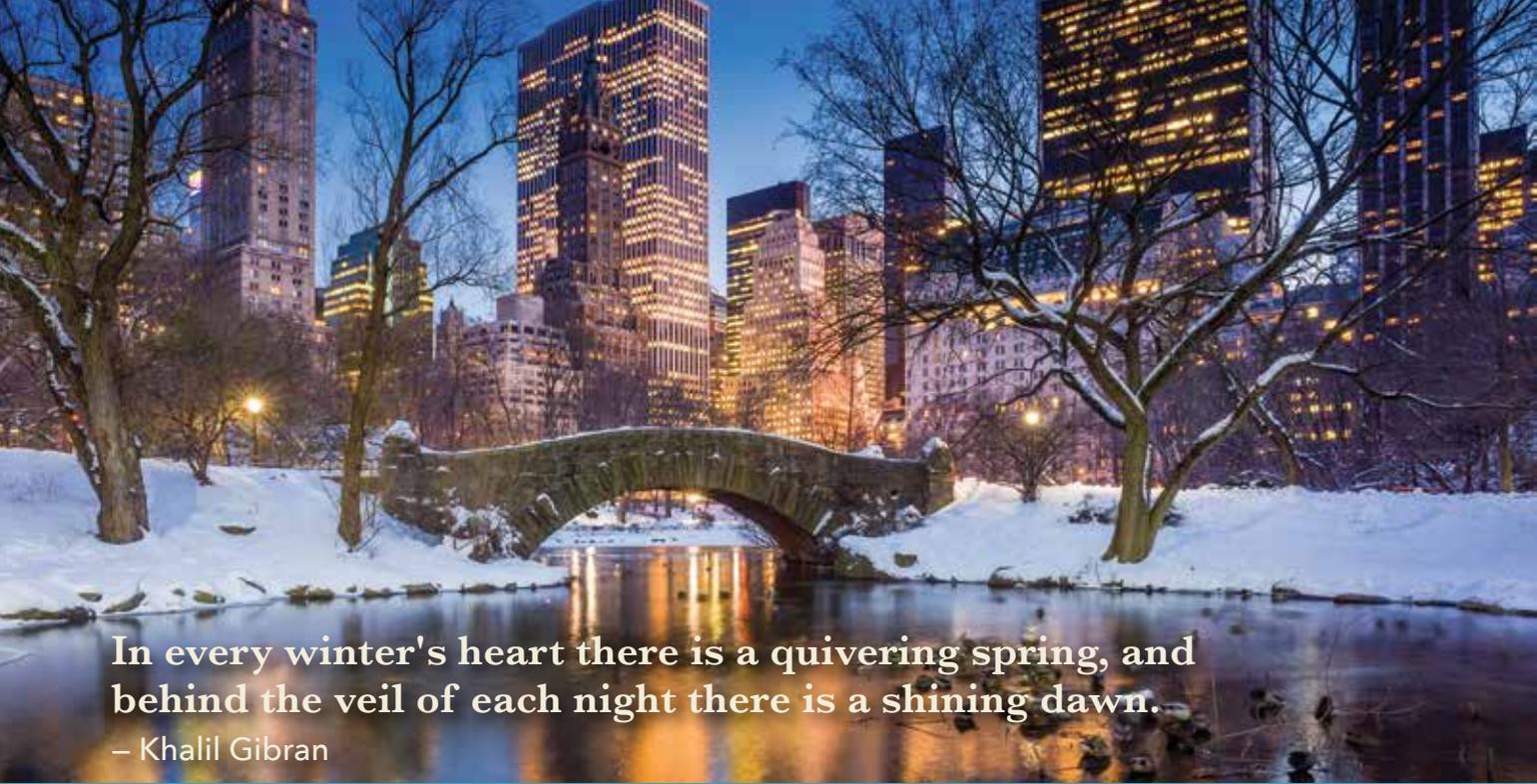




The AMIDA CARE View



in this issue
MAKING REALISTIC
RESOLUTIONS
WINTER
SKIN CARE
PrEP



In every winter's heart there is a quivering spring, and
behind the veil of each night there is a shining dawn.

– Khalil Gibran



**AMIDA CARE,
WITH OFFICES NEAR YOU**

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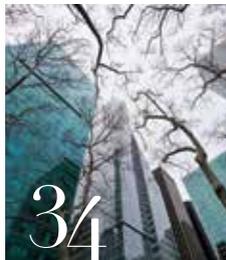
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**YOU CAN ALWAYS CALL MEMBER
SERVICES AT: 1-800-556-0689**

**OR VISIT US ONLINE AT:
www.amidacareny.org**

Photographic Image Disclosure

The photographs used herein are for illustrative purposes only; they do not imply any particular professional credential or health status on the part of any person depicted. Some of the persons depicted are models, who are neither employees nor enrolled members of Amida Care.

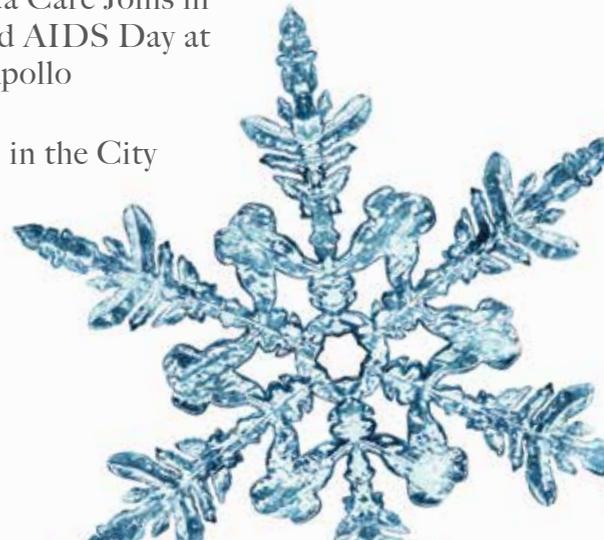


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Dear Amida Care Members,

Extra, extra, read all about it ... Welcome to **The Amida Care View**. Winter in the Northeast can be an exciting season and sometimes surprising too. In the New Year, take time to give thanks for the joys, lessons and accomplishments of the past year, while getting excited for the possibilities of the one ahead. Indeed, during your winter retreat inside (could be in your home and/or within your own heart); you can discover new beginnings and bring awareness to the opportunities and challenges that may come your way in 2015.

