August 2026
Public Policy & Government Relations Update
Volume 2: Issue 8

Introduction

PPGR is excited to provide the August edition of our PPGR update. In this edition we give Medicaid updates, details about Amida Care's Get out and Vote campaign, and we invite you to join us in future action.

We hope that you enjoy the rest of the summer!

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Medicaid Updates

A final rule from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) restricts federal funds for youth gender affirming care

On August 11, CMS finalized a federal rule that prohibits federal Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) funds from covering certain gender-affirming care services for young people. The rule does not prevent states like New York from covering these services, however the state would have to pay for the services using their own funds.

Affected services include puberty blockers, hormone therapy, and surgery for enrollees under the age of 18 in the Medicaid program and under the age of 19 in CHIP.

The rule did not prohibit coverage of counseling or psychotherapy as part of gender affirming care.

CMS received nearly 35,000 comments on the proposal, and of the 11,000 comments posted, CMS writes that more than 90% were in opposition to the policy change.

Gender-affirming care is considered a best medical practice, recommended by major medical groups, including the American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Psychological Association.

New Medicaid work rules are putting NYC enrollees and hospitals at risk.
Of the estimated 67 million people in the United States who will likely be affected by Medicaid cuts, about 3.6 million recipients live in New York City, and more than 1.3 million are concentrated in three congressional districts. Parts of Bronx, northern Manhattan and Queens

Read more here:
Medicaid Work Requirements

This CMS rule builds on a range of federal actions that adversely affect LGBTQ+ health access. KFF summarizes these actions here.

Community Engagement (Work) requirements & more frequent recertification

As we've previously reported, Medicaid is changing in 2027. People on Medicaid will need to recertify their Medicaid eligibility every six months. In addition, starting January 1, 2027, some people who have Medicaid coverage will need to show they are working, going to school, helping out in the community or participating in job training to keep their health coverage. We urge you to read more about the changes here. Amida Care is working to inform staff and members about the changes.

Note: There are several exemptions to the new rule, including one that excepts people with a physical or mental health condition that makes it difficult to work. In 2027 people who are subject to the new rule can can self-verify (self-attest) that they are exempt. In 2028 additional proof may be needed to demonstrate an exemption.

STAY COVERED

2026 Get Out And Vote – Relauch

This November, the United States will hold critical elections. In New York you will have the opportunity to vote for New York State and Federal level officials. Every member of Congress, the Governor and the New York Legislature are some of the offices that are on the ballot.

The outcome of this election is very important for the direction of our state and country. With this in mind, PPGR worked closely with the Amida Care Communications team to relaunch Amida Care's Get Out and Vote campaign.

Amida Care's Get Out the Vote webpage offers helpful links, important deadlines, and more resources to share with family and friends.

General Election - Dates

- Election Day is Tuesday, *November 3, 2026*. Polls are open from 6:00AM to 9:00PM.
- Early Voting Period is *October 24, 2026 – November 1, 2026*.
- Find you poll site here - https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/
- Check to make sure you are registered here - https://amiregistered.vote.nyc/ if not, register to vote by *October 24, 2026* here - https://www.ny.gov/services/register-vote

Stay Involved: Join PPGR in Ongoing Advocacy

As summer comes to an end, PPGR thanks you for joining us for our successful Washington DC advocacy day on July 15, 2026. Our team is already planning future actions, and we invite you to lend your voice to our efforts.

Please save the date on November 18, 2026. PPGR is working with our community partners to bring our voices to Washington DC.

Additional Updates

State Senator Erik Bottcher-NY47 & Assemblymember Tony Simone NY-75 propose a bill to fully legalize bathhouses again.

Read more here:

New York State Lawmakers Propose Legalizing LGBTQ Bathhouses Again

With a 51-44 vote, the Senate confirmed the new Director of the CDC. Dr. Erica Schwartz was picked by President Trump and will now lead the Federal agency.

Read more here:

Senate Confirms New CDC Director