

Governor Christie: We Need To Approach Addiction In A Much Different Way And Change Attitudes

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Transcript:

Governor Christie: I want you to know that this is extraordinarily serious for me. That with the rest of the time that I have as governor, a little less than a year, most of my time is going to be spent on this. Trying to make sure that we get people access to care and treatment, trying to make sure that we talk, most importantly, about this issue in a much different way than it's been talked about before. I want people to understand that drug abuse, alcohol abuse, is not a moral failing. It's a disease and we don't talk about it that way. When I come to places like this, people look at me and they get it but I know you get it here. We need all of us to work to get the people who are outside to understand that. I don't want families being unwilling to seek treatment because they're ashamed to talk about it. I don't want individuals who are in the throes of the disease to be unwilling to come forward and ask for help because they're ashamed of how people may judge them. If you had heart disease, or diabetes, or cancer, you wouldn't hesitate to go and ask anyone, a neighbor, a friend, a co-worker, a family member, where is the best place for me to get care? Do you have any stories about people who had what I have and got help and were made better? But you don't see families going around and saying, my son, my daughter, my husband, my wife, my brother, my sister is a heroin addict. Have you had any experience with that and can you tell me where I might go for help? Because people think that reflects on them. That it made them a bad husband or wife. A bad mother or father. A bad son or daughter. We know that's not true and we know that there but for the grace of God go I. For any of us, any of us. And so, we need to approach this in a much different way and the only way we are going to change attitudes is to talk about it and to be public about it and that's what I intend to continue to do.

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