Have you made any resolutions yet for the New Year? Amida Care invites you to refresh, reboot or start new, in connecting with your life goals for this year. However, because it can be easier to do with support, we've split some of the top goals into smaller steps that are easier to stick to, on page 4.



And Wellness For All, on page 8, offers examples of valuable goals you may want to consider. Then, take a look at some of the programs that Amida Care offers to help you achieve those goals in **Above and Beyond For You**, page

10. Also check out **Renewals for Heart, Body, Mind and Spirit** on page 22, which lists the "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People."

One of the things we are looking forward to in 2015 is the introduction of a new program called **HARP**, which stands for "**Health and Recovery Plan**," and is currently awaiting approval from the New York State Medicaid. Read about what this new program can offer you, on page 24.

We hope that you've all received your **2015 Amida Care Art Calendars!** On page 18, you'll get an inside look at the Member Advisory Council (MAC) process of picking this year's contest winners. If you didn't get your calendar, or want a second one for someone you know, drop by one of our Member Centers on W. 35th Street in Manhattan, Grand Concourse in the Bronx, or Willoughby St. in downtown Brooklyn!

In this issue you will also find more information about **Medicines, Formularies, and Safeguards** on page 26, about **PrEP** on page 28, as well as on **ways to protect your skin this winter** on page 16.

As usual, we conclude this magazine with **Zen In The City** (page 34), a place to reflect, breathe and find inner peace ... connect with your thoughts, feelings, apartment, community, city or other important parts of your life.

We hope you find pleasure during the rest of winter and enjoy your member magazine for this season. Remember to stay warm, be well, respect you and be an advocate for your wellness ... we support you and commit to going above and beyond for you in 2015!

Abrazos,

Doug Wirth

Doug Wirth
President & CEO



NEW **AMIDA CARE** MEMBER SERVICES CENTER OPENS!

On November 17, 2014, Amida Care opened a *BEAUTIFUL NEW MEMBER SERVICE CENTER* at 234 West 35th Street between 7th and 8th Avenue. The new *MEMBER SERVICE CENTER* is a state-of-the-art center that offers our members a comfortable space in which to have questions answered, get guidance related to housing and food needs, as well as information on other support services you may be interested in.

Stop by and learn about Amida Care's Live Your Life Program which provides our members with information on how to live your life in a holistic, healthy, safe and joyful way. You will also find that we built two large privacy rooms where you can have a confidential conversation with a Member Services Representative.

We hope you will stop in and visit - we are ready and waiting to serve you!

**Small Steps
Will Get You There**

Making Realistic Resolutions

2015

We've all made New Year's resolutions that were gone by February. We tend to blame a lack of discipline or willpower for preventing us from achieving our goals. But in actuality, the most frequent cause of broken resolutions was simply because **the resolution was too broad!**

Common resolutions such as "losing weight," or "reducing stress" are not easily measurable goals. On the other hand, if you set smaller and more attainable goals, you are more likely to stick with them and achieve success.

Here are some examples of popular resolutions broken into smaller, more realistic goals for a better chance of keeping them in 2015.

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

1

New Year's Day

New Year's Resolution
Be organized
Exercise More
Eat a Healthy Diet

Exercising

How many times have we made a resolution to lose weight but then felt overwhelmed with the tough task? Take it step by step – Literally! Take the stairs whenever you can. This will make you feel more confident in your ability to achieve your overall weight loss goals.

Consider taking a walk every day, for a set amount of time. If it's nasty outside, take a stroll around your living area or indoor space, such as a store. Research shows that people who walk at least thirty minutes a day lower their chances of depression and burn some calories.

If you're someone who has been concerned about your weight, you should also consider contacting your Amida Care Team to create a weight-loss plan that's best for you.



Eating Healthier

Make your plate colorful! Pick a specific meal to improve: breakfast, lunch, or dinner. **Cover half of your plate with vegetables for that meal.**

Want dessert? Choose your favorite fruit or yogurt instead of that piece of pie.

Reducing Stress

Breathe. When we're stressed, we tend to stop breathing correctly for long periods of time and take shallow breaths. Block out specific times during the day – perhaps before getting out of bed, before a meal, or before going to bed to **spend a few minutes consciously taking a deep breath for a count of five and then breathing out slowly for a count to five.**



continued on page 6

continued from page 5

Small Steps Will Get You There

Improving Sleep

Make it a rule to shut off your TV, computer, or cell phone an hour before going to bed every night to allow yourself some time to relax and fall asleep. Using these and other technological devices in bed may keep you up and contribute to insomnia.



2015



Call your Amida Care Team to work with you to make nicotine a part of your past



Quitting Smoking

You could start by cutting down on the number of cigarettes you smoke per day or per week. Stopping smoking can have a tremendous boost to your health, even within a short time. Quitting can be challenging. Many people use counseling or medication to help them successfully quit.

Call your Amida Care Team to work with you to make nicotine a part of your past and not your future.

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a blue top and large hoop earrings, is smiling and looking down at a document she is holding. The background is a blurred green outdoor setting.

**Knowledge is Power.
Be in the know,
be empowered!**

Amida Care Resource Library

GET THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO BE
AN ACTIVE PART OF YOUR **CARE TEAM.**

At Amida Care, we have clear
and easy to read info packs
on a variety of health topics:

- Asthma
 - Colonoscopy
 - Diabetes
 - Hypertension
 - Women's Health
 - Mammography
 - Men's Health
 - Immunizations
 - Safer Sex
 - Healthy Goals
 - Flu
- and much more.*

Call our Member Services
Department to request the
information you need to
stay healthy.

1.800.556.0689

**Call us with suggestions
for other topics!**

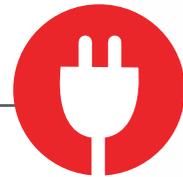
AND WELLNESS FOR ALL!!

