



New Hampshire Senate

News Release

For Immediate Release:

December 9, 2015

Media Contact:

Kate Giaquinto

kate.giaquinto@leg.state.nh.us

(603) 271-3043

Task Force recommends removing insurance preauthorization for substance abuse care, expanding drug education in schools

Concord, NH - Today, the Division I subcommittee of the Joint Task Force for the response to the heroin and opioid epidemic recommended two key pieces of legislation to the full task force. The first piece would remove the preauthorization requirement and standardize the high level of treatment provided by insurance companies for substance abuse treatment and the second will expand drug and alcohol education in schools.

"Removing the insurer's prior authorization requirement for substance use disorder outpatient services provides individuals who seek emergency treatment with the ability to obtain care without delay. In addition, this legislation would require insurance providers to standardize the criteria for rendering substance abuse care and provide a high level of care that is consistent regardless of provider," said Senator Jeb Bradley (R-Wolfeboro), task force chair.

"Throughout the task force's meetings, we've heard consistent and compelling testimony that there are often small windows of opportunity when addicts seek medical care or treatment and these barriers can discourage them from seeking treatment. This legislation would ensure that addicts are receiving consistent, high quality care and these services are adequately covered by their insurance providers," said Bradley.

"Another important step our sub-committee made against the heroin epidemic is recommending to the whole task force for expedited review in January to clarify current statute regarding age appropriate drug and alcohol education for students starting in kindergarten through grade 12," said Senator Nancy Stiles (R-Hampton).

"It is proven that proper and regular drug and alcohol education is critical-in preventing future drug abuse by our students. While many school districts already provide drug and alcohol education, this legislation directs that evidence-based prevention education be taught consistently throughout the span of a student's public education addressing the problem at a very young age," added Stiles.

###