



LETTERS

Carpenters fund working to keep members from being lured out of state for addiction treatment

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RE “THE brokers and the damage done” ([Page A1, May 28](#)), about middlemen luring addicts to Florida for treatment that proves troublesome: Sadly, this is an ongoing challenge at New England Carpenters Health Benefit Fund. In 2015, our members and their dependents were being admitted at treatment facilities in Florida every week.

Since then, we have implemented changes that are making a difference. The Carpenters and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts have partnered at several levels. First, our internal health fund office is notified immediately of admissions at out-of-state treatment facilities. The office then reaches out to the patient, and sometimes the family, to encourage in-area and in-network treatment options.

We have also worked to ensure that there are adequate services available in the area for our members. The health fund is now covering extended services through qualified recovery homes. For an addict, and for parents who are struggling with an addicted child, this makes a lot of sense. As John McGahan, president and CEO of the Gavin Foundation, states, “Compare months of 24-hour programming and support that we offer vs. a guy alone in a boarding house, struggling with the urge to use or drink.”

Blue Cross has also expanded its network of in-area treatment facilities.

Battling addictions is complicated, but our approach is bringing positive results. Lives are at stake, so we will keep working at it.

Jeffrey W. Werner, executive director

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