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## "Christie Tours London Addiction Treatment Housing Program"

February 3, 2015

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*In Case You Missed It*

– *The Bergen Record*

### Christie tours London addiction treatment housing program

Melissa Hayes

The Record

February 3, 2015

Governor Christie toured a transitional housing program for women recovering from drug and alcohol addiction, praising the staff and sharing familiar stories about his own efforts in that area.

Christie and members of his travelling delegation are spending their last full day in Great Britain meeting privately with finance executives and Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne, who oversees finance. The governor and his wife, Mary Pat, also toured Hope House in Clapham, a section of south London, run by Action on Addiction, an organization supported by the Royal Family. ...

Christie told Action on Addiction executives and staff about his own efforts to combat the stigma of addiction in New Jersey. Christie also made it mandatory for non-violent, low-level drug offenders to be sentenced to treatment instead of prison.

He said that when he's speaking to Republicans about being pro-life, he tells them they must also support helping addicts regain their lives. It's a story the governor frequently shares.

"If you're going to be pro-life, tell me that you're pro-life for the kid who is lying on the floor of a jail cell basement addicted to drugs," Christie said sitting around a table inside Hope House. "If you're pro-life, you need to get them to places like a first-stage place and then here to give them the tools to deal with things."

Action on Addiction has first-stage addiction treatment programs and second-stage transitional housing like Hope House, which has 22 beds. Clients at Hope House participate in workshops, attend meetings and get counselling as they transition out of more intensive treatment programs.

Christie said the welcoming atmosphere and staff at Hope House make participants overcome the stigma that is associated with addiction.

"If they don't look in the mirror and like who they see, it's very difficult for them to feel like they're worth the work that needs to go into battling this disease every day," he said.

Christie said addiction should be viewed the same way as cancer or heart disease – as an illness rather than a weakness.

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"I had a mother who died of lung cancer who was a smoker her whole life," he said. "No one saw her lying in that hospital bed when she was dying and said, 'Well you got what you deserved.' They worked as hard as they could to try to save her. Well why do we feel differently about someone who falls victim to the disease of drug or alcohol abuse?"

Nick Barton, the chief executive of Action on Addiction, said his charity has a saying that no one chooses to be an addict.

"It's something that finds people and our job is to help them escape from that incredible grip it can have on their lives," he said.

Susanne Hakimi, head of service at Hope House, says every life helped makes a difference.

"I think we're highly privileged to do this work too because if you can change one or two person's lives you've done a great thing," she said.

Full article [HERE](#).

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#### **New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie Visits Drug Treatment Center in U.K.**

Heather Haddon  
Wall Street Journal  
February 3, 2015

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton have found common cause in a social issues they care about: drug treatment.

On Tuesday, his third day of a U.K. visit, Mr. Christie toured Hope House, a residential addiction-recovery facility in South West London. The Duchess has helped financially support Action on Addiction, an organization that provides funding for the 22-bed facility for women.

Stateside, Mr. Christie has made drug treatment one of his main social-welfare programs. The Republican has connected his antiabortion stance with the need to value the lives of all people, including the drug-addicted.

"When I talk to folks in my party about home about being pro-life, I said it's easy to be pro-life when you are in the womb," Mr. Christie said to Hope House staff and executives. "If you are pro-life, tell me that you're pro-life for a kid who is lying on a jail floor basement, addicted to drugs."

He referred to addiction as a disease, nodding while listening to staffers talk about the need to lower the stigma many drug addicts face.

Mr. Christie's mother, a lifelong smoker who died from lung cancer, didn't encounter the negative reactions that people undergoing drug treatment often do, he said.

"No one saw her lying in that hospital bed when she was dying and said, look, she got what she deserved," said Mr. Christie, who often speaks about the influence his mother had on his life. "Why do we feel differently for someone who falls victim to drug or alcohol abuse?" ...

Full article [HERE](#).

# # #

**Press Contact:**  
Michael Drewniak  
Kevin Roberts  
609-777-2600



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Office of the Governor  
PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
609-292-6000

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