

A newsletter for Amida Care Members!

Formerly VidaCare

Dear Members,

Spring brings many changes, green tree buds, flowers blooming, AND a new name for your health plan! After many discussions with members, staff and experts in the field; VidaCare was finally renamed “**Amida Care**” on April 1st.



Doug Wirth, CEO

We liked this name for the many meanings within the word *Amida*:

- ◆ “**To stand up**” - which speaks to our mission of advocating with/for and empowering members to what you need for the health care system;
- ◆ “**Compassionate Care/healing**” - which we hope you experience as our member; and
- ◆ “**Friend**” (Ami) - which we all need, to have someone we can trust and rely on *to be there* when we need them ... and this is our commitment.

I hope you’ll join us on May 7th (5-8pm) at the New Song Church, 2230 Frederick Douglas Blvd. in Central Harlem to celebrate LIFE, spring and our new name. Remember, we’re the same people and plan you’ve come to rely on.

Sincerely Yours,



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Upcoming Amida Care Live Your Life Events

Members may bring 1 Guest to events below:



May 7th 5-8pm

Amida Care’s New Name Party

Join us for food, fun, music and dancing as we celebrate our new name
@ New Song Church
2230 Frederick Douglas Blvd



June 23rd 3-5pm

Healthy Relationships

Learn simple techniques for having healthy relationships. Leaders will show you ways to honor/express yourself.
@ Lifeworks Center
150 W 28th St. Suite 1104

Call **1-800-556-0689** today:

To reserve your seat, meal, MetroCard & gift bag.

Kick Asthma!!



May is Asthma awareness month. Asthma is common among New York City's children and adults. People with asthma have chronic lung inflammation (swelling) and episodes of airway tightening that cause symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, chest tightness, and shortness of breath. Asthma can't be cured, but it can be controlled with proper treatment and management. PLWHA may also have asthma. Management of asthma for PLWHA is the same as for those without the infection, However, sometimes HAART (Antiretrovirals) can interact with certain asthma medications, so be sure your Primary Care Provider PCP is aware of all medications that you take.

Use the letters **K-I-C-K** to remember how to manage your asthma

- K**now what worsens your asthma.
- I**nform your doctor about frequent asthma symptoms (i.e daytime symptoms more than 2 days per week or nighttime symptoms more than 2 times per month may be an indication of persistent asthma).
- C**ontrol frequent symptoms by using long-term control asthma medicines (inhaled corticosteroids are the most effective) and by avoiding tobacco smoke and other triggers.
- K**ee regular doctor's visits, and ask your doctor for a written Asthma Action Plan.

Sources: www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/asthma/asthma.shtml; www.thebody.com



Amida Care's new website! www.amidacareny.org

We are delighted to announce the launch of our new, improved website. The site is loaded with important information for both members and providers.

Some of the website's current features include:

- ◆ Benefit information
- ◆ Up-to-date health alerts
- ◆ Member events calendar
- ◆ Links to other important sites and much more

If you have access to the internet, check out our new website.



New York City Department of Health Offers Free and Confidential STD Clinics



Although we understand that most individuals may want to be examined and if necessary treated by their primary care provider, the Health Department does provide free and confidential STD clinics to the public.

NOTE: Minors do NOT need parental consent for examination and treatment. For additional information, call **311**. These clinics are located in all five boroughs, with some having Saturday and late evening hours.

IMPORTANT!!!!!! EAT before your clinic visit. It is not necessary to fast before testing.

What You Can Expect During a Visit to an STD Clinic

Upon arriving at the Clinic, you will be asked to fill out a form with information about yourself and your reasons for coming to the clinic. Your medical records are confidential, meaning no one has access to them except authorized Health Department personnel. On this form, a number will be written. To ensure your confidentiality, you will be called by that number throughout your clinic visit. During registration, you will be called and seen by a clinician. Our medical staff is made up of doctors who have been practicing the specialty of diagnosing and treating STDs for some time. Please be accurate and detailed when providing information, so that we can provide you with the best medical and counseling services, when discussing your medical history with the clinician.