EVERY JANUARY, ABOUT ONE IN THREE AMERICANS SET NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS TO BETTER THEMSELVES IN SOME WAY. **THIS YEAR LET'S CHOOSE WELLNESS.** LET'S PICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING WORTHY RESOLUTIONS TO LIVE HEALTHIER. HERE'S TO OUR HEALTH!



LOSE WEIGHT

This one is at the top of many New Year Resolution lists, and it could be challenging. Losing weight is beneficial for our health and self-esteem. Exercise and a low fat, low calorie diet is the best way to lose weight in a healthy manner.



STAY CONNECTED

Research suggests that people with strong social ties live longer than those without. Visit a friend, join a group, take a class, or call your favorite aunt or cousin.



QUIT SMOKING

Many health professionals consider quitting smoking the single most important thing you can do for your health. Besides the health benefits, quitting will be good for your pocket and you will smell better!

VOLUNTEER

NYC offers so many opportunities to volunteer and help our fellow brothers and sisters. Giving of ourselves really feels good and research suggests that our happiness also increases when we help others.



REDUCE STRESS

A little stress can help us get going. But if stress is chronic, it can increase your risk of—or worsen—insomnia, depression, obesity, heart disease, and more. Meditation, exercise and laughing with friends will help you relax.



CUT BACK ON ALCOHOL/ RECREATIONAL DRUGS

Using drugs and alcohol in excess affects the brain and can increase the risk of depression, memory loss, or even seizures. Heavy drinking increases your risk of liver and heart disease, hypertension, stroke, and mental deterioration.



GET MORE SLEEP

A good night's sleep can do wonders for our mood—and appearance. But sleep is more beneficial and important to our health than we may realize. A lack of sleep has been linked to a greater risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes. Power nap, anyone?

MAKING RESOLUTIONS IS VERY EASY; keeping up with them is more challenging. So seek support. There is a whole community of committed and friendly case managers, counselors, educators, peers and health care providers that can help you create strategies for success. To learn how Amida Care can help, read our next article “Above and Beyond for You” (page 10) or call us at **1-800-556-0689.**



LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Learning helps us stay mentally sharp and offers a sense of accomplishment that makes us feel successful. Learning how to use a computer, reading about your favorite subject, or learning a new craft are great ways to exercise your mind.

STAY IN TREATMENT

Choosing to take your medications as prescribed, keeping your doctor appointments and following your treatment are not only good for your health, they will also reduce your risk of emergency room visits and other health complications.



ABOVE AND BEYOND FOR YOU!

WE OFFER A VARIETY OF INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS TO HELP AND SUPPORT YOU IN YOUR PURSUIT OF YOUR HEALTH GOALS. HERE ARE A FEW OF OUR OFFERINGS ESPECIALLY **FOR YOU:**

HEALTHY GOAL	SUPPORT AMIDA CARE OFFERS OUR MEMBERS
 LOSE WEIGHT	<p>We have trained nutritionists in our network of providers. Talk to your PCP or call Member Services to schedule an appointment. Also, as part of our Live Your Life events, we offer workshops on healthy cooking on a budget and exercise classes.</p>
 STAY CONNECTED	<p>Every year Amida Care offers more than 40 Live Your Life workshops and events throughout the five boroughs. These events are always free of charge, including our Winter and Summer Celebrations—the parties of all parties. They are great opportunities to connect with old friends and make new ones. And you can bring a guest to most of them!</p> <p>We also cover Adult Day Health Care programs which offer a variety of one-on-one and group social and health services in a safe, friendly, and embracing environment. Check out your directory, look one up online, or call Member Services at 1-800-556-0689.</p>
 QUIT SMOKING	<p>As part of our pharmacy benefit, you can get free nicotine patches and other smoking cessation treatments. Talk to your PCP or Member Services for more info.</p>
 VOLUNTEER	<p>Amida Care is part of a large community of local organizations working for the well being of New Yorkers. We can help you identify a volunteer opportunity near you. You can also visit www.nycservice.org to search over 5 million volunteer opportunities.</p>

HEALTHY GOAL

SUPPORT AMIDA CARE OFFERS OUR MEMBERS



REDUCE STRESS

At Amida Care, we recognize the impact of stress on your health. As part of our benefits we offer you a comprehensive mental health benefit. To complement our mental health program, we go above and beyond for you and offer art therapy, meditation, yoga, dance, and Zumba classes, all of which help us relax and release stress. Get the current event schedule online or by calling Member Services at 1-800-556-0689.



CUT BACK ON ALCOHOL/DRUGS

Amida Care offers our members both daytime and residence drug and alcohol treatment programs. Our knowledgeable Member Services Reps can help you locate a treatment center near you.



GET MORE SLEEP

Meditation, relaxation exercises, and physical activity – all of which we offer on our Live Your Life program – can help us sleep better. Your PCP can help you address any clinical issues affecting your sleep, including referrals to specialized sleep medicine centers.



LEARN SOMETHING NEW

African dance, painting, cooking, meditation, arts and crafts, are a few of the things you can learn with Amida Care. Our monthly Live Your Life events offer these and a lot more to all our members and their guests. Check our website or call Member Services at 1-800-556-0689 to find out the time and location of our next event.



STAY IN TREATMENT

“Drugs don’t work in patients who don’t take them” is a popular quotation from former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, MD, who lived to be 96 years old. Do you need help keeping your doctor appointments, taking your medications as prescribed, or navigating healthcare? Call us. We can work with you to create a strategy to stay in treatment, including going with you to your medical appointments, and setting up translation services.



The Power of Resolution!

One afternoon in January 2013, someone knocked at Joann's door. She wasn't expecting anyone and wouldn't normally answer for uninvited visitors but she said to herself, "Just see who it is and what they want." In that moment, that decision reshaped her life.

Joann was struggling with addiction, not in care for her HIV disease and barely making it, due to the recent passing of her mother. Two weeks earlier, she had made a New Year's resolution to get her life in order and most importantly, get her drug use under control. When Joann opened the door and saw a health navigator from Amida Care, she knew it was a "divine intervention." The Health Navigator - let's call her Melissa - asked if she could come inside and discuss how she could help Joann get back into care. They talked about what Joann wanted to achieve and how Amida Care could help. Joann restated her resolution with clearer goals: to get her life in order by *stop using drugs, get in care, and find a way to deal with the loss of her mother*. They created a plan and agreed to work together and become a team.

