



*For Immediate Release*

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**Cherie Raymond of Amida Care Named ACAP Making a Difference Award Honorable Mention Winner for Transgender Health Care Coordination**

New York, NY (May 10, 2017)—The Association for Community Affiliated Plans (ACAP) named Ms. Cherie Raymond, RN and Manager of Medicaid Clinical Services at Amida Care, a 2017 *Making a Difference* Award Honorable Mention winner. The *Making a Difference* Award recognizes employees who exceed the norm in service related to advocacy, care, access, and the public good for Medicaid and other safety net health programs and on behalf of the vulnerable populations that these programs serve. Amida Care nominated Ms. Raymond for the award in recognition of her efforts that make a difference in the quality of life for Amida Care’s transgender members.

Ms. Raymond assists Amida Care’s members of transgender experience and their health care providers in navigating the process of gender-affirming care and surgery. Over 400 of Amida Care’s members are transgender, representing close to 7 percent of Amida Care’s total membership. Ms. Raymond’s member care coordination helps support each member’s unique health needs and goals, which includes working to address non-medical needs that may impact their health, such as housing and legal concerns. Her compassionate care coordination, cultural sensitivity, and understanding of the gender transition and gender-affirming surgery processes has enabled over 175 of Amida Care’s transgender members to receive this life-affirming care.

“Cherie Raymond stands out as a shining example of what we strive for at Amida Care: providing high quality, personalized care and going above and beyond for our members,” said Doug Wirth, President and CEO of Amida Care. “Her extraordinary service to our members of transgender experience is helping them to live their best, most authentic lives.”

“Ms. Raymond’s work to improve access to health care for transgender individuals represents the best the safety net has to offer. Amida Care’s transgender health program is a leading, widely recognized example in our industry. We couldn’t be happier to recognize Ms. Raymond’s work,” said ACAP CEO Margaret A. Murray.

Ms. Raymond helped Amida Care develop NYS Medicaid compliant procedures after New York began to cover gender-affirming surgery as a benefit under Medicaid in 2015. She maintains close working relationships with Amida Care’s network of providers, from primary care and behavioral health to surgeons and post-surgery care providers. Ms. Raymond has been a

registered nurse for 38 years and has delivered care all over the world, including as a Peace Corps volunteer in Mozambique.

The transgender community is disproportionately affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with transgender women 49 times more likely to be infected with HIV compared to the general population. Ensuring that members of the transgender community who are living with HIV have access to health care gives them the chance to become virally suppressed. This makes it possible for them to live longer, healthier lives and much less likely to transmit HIV to others, which is critical to New York State's goal of Ending AIDS as an Epidemic by the year 2020.

Brisa Guajardo, Business Development Manager for Community Health Plan of Washington, was recognized as the winner of ACAP's 2017 *Making a Difference* Award. For more information, visit ACAP's website at <http://www.communityplans.net>.

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### **About Amida Care**

*Amida Care Inc. is a not-for-profit health plan that specializes in providing comprehensive health coverage and coordinated care to New Yorkers with chronic conditions, including HIV and behavioral health disorders, and people who are homeless (regardless of HIV status). We have a wide network of top health care providers in the five boroughs of New York City, and we are the largest Medicaid special needs health plan (SNP) in New York State. For more information, visit [www.amidacareny.org](http://www.amidacareny.org).*

### **About ACAP**

*ACAP represents 60 nonprofit Safety Net Health Plans in 24 states, which collectively serve over fifteen million people enrolled in Medicaid, Medicare, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and other publicly-supported health programs. For more information, visit [www.communityplans.net](http://www.communityplans.net).*