

# Office of the Governor

PO BOX 004  
TRENTON, NJ 08625

## NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jayne O'Connor  
Gene Herman  
609-777-2600

RELEASE: March 15, 1999

### **GOVERNOR SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING TASK FORCE ON MANDATED HEALTH INSURANCE**

Gov. Christie Whitman today signed Executive Order 92, which created the Task Force on Mandated Health Insurance Benefits to evaluate the impact on the quality of health care and the cost of health care from mandated health benefits currently required by state law and regulations.

"It is in the public interest to ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between the mandated benefits that state law requires insurers to provide to its insureds and allowing insurers flexibility to structure their policies in a cost efficient manner to maximize resources available for the delivery of quality health care," the Governor said in her executive order.

The Task Force on Mandated Health Insurance Benefits will be comprised of 13 members. The commissioners of the Department of Health and Senior Services and the State Treasurer or their designees will service as ex-officio members. The Governor will appoint a member representing the state's commercial health insurance industry, a health maintenance organization, the New Jersey Business and Industry Association or the State Chamber of Commerce, hospitals and a member representing physicians.

In addition, the Task Force will include five additional members, with one to be appointed by the Governor. Two members will be appointed by the President of the Senate with no more than one from the same political party and two members will be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly with no more than one from the same political party.

The Governor will designate a chairperson and a vice chairperson from among the members.

In addition to evaluating the impact on the quality of health care and impact on the cost of health care from mandated health benefits, the Task Force also will:

- Assess the anticipated health benefits and estimated costs resulting from pending legislative efforts to impose additional mandated health benefits.
- Identify and analyze cost-effective ways to minimize the impact of approved mandated benefits upon the health care system.
- Develop recommended guidelines for determining whether additional benefits should be mandated in the future.

- Consult with the Health Wellness Promotion Advisory Board in the Department of Health and Senior Services, which is charged with reviewing medical testing and services that will encourage health care consumers to engage in healthy lifestyle behaviors.

The Task Force, which will hold at least two public hearings, will present its finding and recommendations to the Governor within one year.