A few days later, they traveled together to see her primary care provider (PCP) at HELP/PSI. For Joann, this was the first step toward getting a better handle on her health. Melissa accompanied Joann to her

appointments a few times until Joann felt she could do it on her own. She decided to change to a female PCP, where she would feel more comfortable talking about everything. She was doing well. She was in treatment and happy with her health care.

During one of her doctor visits, a case manager spoke to her about attending the Adult Day Healthcare Program at HELP/PSI. She agreed to try it. Joann was "like a sponge" in the Program, she attended as many groups as she possibly could. She found the groups to be transformative. The Program and its members became a source of encouragement and a valuable resource in her quest to adhere to her medications, stay clean and sober, and to find bereavement support. With determination and her new support system, Joann stopped using drugs. She had to change a lot of things in her life to achieve this; she changed the people she associated with, she watched how others were dealing with addiction and loss, and she committed to being positive everyday no matter what the circumstances. Ultimately, Joann says she developed coping mechanisms to deal with her feelings instead of medicating them with hard drugs. She says fondly, "My HELP/PSI family made a difference in how I live and think."

Continued on page14

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With the support of her peers, she regained respect for her family and friends, and in time, for herself. She now cares about others and when she was called upon to take care of her granddaughter, she stepped forward and accepted the challenge. Joann is now the primary caregiver for her granddaughter and has full custody. But Joann was still driven to do more. With stable physical and mental health and her sobriety, Joann applied for a part-time position at Amida Care as a Community Health Outreach Worker. And she got it! Today, she is knocking on the doors of members who have fallen out of care and helping them reconnect with their doctors. Joann, who is very shy, says her approach in engaging members is to always be friendly, patient, and respectful of their privacy so that members feel relaxed. She knows firsthand what a difference that can make.

Resolutions with Heart:



"I am clean and sober for 24 months and taking it one day at a time."



"Before, my health was not a priority, but now I can honestly say I haven't missed an appointment in the last two years!"



"I am now dealing with my feelings instead of medicating them."





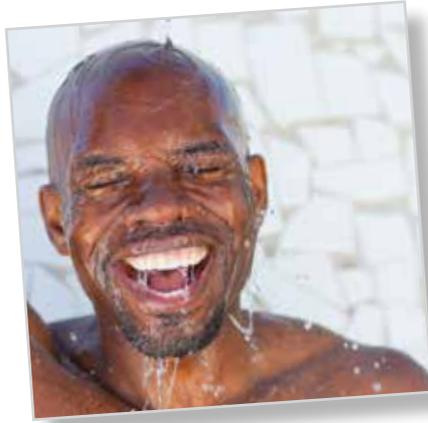
IT'S FLU SEASON!

Remember to call your PCP and schedule your flu shot. Vaccination is the BEST way to protect yourself against the flu.



W I N

The much colder and drier air of a NorthEast winter means New Yorkers need to pay special attention to their skin



TEER *Skin Care*

We all know that a winter in New York is not the same as a winter in Arizona or Florida. The much colder and drier air of a NorthEast winter means New Yorkers need to pay special attention to their skin. Skin specialist Robert Greenberg, MD, says wintry temperatures on the East Coast can cause the humidity indoors to dip when the heating is on. "The air is very dry and we lose water from our skin to the dry air," he says. So, what can we do to keep our skin moisturized in the winter?

It may seem logical and be very tempting to take hot showers in the winter, but it is suggested to take shorter and lukewarm showers instead because hot showers strip the oils from your skin that are needed to retain moisture. "A long, hot shower in the morning is not a good idea," Dr. Greenberg says, "It's too drying."

Remember to pat yourself dry instead of rubbing, which can irritate your skin and remove more moisture. When you are done, put lotion on right away. Applying lotion while your skin is still damp will help seal in moisture.

Greenberg also recommends avoiding harsh soaps and moisturizers to prevent skin irritation. These include products that contain added fragrances or dyes, which can be especially drying as the winter progresses and the air becomes dryer. He also says to humidify the indoor air as much as possible, which you can do simply by placing a container with water next to or on top of a radiator.

To prevent dry and chapped hands, embrace wipes and alcohol-free hand sanitizers. These sanitizers use non-alcohol antimicrobials instead of alcohol. Alcohol kills germs quickly but evaporates in a few seconds and dries the skin. "They're less drying than washing repeatedly with soap and water," dermatologist Dr. Kathleen Rodan says.

When you do wash your hands, choose a moisturizing soap-free cleanser or a hydrating antibacterial gel.

Don't forget your lips!

***Remember to drink plenty of water to hydrate from the inside!*

The 2015 Art Calendar is Here!

Once a year we prepare for one of our most exciting events, the Amida Care Calendar Art Contest. Members of Amida Care and clients attending AIDS Adult Day Health Care Programs (ADHCPs) are eligible to submit their artwork. This year we received over 100 entries from members and ADHCP clients. Our office was bursting with beautiful art!

On October 9, our Member Advisory Council (MAC) came together to review and select the winning art to be included in our gorgeous Art Calendar 2015. Here are some photos of the occasion.

Most of the art comes from art therapy programs within ADHCP sites. These groups are lead by an Art Director/Therapist trained to guide individuals who want to expand their horizons artistically through drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, and/or any media offered by the site. Each year, Amida Care offers a Live Your Life event focused on art therapy so that all members have access to an art therapist and facilitator.



The art for our calendar is selected by the Amida Care Member Advisory Council (MAC), which is comprised of twenty five members. Their role is to judge the art in a fair and impartial manner.

The judging is done in a three round process as follows:

- 1st round: all MAC members select art that best represents life, healing, and/or our mission.
- 2nd round: selection of art pieces with the most votes; and
- 3rd round: selection of fourteen art pieces that earned the most votes.

The top two images with the most votes will represent the front and back calendar covers; the remaining twelve images will represent the months January through December.



The calendar raises awareness about the plan and its membership. It includes important tips and reminders about health promotion and preventative strategies. It also allows our members to share their artistic abilities and tell their personal story to others.



