



Lynsey Billet, lynsey@anatgerstein.com, 347-361-8449

Amida Care Condemns Discriminatory New HHS Rule

(New York, NY - May 24, 2019) Doug Wirth, President and CEO of Amida Care, released the following statement in response to a new proposal by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to rollback protections for people of transgender experience in health care settings:

“There is no excuse for health care professionals to refuse medically necessary care to people because of who they are. Transgender Americans are a prime target of bias and systemic discrimination: from family members, at school and work, in the justice system, in access to housing, and in health care settings. According to recent surveys, 1 in 4 transgender respondents reported having to teach health care professionals about transgender care. Among transgender Americans living with HIV, 19% reported being refused treatment due to their gender identity, and 28% report they have been harassed in a doctor's office. Nearly a quarter of respondents have avoided seeing a doctor out of fear that they would be mistreated. This latest development means that our transgender neighbors, and indeed the entire LGBTQ community, will face even steeper barriers to care. The Trump administration continues to take actions like this one that will deny access to care for people in communities that are heavily affected by HIV in direct opposition to its stated goal of Ending the Epidemic by 2030.

“Our Constitution is clear: *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all [people] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

“It is therefore our duty to create opportunities for *all* Americans to be well so that they can have the best chance to lead successful lives. This includes LGBTQ people, who are integral to our communities and our workforce. They are a key part of our economic engine in all industries, whether as consumers, workers, executives, or small business owners. In America, there is no place for attacks on specific populations or on the health care access that is a basic human right, not a privilege. Creating equitable access to health care, and protecting the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid for all who need it, supports the life, liberty and happiness of all of us.”

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.