest increase overall to this community in over a decade.
 - These increased reimbursement rates will help improve critical services and provide more treatment capacity for those who need it most.
- **Reducing Emergency Room Burdens.** Besides providing greater access to care in the community, the increased rates will also reduce the burden that hospital emergency departments face in treating these patients. When individuals seek early and appropriate treatment for their needs, other health complications can be prevented, alleviating the need for more expensive services. By improving access to care in the community, the pressure on hospitals and emergency rooms will lessen.
 - **Expanding The Availability Of And Access To Mental Health And Substance Use Treatment Services.** The

\$100 million investment will expand access to high quality health care providers for individuals with behavioral health needs. Increased reimbursement rates will help ensure that New Jersey's behavioral health system has the capacity to serve patients with the appropriate level of care for their clinical needs.

- **Fiscal And Moral Responsibility.** This investment will help make sure that those in need get the appropriate treatment earlier and preserve state resources by preventing unnecessary emergency room visits.

Debra Wentz, President Of The New Jersey Association Of Mental Health And Addiction Agencies: "You can pay lip service to this kind of area, but when you put your money where your mouth is, it's huge. It's a rare day when the priorities of providers of services to vulnerable populations and government align to the extent that they did. It's an unprecedented, historic commitment of funding to increase rates." (Josh Cornfield, "Christie pledges \$100M for drug treatment in state address", [Associated Press](#), 1/13/16)

Former Governor James E. McGreevey: "I mean, we're in the midst of a full-fledged crisis, this crisis is neither Republican nor Democratic, and the governor recognizes this, and has put the full weight, measure of his office, behind these initiatives." (Andrew Kitchenman, "Governor Lays Out Plan For Combating Drug Addiction And Reducing Overdoses," [NJ Spotlight](#), 1/13/16)

Dr. Jeffrey Brenner, Executive Director Of The Camden Coalition Of Healthcare Providers: "This really puts a wind in all of our sails - puts a clear message the state is behind our effort." (Maddie Hanna, "Christie drug treatment ideas a 'work in progress'," [Inquirer](#), 1/13/16)

Expanding The Recovery Coach Program To Get Help To Overdose Survivors Immediately Following A Reversal

\$1.7 Million For Expansion Into Six Additional Counties. The Governor has announced \$1.7 million in funding for the expansion of the Recovery Coach Program into six additional counties.

As a direct result of the Facing Addiction Task Force's work, the "Recovery Coach" program launched in our five counties hardest hit by the addiction crisis. The "Recovery Coach" program will reach and connect drug overdose survivors with treatment, counseling, and support services in the immediate aftermath of their overdose – a critical moment for successful intervention.

Recovery Coaches and Patient Navigators engage individuals reversed from an opioid overdose to provide non-clinical assistance, recovery supports and appropriate referrals for assessment and substance use disorder treatment.

This program puts support immediately in reach for victims at hospitals after they are stabilized.

Creating The State's First Ever Fully Dedicated Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facility For Prison Inmates

Investing \$2 Million To Re-Open Mid-State Correctional Facility As A Dedicated Treatment Facility. Continuing his commitment to help all individuals with substance use disorders, Governor Christie is re-opening Mid-State Correctional Facility in 2017 as an institution dedicated to drug treatment. This will fundamentally change how New Jersey treats addiction behind prison walls – making those efforts smarter, more accessible and more effectively integrated with re-entry efforts to help people stay clean. Governor Christie directed the Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Services to implement the first-ever dedicated, licensed substance use treatment program at Mid-State Correctional Facility, which will be dedicated to treating addiction behind prison walls – a first-of-its-kind program in New Jersey. The new Mid-State Correctional Facility substance use treatment program will be licensed by the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

Building On New Jersey's Strong Record Of Combating Recidivism

New Jersey is widely recognized as a national leader in reducing incidents of recidivism and reducing its prison population:

- The state's recidivism rate has dropped from 48% at the turn of the century to approximately 32%.

- Since 1999, New Jersey's prison population has declined more than 29 percent.
- New Jersey's state-sentenced inmate population in county jails, roughly 1,500 before Governor Christie took office, is now below 200, which allows more offenders to begin the New Jersey Department of Correction's (NJDOC) highly regarded re-entry programming as soon as possible. (NJ Department of Corrections Press Release, 10/26/15)

New York University's Brennan Center for Justice: "Over the last decade and a half New Jersey has reduced its prison population by 26 percent, as violent and property crime declined by 30 and 31 percent, respectively. New Jersey safely downsized its prison population by enhancing the efficiency of its parole process and increasing flexibility in the sentencing of low-level drug offenders.

From 2011 to 2014, crime in New Jersey fell 20 percent while incarceration fell 9.5 percent. (Lauren-Brooke Eisen and InimaiChettair, "The Reverse Mass Incarceration Act," Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, October 2015)

The Governor's Commitment To Reclaiming Lives Has Been A Top Priority Since The Earliest Days Of His Administration

Ushered In A Statewide Expansion Of Drug Court & Mandatory Treatment Capacity: Governor Christie signed landmark, bipartisan legislation to put in place a statewide, mandatory drug court program. The law calls for a five-year phase- in period that establishes drug court programs in all of New Jersey's 21 counties – a profound expansion from the previous administration under which non-mandatory drug court programs operated in just 3 counties.

Focusing On Treatment. To date, nine vicinages (Ocean, Hudson, Somerset/Hunterdon/Warren, Passaic, Mercer, Atlantic/Cape May, Bergen, Burlington, and Monmouth) have implemented mandatory Drug Courts, with another three (Essex, Cumberland/Salem/Gloucester and Middlesex) slated for July 2016. The fiscal 2017 budget increases funding to support the operational costs needed to expand the Drug Court Program into the final three vicinages.

Signed Bipartisan Overdose Protection Act Into Law: Governor Chris Christie signed the bipartisan Overdose Protection Act establishing a two-prong approach to help prevent drug overdose deaths in New Jersey. First, it provides legal protection to people who are in violation of the law while they are attempting to help a drug overdose victim. Secondly, it eliminates negative legal action against health care professionals or bystanders who administer overdose antidotes in life-threatening situations.

Expansion of the Overdose Prevention Act: In February 2015, Governor Christie signed an expansion of the Overdose Prevention Act, adding a provision to extend the immunity provisions of the law to first responders including police and EMTs who administer and dispense Narcan.

Statewide Expansion of Narcan Program To Save Lives From an Overdose: Governor Christie implemented a statewide program to help reduce the number of heroin-related deaths by training and equipping police officers and first responders to administer the antidote Narcan to overdose victims.