You can get your 2015 calendar at your ADHC or Case Management site, your doctor's office, or clinic. You can also call Member Services at 1-800-556-0689 and request a copy.

Tuesday

Wednesday

The hard work was done and the tough selections have been made. Now here's a peek at your

2015 Amida Care Art Calendar!

Let the beautiful art and encouraging words inspire you every day, every month, and all year long!

You should have received a copy of the calendar in the mail. You're always welcome to call Member Services at **1-800-556-0689** and request a copy. Copies are also available at your ADHC or Case Management site, your doctor's office, clinic, or one of our offices.

Main Office

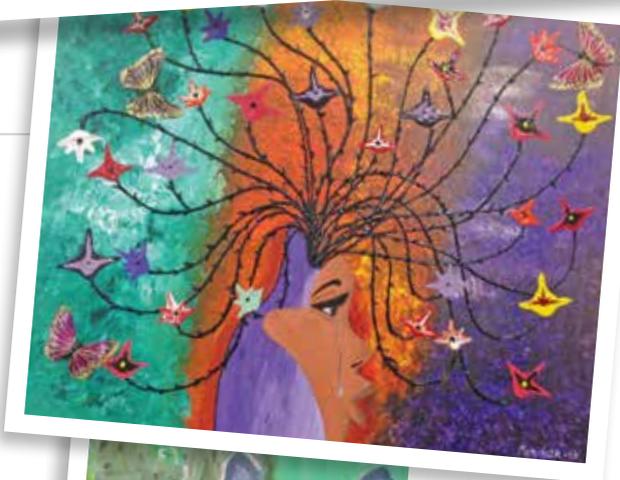
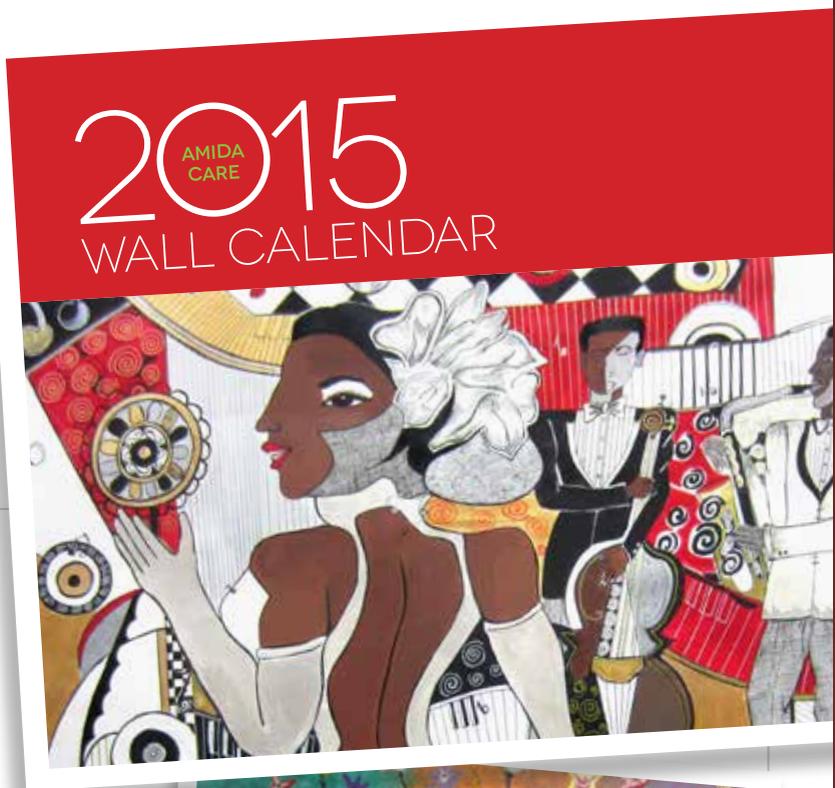
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AMIDA CARE COMPLIANCE HOTLINE

888.394.2285

*If you suspect fraud,
waste, or abuse:*

Please call the **Amida Care Compliance Hotline** at **888-394-2285**.

We're here to help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. *The call is free.*

When you call the hotline, you can leave your name and number.

Or you can stay anonymous.

Either way, the source of the facts you share will remain anonymous.

Other options for reporting anonymously:

Compliance mailbox:

compliance@amidacareny.org

Compliance address:

Amida Care, Attn: Compliance

14 Penn Plaza, 2FL

New York, NY 10122

Renewals for Heart, Body, Mind and Spirit

The Principle of Sowing and Reaping

*“Sow a thought, and you reap an act;
Sow an act, and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, and you reap a character;
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.”*

- Samuel Smiles



Habit 1



Be Proactive

Take responsibility for your life—for your own behavior (past, present, and future). Proactive people are aware they have choices and choose not to be victims or to blame others.

Habit 2

Begin with the end in mind

If you don't control your own destiny, someone else will. Define what your mission and your goals in life are. Dr. Covey suggests all things are created twice—first mentally and second physically. Successful people don't simply live day to day without a purpose but identify and commit themselves to the principles and values that matter most to them.

Habit 3



Put First Things First

Prioritize, and then do the most important things first. Keep the Main thing the Main thing.

Habit 4

Think Win/Win

Have an "everyone can win" attitude. It's about mutual benefit and mutual respect in dealing with others. It's not about doing things selfishly (win/lose) or (lose/win). It's thinking in terms of "we" rather than "me."

Some suggest your body is made up of four rooms: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. It's suggested you need to spend some time in each of these rooms every day. Take time everyday to take care of your body, your mind and emotional health, and to develop your spiritual practice.

Habit 5

Seek First To Understand, Then To Be Understood

There's a reason you have two ears and only one mouth. It's suggested you listen to others with the intent to understand rather than the intent to reply. Seeking to understand takes kindness. Seeking to be understood takes courage. Effectiveness comes from balancing the two.

Habit 6



Synergize

Synergizing is a way of cooperating so people working together are more effective than working individually. It means coming up with a third way of doing things – not "my way" or "your way" but a third way that may work better.