During the medical exam, a clinician will take specimens, some of which will be tested at our on-site lab. A microbiologist will perform the lab tests and share the results with your doctor. If indicated by those results, you will receive medication before you depart the clinic. Some specimens though may be sent to an outside lab for testing. The clinic staff will let you know how and when to get those results so you can come in for additional treatment and follow-up if required.

Viral hepatitis services are offered at several clinics*. Hepatitis C screening is available for patients at risk of infection. There is no vaccine for hepatitis C. Vaccine for Hepatitis B is available to ALL patients who have not been vaccinated or infected in the past. Vaccine for hepatitis A is available to patients at high risk of infection. Hepatitis A vaccine will NOT be provided for travel purposes.

Clinics are located in all five boroughs. For locations, phone numbers, hours of operation, and any additional information, please **call 311**.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/std/std2.shtml>



Transportation

Non-emergency Public Transportation: Amida Care members are eligible to receive MetroCards for their transportation to all medical, mental health and case management appointments. Members receive these cards from their providers, who are then reimbursed by AmidaCare.

Non-emergency Ambulette: Amida Care members who are determined by their Primary care Providers to be unable to take public transportation may use any of the in-network ambulette providers to get to and from their appointments. Your provider should make these arrangements with the ambulette provider.

Emergency / Ambulance transportation: If 911 is called and the ambulance needs to transport a member to a hospital, this is paid for directly by the Amida Care.

* The only time that Metrocards are not covered by Amida care is when they are for travel to a Methadone Treatment Programs (MMTP) . The MMTP program will pay these costs.



Spring into health recipe

CHICKEN BROCCOLI VEGETABLE SAUTE

- 2 tbsp. butter, divided
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- 1 c. broccoli, cut up
- 1/2 c. carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 c. mushrooms, sliced
- 1 can cream of broccoli soup
- 1/3 c. milk
- 1/8 tsp. pepper



In skillet over medium heat, in 1 tablespoon butter, cook chicken 10 minutes, or until browned on both sides. Remove chicken; keep warm. In same skillet, in remaining butter, cook broccoli, carrots and mushrooms 5 minutes, stirring often. Stir in soup, milk and pepper. Heat to boiling. Return chicken to skillet. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes or until chicken is fork-tender.

Medicaid Recertification

Everyone with NY State's Medicaid, must renew/recertify their coverage every year. You should receive a renewal package from HRA 90 days prior to the expiration date. An in-person interview is no longer required.



To renew your Medicaid you must:

- ◆ Review renewal/recertification carefully and make any necessary changes;
- ◆ Check the "No Change" box if there are no changes to report;
- ◆ Sign both the Renewal/Recertification Notice and the Terms, Rights, and Responsibilities document;
- ◆ Return forms and all appropriate documentation by the "Respond By" date printed in the introductory paragraph;

For help with your Medicaid renewal you can call the HRA Medicaid helpline at 1-866-692-6116 or 311. Enrollment Counselors are available Monday-Friday, 8AM-5PM to assist you. You can also drop-off renewal materials and get help with completing the forms at the HRA Medicaid Renewal Site in Manhattan at 340A West 34th Street, between 8th and 9th Ave. 1st floor. Amida Care also sends you a reminder note about your renewal every year. Call Member Services if you need any assistance at 800-556-0689.

Source: http://www.nyc.gov/html/hia/html/public_insurance/renewing.shtml

Member Spotlight



This past December, Linda Hamptlon from Harlem United was recognized by the Robin Hood Foundation as one of the Robin Hood's Heroes. She was one of only three persons in the city recognized for her extraordinary contributions to the fight against poverty. Award recipients are celebrated for their tenacity, selflessness, and ability to profoundly affect others lives. Linda certainly has all of these characteristics. Last year she fulfilled a life long dream of being a bus driver and now rises at 3:30 each morning to

drive mentally challenged clients to their daily programs and therapy. Congratulations Linda! You're a true hero and an inspiration to us all!

For Linda's story and a video of the awards ceremony go to:

<http://www.robinhood.org/heroes/linda-hamptlon.aspx>



You Deserve To Be Healthy and Happy!

Amida Care members are entitled to counseling services.

Just because you are living with HIV, doesn't mean that it's normal for you to feel depressed or anxious. You deserve to feel as healthy as possible, both physically *and* mentally.



