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May 6, 2019

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Amida Care Condemns Trump Administration and HHS Over New Rule That Allows Discrimination and Limits Access to Health Care

New York, NY (May 6, 2019) – Amida Care, New York’s largest not-for-profit Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP), strongly opposes the new rule issued by the Health and Human Services Department (HHS) Office of Civil Rights, protecting health care workers who refuse to provide health services and care to individuals based on religious or moral objections.

“Rolling back non-discrimination protections in health care settings will have devastating consequences for millions of Americans,” said Doug Wirth, president and CEO of Amida Care. “The new rule will particularly impact the transgender community, the entire LGBTQ community, people living with HIV/AIDS, and women seeking reproductive care, as well as many other populations that already experience barriers to care. In essence, it is a license to withhold care based on homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of bias and discrimination.”

For example, as noted in a report Amida Care recently issued, “Breaking Barriers to Transgender Health Care,” 19 percent of transgender women reported being refused treatment and 28 percent reported being harassed in a doctor's office. As a result, many simply avoid care altogether.

Despite the Trump administration’s stated goal of ending the national HIV epidemic by 2030, the administration continues to take actions like this one that will deny access to care for people in communities that are heavily affected by HIV.

“When a person chooses a career in health care, they make a commitment to care for all those who need it. When you give a healthcare professional license to discriminate, you leave everyone at risk of being discriminated against,” Wirth added.

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 complex chronic conditions, including HIV and behavioral health disorders; and people who are of transgender experience or who are homeless, regardless of HIV status. Amida Care has a wide network of health care providers throughout New York City and is the largest Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP) in New York State. For more information, visit www.amidacareny.org.

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