Habit 7

Sharpening the Saw

This is about "me time." Dr. Covey describes this as an "upward spiral." It's about continually renewing yourself in those "four rooms of your life"-- physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. It's the habit that increases your ability to live all the other habits of effectiveness. The idea of the "upward spiral" is that as you become more effective, you will begin to renew yourself at higher and higher levels.



*The name of the project is "Health and Recovery Plan" which is shortened to **HARP**.*



The goal of Health and Recovery Plans (HARPs) is to improve the overall health of each person who participates.



HARP

Amida Care is preparing to launch a new product by Summer of 2015. Many of our existing members have important physical health needs as well as behavioral health needs. Behavioral Health includes mental health and substance use needs. If you are one of those members, this new product may have services which may be useful to you. Amida Care has applied to be part of a New York State plan to improve access to care for people who have medical and behavioral health concerns. The name of the project is "Health and Recovery Plan" which is shortened to HARP. The goal of Health and Recovery Plans (HARPs) is to improve the overall health of each person who participates.

Being part of a HARP is mainly for people who have been diagnosed with either a mental health condition or have a substance use concern.

What could this mean for you?

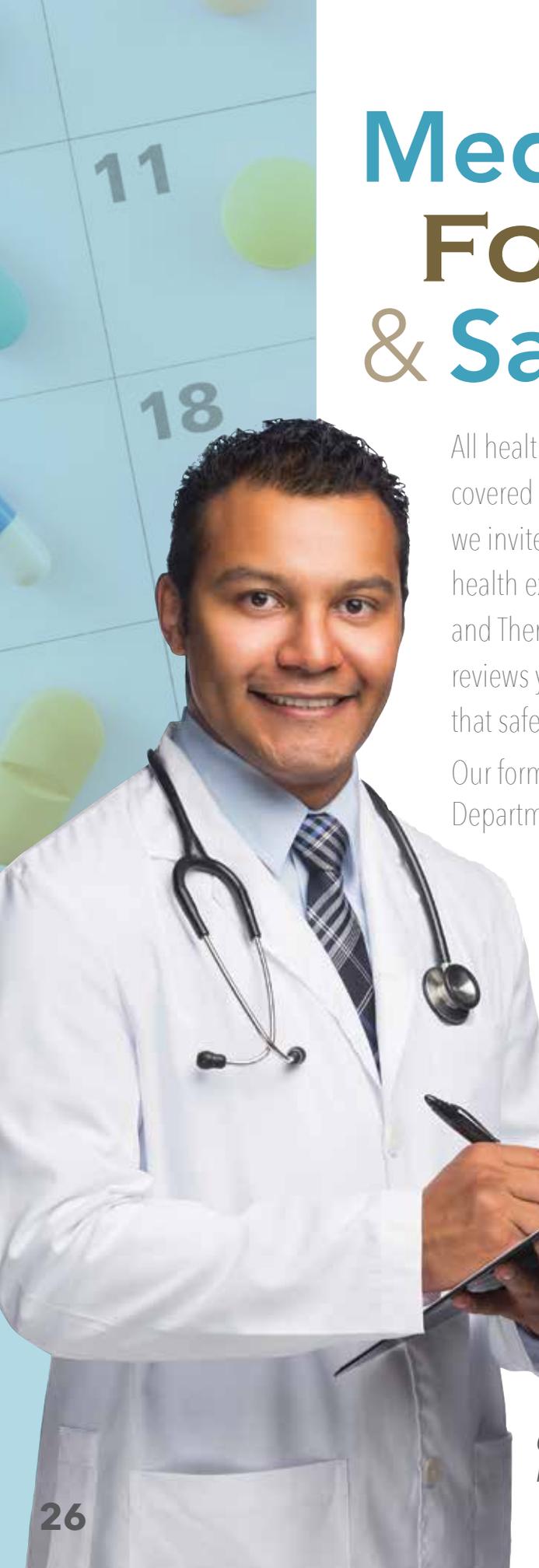
- A case manager or care coordinator who is your primary contact
- Improved communication between your PCP, your Behavioral Health provider, as well as other members of your healthcare team
- Access to a specialized group of benefits
- Making a plan of care that sets the goals you want to achieve

What will be part of the HARP at Amida Care? The proposal (currently awaiting approval from New York State Medicaid) includes:

- Educational support services
- Individual employment services
- A network of specialized providers who understand all of your health care concerns
- Rehabilitation
- Crisis intervention
- Community-based services
- Peer supports
- Self-directed services

We hope that the State will approve the plan and all of the above services will be part of the HARP at Amida Care. Watch for an announcement later this year. Amida Care is excited about the possibility of offering many of you more services very soon.





Medicines, FORMULARIES & Safeguards

All health insurances, including Amida Care, have a list of covered medications. This is called a **formulary**. At Amida Care, we invited a group of your pharmacists, doctors, and other health experts to come together and be part of our Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee. This Committee creates and reviews your formulary. The goal of the formulary is to ensure that safe, effective, and affordable medications are being used. Our formularies are frequently reviewed by New York State Department of Health.

The goal of the formulary is to ensure that safe, effective, and affordable medications are being used.

*Contributing-author:
Kenny Ng*

(PA) *Prior Authorization*

From time to time, your pharmacist may tell you that a Prior Authorization is needed. That means that there is a safer or less costly drug option available. In most cases, your pharmacy will contact your PCP to inform him/her to submit a Prior Authorization request to Express Scripts.

(QL) *Quantity Limit*

Many drugs have limits in quantity of medicine one person can get in a month. An example would be a maximum of 30 tablets each month of a particular medicine. Your pharmacist knows when too much of a drug has been prescribed. When that happens, he/she will inform you that the drug quantity limit has been reached. You or your pharmacist should contact your PCP and ask her/him to submit a quantity overwrite request to Express Scripts.

This ensures that doctors are not prescribing you too much of a certain drug that could be potentially harmful to your health, or wasteful.

(ST) *Step Therapy*

Step Therapy is when your pharmacy tells you that your insurance wants you to take a different drug instead of what your doctor had first prescribed. Step Therapy is a way for you to try an equally effective, but safer, or more cost effective drug before you “step” up to a more costly drug.

