

Governor Christie: Treatment And Hope First, No More Insurance Denials

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Transcript:

Governor Christie: So if the rich have always been able to pay for it, and the poor now have much greater access to it because of Medicaid expansion, who has the biggest economic barriers to drug abuse treatment. It is the working men and women of the middle class of New Jersey, not wealthy enough to pay privately, too high in income to qualify for even expanded Medicaid. They are dependent on a health insurance industry that too often finds a way to say, no. Well, as a guy who grew up in a middle-class New Jersey family, I say that is unacceptable. Whether your child lives or dies should not be subject of a denial letter from an insurance company. On behalf of our middle class being attacked by the double whammy of the addiction crisis and being denied coverage by our insurance industry, I demand we end this today together. So, I am going to call on the same people that I call on every time I have a tough problem to fix in this city. I'm calling on Senate President Sweeney and Speaker Prieto, and the Republican Leaders Kean and Bramnick, to be the sponsors of a new law to mandate that no citizen with health insurance can be denied coverage for the first six months of inpatient or outpatient drug rehabilitation treatment. Come on, let's face it, no family puts their loved one into inpatient drug treatment unless it is already absolutely necessary, unless every other alternative has been tried. Rather than support, compassion and coverage, they are met too often by questioning, red tape and denials by insurers who happily take their premiums at the same time. No more pre-approvals. No more medical necessity reviews prior to admission by an insurance company bureaucrat. No more denials that can cost lives. Treatment first. Hope first. Denials last. Together we can end the insurance company run-around, and I challenge you to pass this law in the next 30 days. 30 days. I will sign it the day you land it on my desk. Together, we can save lives immediately by doing this. Immediately. Understand, middle class families living the nightmare of

addiction of a loved one, they do not deserve the double dose of agony—denial by an insurance company which leads to the death of a loved one.

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