



AMIDA CARE

MEMBER NEWSLETTER 2018 - VOL.2



BE YOURSELF with **PRIDE**



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Check out our new blog, [Amida Care Now](http://www.amidacareny.org/blog), at www.amidacareny.org/blog, for health information and other useful topics.



Follow us on social media!



Dear Amida Care Members,

Living with pride is a goal we strive for daily at Amida Care. There's no doubt how much we enjoy the chance to "step out" with our members every June, atop our float in Manhattan's LGBTQ Pride March. But it's also essential for each one of us to live with pride, not just during Pride month but throughout the year. This applies to all of us – whether we are gay, straight, or bisexual; a person of color; man, woman, transgender or gender non-conforming person; or young or older.

Living with pride feeds those essential feelings of self-worth, self-acceptance, and self-love that are necessary to the well-being of every human being.

Let's each take a moment to reflect on what makes us feel good about ourselves. What makes you feel proud when you celebrate yourself, your community, your heritage, and your life? Which answers come up when you ask yourself, "How do I feel about who I am?"

First and foremost, taking pride in yourself requires that you know yourself and get comfortable with who you are. When we live with pride, we view ourselves as worthy of respect from others.

Here at Amida Care, every day we rededicate ourselves to living with pride. This pride fuels our passion to keep going "above and beyond" for you. You are so worth it!



Abrazos,

Doug Wirth

Doug Wirth, President and CEO



Body, Mind & Spirit

A GUIDE TO WELLNESS

Amida Care's newest community magazine, entitled **Body, Mind & Spirit: A Guide to Wellness**, was published in early Spring 2018. This 40-page special publication features helpful and healing articles in English and Spanish. Topics range from healthy eating, sexual health screenings, and smoking cessation to timely updates on voting in this year's elections, preventing opioid overdoses, and helping those who struggle with suicidal feelings. Also included: a listing of Mental Health Hotlines and Services, articles on self-esteem and staying in the now, and a guided meditation. To read the magazine online, go to www.amidacareny.org.

NEED TO RE-ENROLL IN AMIDA CARE'S MEDICAID PLAN? NOW JUST GO ONLINE!

Amida Care's **Live Life Plus Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan** (SNP), our state's largest, is listed on the New York State of Health (NYSoH) website at www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov. If your membership has been interrupted by recertification or any other reason, you can re-enroll online quickly and easily.

Our Medicaid SNP is specially designed to provide comprehensive health coverage and services to people living with HIV/AIDS and chronic conditions; people who are homeless, regardless of HIV status; and people of transgender experience, regardless of HIV status.

To enroll or to re-enroll, just go online at www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov or call **855-355-5777**.



Carnaval Under the Sea!

Winter Life Celebration 2018



At Amida Care's latest Winter Life celebration – with a *Carnaval Under the Sea* theme – our members and staff dove headfirst into the party atmosphere. For the first time, our special event was hosted at *National Geographic's* recently opened **Encounter** venue, in the heart of Times Square. After enjoying our celebration, Amida Care members and staff loved the unforgettable experience of the **Encounter: Ocean Odyssey** exhibition. It digitally simulates deep underwater travel from Australia's Great Barrier Reef across the Pacific Ocean to the California coast. Tiger sharks, giant squids, frolicking dolphins and sea lions, and humpback whales – wow, what a night!



Health Information Exchange

Fill Out Your RHIO Consent Form Today

RHIOs, or Regional Healthcare Information Organizations, share information about people's health (with consent) electronically and securely, to improve your health care services. There are 8 RHIOs across NY State that connect nearly all the hospitals and 80,000 providers. Amida Care members belong to two RHIOs: **Bronx RHIO** and **Healthix**.

The RHIOs allows the doctors and hospitals taking care of you to share your medical information with each other, so that they have all the information available about your health, in order to provide you with the best care. This can only happen with your consent. Here's what you get if you sign a RHIO consent form: your doctors will have immediate and up-to-date information about your medications, test results, and health care visits. This will help them provide you with the best possible care. It may also improve the quality of care you receive, since it will help you avoid repeating tests (fewer needlesticks and imaging, such as x-rays) that you may already have completed at another clinic.

If you permit authorization by signing a RHIO consent form with Amida Care, Amida Care will be able to access information about you from other health care providers. Please go to our website at **www.amidacareny.org** to download and print out a RHIO consent form in English or Spanish. After you fill out and sign your form, give it to an Amida Care representative or mail to us at: Amida Care, 225 West 34th Street, 2nd floor, NYC, NY 10122.

