



**For Immediate Release:**

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**Amida Care Celebrates New York State's Success in Achieving Largest  
Decrease in HIV Diagnoses Since 2014**

*Expanded Access to PrEP Needed to End the Epidemic by 2020*

(New York – October 8, 2019) - Governor Andrew Cuomo has [announced](#) that 2018 had the largest decrease in new HIV diagnoses in New York since the launch of the Ending the Epidemic initiative in 2014, and that the State is on track to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic by the end of 2020. In response, Doug Wirth, President and CEO of Amida Care, issued the following statement:

“Amida Care applauds Governor Cuomo for leading an aggressive effort to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic in New York. We join the Governor, New York policy makers, public health officials, community advocates, and health care providers in celebrating the news that new HIV diagnoses for 2018 reached an all-time low. With new HIV infections dropping 28% since 2014, we are closer to reaching our goal than ever before.

“But the work is not done yet. In order to reach the 2020 goal, we need to do more to ensure communities at elevated risk for HIV have access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a once-a-day pill that is highly effective in preventing HIV transmission, and a key pillar in the Governor's Blueprint to End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic. The Governor's leadership in expanding access to PrEP has resulted in a 32 percent increase since 2017 in prescriptions among New Yorkers--a crucial factor in the decrease in diagnoses. Yet, communities hardest hit by HIV are the ones with the lowest rates of awareness of and access to PrEP. In New York, the largest proportion of Medicaid recipients taking PrEP are white men, despite the fact that in 2017 more than 78% of new HIV diagnoses were among people of color.

“Disparities in PrEP awareness and access must be addressed if we are to end the epidemic by 2020. Currently, only about 6,000 New York Medicaid recipients are using PrEP, but the State hopes to increase that number to 30,000 by the end of 2020. Overall, the goal is to increase the number of PrEP users statewide from 32,000 to 65,000 by the end of 2020. New York State has several innovative Medicaid Special Needs Health Plans (SNPs), like Amida Care, which have expertise in sexual health and HIV treatment and prevention services. These plans deliver culturally competent care through their network of providers and have helped their HIV-negative members access to PrEP. Amida Care is working with New York State to provide wider access

to enhanced sexual health services in order to serve more people who are potentially at elevated risk for acquiring HIV.

“We look forward to supporting and actively promoting the New York State Department of Health’s PrEP Aware Week (October 20 to 26), and we thank the Governor for his steadfast commitment to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic in New York.”

**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 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](http://www.amidacareny.org).