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## Governor Christie: We're Committed To Efficient & Effective Medicaid For Patients And Taxpayers

Monday, August 29, 2016

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Gov. Christie: We're Committed To Efficient & Effective Medicaid For Patien...

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### Transcript:

**Governor Christie:** We're continuing to make changes as we go forward. I am committed to the idea that we are no longer in the mental health area going to pay for services that are not being utilized. We are one of just a few states left who continue to pay for these things in a blanket way rather than pay fee-for service. We're not going to do that any longer. The extensions that we've given are over. And I know that there are mental health providers in this state who would like to continue to be paid for services that they don't provide. That's not what the taxpayers should be doing, in my view. We have given them more than sufficient time to make the conversion, and I have directed the Department of Human Services to ensure that no further extensions are given and that they have to make the conversion to a fee-for-service model from the model that is in existence now, as I said, which only a handful of states, less than five or six, do this way any longer. Everyone else says, you come in for a service, you provide it, you pay for it. Here they get a blanket payment and depending on how much service is provided or not they get that money anyway. It's not the most efficient way to develop it, to provide rather, for those types of services to folks, and we're not going to pay for that any longer. I did this by Executive Order, you'll recall, and I had vetoed the attempts to codify this. Very simple reason why: I do not trust the federal government, and I don't think anyone else should either and this is regardless of party. The fact is that if they bring reimbursements levels below what they promised the State of New Jersey should have the option to opt out if it's going to further burden our taxpayers in an unfair way. We made a deal with the federal government. They keep their deal, we'll keep our part of the deal. They break their deal, I want any governor who is

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sitting here to be able to reconsider that and if they decide that's what's best, to pull back from this. I am for Medicaid expansion as I've proven over the last two years, but I am not for Medicaid expansion at any price. And the federal government has made a deal with us, we'll keep our deal with them, if they decide to change the deal then every Governor who sits in that chair should have the ability to reevaluate that plan based upon whatever rules the federal government is putting in place at that time. I want to thank a number of folks, the Commissioner, and what they're doing over at Human Services has been extraordinary over the last couple of years, and former Commissioner Velez, as well, have done a great job in terms of this expansion. We are committed to it, we will continue to be committed to it and what I wanted to highlight today is not only are more than a half a million people getting more and better healthcare than they were getting before, but it is also costing the people of the State of New Jersey less money not only because of the federal match but because of the reforms that we put into place to make the delivery of that care more efficient and effective, not only for those who receive it but for the taxpayers. And so I want to thank Beth for her hard work, I want everyone to know that we're going to continue to stay vigilant about this for all parties concerned, not just for the taxpayers but also for those citizens in New Jersey who need this care and whose lives can be changed for the better by receiving it. And so we will continue to look at new ways as we go into the next budget cycle, for the fiscal year 18 cycle and see how we can do that.

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