Help us to help you receive quality care! Visit our website at **www.amidacareny.org** to download and fill out your RHIO consent form. If you have any questions, call Member Services at **800-556-0689** or **TTY: 711**.



Got Diabetes?

3 Ways to Help Yourself

Nearly 1 million New Yorkers are living with diabetes, and about 20 percent don't even realize it! If you have been diagnosed with diabetes or as pre-diabetic, here are three ways to help manage your illness:

- Learn about diabetes;
- Visit your health care provider; and
- Lead a healthier lifestyle.

Diabetes is a chronic, long-term illness in which a person's glucose (blood sugar) blood level rises too high. Our bodies control glucose with insulin, a hormone that regulates how food is used to make energy. People with diabetes either don't have enough insulin, or it doesn't work properly. Untreated, diabetes can lead to heart or kidney disease or damage to the eyes and nerves.

When you meet with your health care provider, they may order a test called hemoglobin **A1C**, which measures your blood sugar over a three-month period. Most people with diabetes aim for an A1C result of 7 percent or less. Together, you and your provider can set a goal for your **A1C** result. Your provider will also

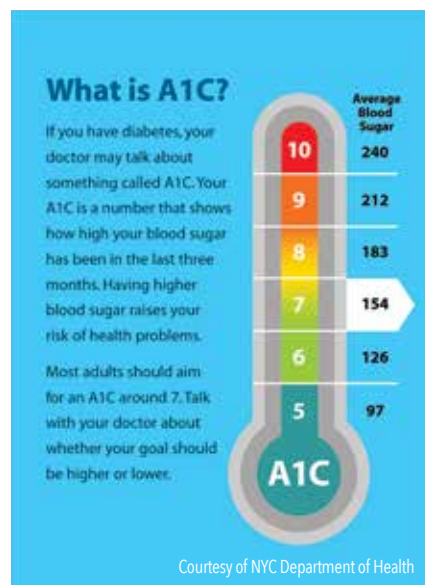
check your blood pressure. Most people aim to keep their blood pressure below 120/80.

Every year, your provider may also send you to an eye doctor for a special exam of the back of your eye, which is called your retina. Left untreated, problems with the retina's blood vessels can lead to loss of vision or even blindness.

Diabetes can also cause nerve damage, especially to the feet. Most people feel pain when they are injured, but those with nerve damage may be injured and not even know it! That's why it is important to check your feet daily for sores, wear comfortable socks and shoes, and trim your toenails carefully. Your provider may also send you to a podiatrist (foot doctor) once yearly.

Live healthier by taking steps like exercising three times a week for 20 minutes, eating a healthier diet, and working on controlling your weight.

Learning more about diabetes, seeing your doctor, and taking care of your body can all help keep your blood sugar close to normal.





YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE

Register and VOTE in 2018!

Your vote matters! Elections are happening this year at both the national and New York State levels. In 2018, we'll elect a U.S. Senator, our Governor, the NYS Attorney General, and State Assembly representatives. These three rounds of elections are coming up on Tuesdays:

- **November 6 general election;**
- June 26 U.S. (federal) primary; and
- September 11 NY State primary

Throughout the past year, you have fought hard to make sure that government listens to your voice and stops dismantling Medicaid, while maintaining access to health care, housing, and employment. Going forward, you have the opportunity to exercise your ultimate right as a U.S. citizen: the right to vote. Regardless of your political beliefs, voting is the ultimate way to exercise your right as a U.S. citizen by choosing to elect candidates who represent your interests.

If you've never voted before or recently made a change – like moving, changing your name, or getting released from incarceration – it's easy to register or re-register ASAP (before mid-October at the latest):

- Get a voter registration form at a post office, or
- Call 311 in New York City, or
- Go online to www.elections.ny.gov, or
- Call or visit the NYC Board of Elections at **866-VOTE-NYC**.

Find out where your polling place is by watching for a flier in the mail, calling 311, or visiting the website listed above. Where you live determines where you vote, and your signature verifies who you are at polling places. So you'll need to give your current address, and you'll want to ensure that your name is listed correctly.

If you were convicted of a felony in NY State, your right to vote is automatically restored as soon as your sentence is completed, or parole has ended. If you're on probation, all you have to do is re-register with your county Board of Elections. For details, visit the NY State Attorney General's website: www.ag.ny.gov/civil-rights/voting-rights.

Be sure to vote! Your vote is your voice.