Medicaid will not cover the less safe or the more costly drug until the similar drug in the formulary has been tried.

Safeguards

Through formularies, PA, ST, and QL, we created a system of safeguards that protect your health, add accountability, and give your health provider enough flexibility to provide you with the best care possible.

If your doctor does not want to switch or change formulary options, or want to increase quantities, he or she can fill out the necessary forms and send them to Amida Care showing why you must have the non-formulary medication.



These forms can be downloaded from our *Pharmacy Coverage Guidelines webpage* at: <http://livelifeplus.amidacareny.org/pharmacy-authorization-criteria-clinical-guidelines.htm>



PrEP

Wouldn't it be great to have more ways to protect the people we have sex with from HIV infection? Thankfully, we do.

Everyone knows about condoms and how important the proper use of condoms is to protecting our sexual partners. Amida Care covers the cost of condoms when your PCP writes you a prescription for them.

You may already be aware of PEP. (Which is not PrEP; we will get to that in a moment.) PEP is the short name for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis. Prophylaxis is similar to 'protection' or 'prevention' in a medical sense. PEP means taking certain medications for four weeks to stop a new HIV infection from happening to a person who is HIV Negative at the start of it. PEP is started as quickly as possible after a possible exposure. The exposure could be a needle stick (either by accident in the hospital during a medical procedure, or in the community during certain types of drug use) or sexual. PEP has been in use for many years and can be very effective when used correctly.

What you may not know about yet is PrEP. PrEP is the short name for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis. PrEP is for HIV Negative people who, in addition to using condoms, are willing to take one tablet every day to help protect themselves against HIV. The tablet used for PrEP has two ingredients and was approved by the FDA in July of 2012. When done correctly (by taking the tablet every day and using condoms during sex) this method has been proven to be very effective. This can be very reassuring to couples who want to enjoy sexual contact when one person in the couple is HIV + and the other is not.

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PrEP Continued from page 29

As with any daily medication, it is important for the person taking the PrEP tablet (which has the brand name of Truvada) to have regular check-ups with a medical provider. There are basic blood tests to check the safety of the medications and, importantly, to be sure the person has stayed HIV Negative. If the person taking PrEP does become HIV+, it is important to learn this as soon as possible because that one tablet is not enough to treat an HIV infection. It is for prevention. Most health plans cover the costs associated with PrEP (office visits, lab tests, etc.) and there are resources available to help reduce the cost of the medication itself.

Consider sharing this information with your friends, and also with your sexual partner(s). This is especially important if you don't know, or they haven't told you their HIV status. If they are negative, you might be helping them learn about an additional way to protect themselves.

For more information about **PrEP**: **Call 311**

In Manhattan:

- Call Callen-Lorde Community Health Center at **212-271-7200**
- Call Harlem United's Willis Green Health Center **212-531-1300** (123-125 W 124th St)

In Brooklyn:

- Call Star Health Center at **718-270-3745** (450 Clarkson Avenue, near HEAT)



While PrEP can be used by HIV negative people who might be sharing needles with people who could be HIV+, New York offers many places to get brand new needles for free. Using clean needles is the best prevention for HIV and other viral infections.

Act Up – End AIDS (Now)!



Over the last decade, New York State has achieved a 40% decrease in new HIV infections, which is unprecedented nationwide.

Governor Cuomo recently committed to raising the bar, leveraging recent advancements in science and data, to stop new HIV infections in the Empire State by 2020. We are working with the State to develop a plan, secure resources, and advocate for making it a reality.

DEVELOPING A PLAN: The Governor created a Task Force that is responsible for developing a plan to end AIDS. It includes longstanding activists, service providers, and persons living with HIV/AIDS – making it a true public-private partnership. Doug Wirth, President/CEO of Amida Care, and several of our Board Members were selected.

SECURING RESOURCES: Amida Care is working to secure funding for end of AIDS initiatives through a new source of Medicaid (the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Program). \$8 billion will be available statewide to support activities to transform our Medicaid system to one that supports wellness, rather than just better managing illness. Amida Care facilitated a series of meetings with the hospitals in the City leading this effort, and has been successful in convincing many of them to support the HIV/AIDS care and prevention projects that we put forward.

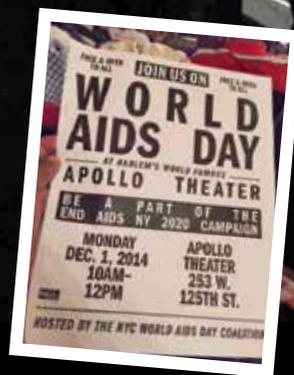
For more information on the *Ending the Epidemic Task Force* visit:
http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/ending_the_epidemic/index.htm.

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION: We are fortunate to have a wealth of healthcare providers, non-profit groups, private industry, and government agencies dedicated to ending the AIDS epidemic, and we need to leverage their knowledge and resources. We are participating in a community-based group called the “Kitchen Cabinet”, which submitted 70 recommendations to the State Task Force.

Governor Cuomo’s goal to **End AIDS in New York State by 2020** represents a long journey of community and government efforts to stop the spread of AIDS as an epidemic. *If you are not already involved, I hope you will join in the effort this winter!*

A flyer for the 'TASK FORCE to END AIDS' featuring logos for AMIDA CARE and ACRIA. The flyer has a green and white color scheme. It includes the slogan 'Let your voice be heard!' and the goal 'Help New York State be the first state to end the HIV epidemic by 2020.' It lists meeting dates: Tuesday, October 14 (Albany), Wednesday, November 5 (NYC), Tuesday, November 18 (Albany), Monday, December 15 (NYC), and Tuesday, January 13 (Albany). A green box highlights 'Governor Cuomo's 3 POINT PLAN' with three items: 1. Identify people who remain undiagnosed, 2. Link people to health care, and 3. Provide access to life saving medications. It also provides an email for submitting ideas: recommendations@amidacareny.org and a website for webcasts: http://www.governor.ny.gov/. The bottom of the flyer features a colorful illustration of diverse people.