How do you know if you need help?

The following are some of the signs that you could benefit from mental health services:

- ◆ Loss of interest in activities or hobbies that you used to find pleasurable, including sex,
- ◆ Difficulty concentrating or making decisions,
- ◆ Feeling tired all the time,
- ◆ Trouble falling asleep or excessive sleeping,
- ◆ Irritability, restlessness,
- ◆ Loss of appetite or overeating,
- ◆ Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, and/or helplessness,
- ◆ Pains, headaches, or stomach aches that do not improve with treatment, and/or
- ◆ Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" feelings.

Are alcohol or drugs making your life unmanageable?

Depression and use of alcohol and/or drugs often go together. Getting help for your depression may help with your alcohol and/or drug issues.

What can mental health counseling do for you?

Dealing with issues that are bothering you may improve the situation and make you feel less worried, anxious or upset. Counseling services are available to assist you with different types of problems.

A Therapist or Counselor will be able to help you:

- ◆ Clarify a problem – some situations are difficult, understanding the issues can help
 - ◆ Make a Plan - action steps that can be taken to resolve the issue
 - ◆ Handle a crisis – help you look at available choices and the one that's right for you
- Many concerns can be resolved quickly in a few visits; for issues that are more difficult, a counselor can set up a special plan just for you and spend time to help you resolve the problem.

Amida Care Members are eligible to receive the care they need, included weekly therapy visits.

Why is it especially important for persons living with HIV to pay attention to their mental health?

Research suggests that treating mental distress can improve survival and slow the progression of HIV.

Where can you get help?

Some people may feel uneasy about seeing a Therapist or Counselor for personal problems. However, at some point in their lives, most people are faced with problems that they need help with. Having a personal problem does not mean "I am having a nervous breakdown" or "I am crazy" or "I'm a failure." **Getting help is a sign of strength.** You can call **Amida Care's Mental Health Department's** toll free number at **1-866-752-5443**, and ask for an appointment with an experienced professional. Our staff will help you find the provider that's right for you!

Sources: www.mayoclinic.com, www.thebody.com, www.nmha.org, www.who.int.

Housing

If you need help with housing please contact:

- ◆ **Your Case Manager (If you are not sure who this is or you need a case manager, call Amida Care Member Services at 800-556-0689) or**
- ◆ **Your HASA Case Manager (HASA #: 212-971-0626 or 311)**





News Flash!!

Members can now receive up to **\$75 in gift cards** per year for attending their initial and quarterly HIV monitoring visits and annual reproductive health visit. Use the below form to request your gift cards today. Just have your provider complete, sign and fax to us! Make sure we have your correct address so we can mail you your cards!



Healthy Member Rewards Program

Eligibility: Member may receive up to \$75 in gift cards per year for attending their initial and HIV monitoring visits (Section II) and annual reproductive health visit (Section III).

Please complete the below information, including PCP or Specialist signature (Section IV) and return to Amida Care via fax (646-786-1837) or mail (248 West 35th Street, 7th flr., New York, NY 10001).

Section I Member Information			
Name: _____	CIN#: _____		
Address: _____	City: _____	State: _____	Zip _____
Primary Phone: (____) _____	Other Phone: (____) _____		

Section II Primary Care Provider Initial Assessment /Viral Monitoring Visit Information (\$10 gift card)	
PCP Name: _____	Site/Facility: _____
Phone: (____) _____	Fax: (____) _____
Date of visit: _____	
Please check all completed activities below.	
<input type="checkbox"/> CD4 Result _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Viral Load Result _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Screen _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse Screen _____
F/U PCP visit scheduled for _____	

Section III Reproductive Health Annual Visit Information (\$25 gift card) 1X/year	
Provider Name: _____	Site/Facility: _____
Phone: (____) _____	Fax: (____) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GYN Exam done Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> PAP smear done Date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> STD Screening done Date: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Safety/Prevention Issues, including safe sex, discussed	

Section IV The above mentioned patient has completed their visit as described	
Provider Signature: _____	Date: _____

Please mail or fax (646-786-1837) this form to:

Amida Care Health Services @ 248 West 35th St. 7th flr. New York, NY 10001