Amida Care Joins in World AIDS Day at the Apollo



On World AIDS Day, December 1, 2014, Amida Care joined together with a broad coalition of over 40 AIDS service and community-based organizations to launch the **End AIDS by 2020 Campaign!** The event was held at Harlem's World Famous Apollo Theater, which was filled to capacity as advocates, providers, consumers, and elected officials took to the stage in show of our unity and commitment to ending AIDS.

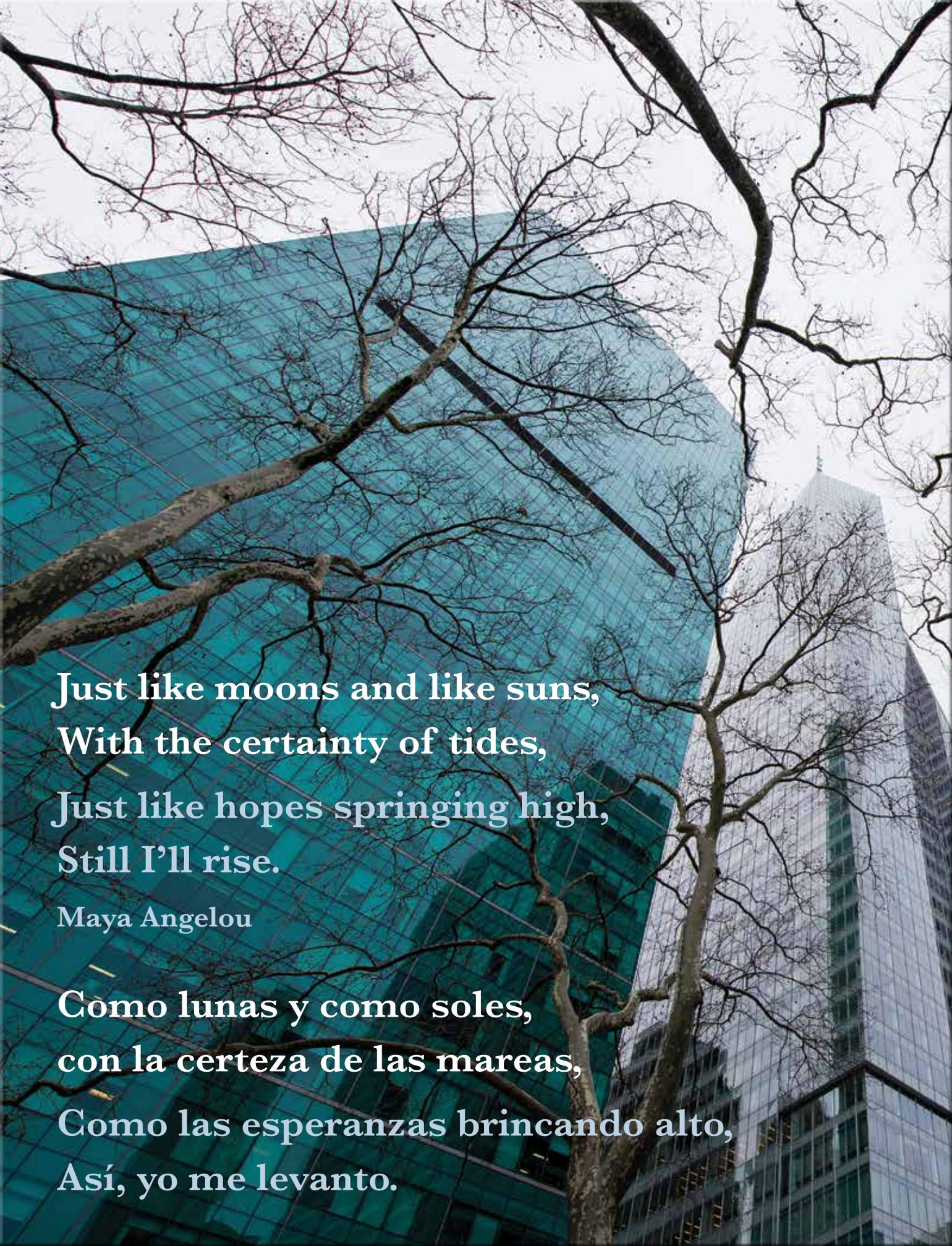


Mayor Bill de Blasio delivered opening remarks, where he spoke of the importance of HIV testing and getting people the help they need. Then Commissioner Mary Travis Basset of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) announced that new HIV diagnoses in New York City are at an all-time low. Yet, disparities exist and the spread of new infections continues to disproportionately affect African-American, Hispanic, men who have sex with men (MSM), and LGBT populations. The City also released the start of #BeHIVSure and NY Knows, two campaigns that promote HIV testing for all New Yorkers.

Before exiting the stage, Commissioner Basset invited leaders from the 40+ sponsoring agencies up to the stage for a large red ribbon cutting ceremony symbolizing our renewed commitment to ending the epidemic. Among them were Amida Care President & CEO, Doug Wirth, who noted afterwards that “the energy, passion, and hope felt in the room today comes from the realization that together we can end AIDS as an epidemic in New York State by 2020. We know what works; we just have to implement it.”

Other speakers at the event included New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito, who expressed how HIV/AIDS is intrinsically linked to the social issues that affect our health: inadequate housing, poverty, racism, homophobia, etc. She was followed by City Council Member Corey Johnson, who, as the only openly HIV+ elected official in New York State, gave a resounding speech on how ending the epidemic is reachable, but only if all HIV+ New Yorker’s have access to stable housing. In addition, all HIV+ New Yorkers need access to quality care, medications and support that will enable them to be undetectable. Similarly, HIV- New Yorkers at risk need access to new prevention strategies like PEP and PrEP.

With Governor Cuomo’s formation of the **Task Force to End AIDS** as an epidemic by 2020, New York is leading the way forward, and this **World AIDS Day** underlined how we are all partners in this movement. As a member of the Task Force, Amida Care is dedicated to ensuring that all New Yorkers who are HIV+ receive the care and lifesaving medications they need to stay healthy and well.



Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Maya Angelou

Como lunas y como soles,
con la certeza de las mareas,
Como las esperanzas brincando alto,
Así, yo me levanto.



ZEN
IN THE CITY

BRYANT PARK