



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amida Care Condemns Proposed Legislation Targeting Transgender Care

New York, NY - Doug Wirth, president and CEO of [Amida Care](#), New York's largest not-for-profit Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP), issued the following statement in response to [proposed legislation](#) in South Dakota that would make transgender health care for minors a felony. The bill is part of a wave of legislation, similar to bills introduced in [Florida](#), [Missouri](#), [Oklahoma](#) and [South Carolina](#), that targets transgender health care:

“We are appalled at South Dakota’s attack on the transgender community. We strongly condemn the content of this bill—which is not only discriminatory, but also dangerous. Legislation such as this further marginalizes an already-vulnerable community and sends a message to LGBTQ youth that they are unworthy of care. It also undermines our goal of ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic nationwide.

Transgender people already face significant discrimination in health care. According to recent surveys, 1 in 4 transgender respondents reported having to teach health care professionals about transgender care, 28% report having been harassed in a doctor's office, and nearly 25% avoided seeing a doctor out of fear that they would be mistreated.

Lack of access to health care and legislation that demonstrates a disregard for the well-being of our transgender neighbors has very real effects, including sobering rates of suicide and depression among LGBTQ youth.

In addition, in order to End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic, more work needs to be done to remove—not create—barriers to health care for the transgender community, which is disproportionately impacted by HIV. At Amida Care, we've seen the importance of HIV treatment and prevention firsthand. In 2017, New York State expanded eligibility for Amida Care to include people of transgender experience regardless of HIV status. Today, Amida Care has more than 500 transgender members who are HIV negative, and as many as 25% are accessing pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a powerful HIV prevention tool. We have also had tremendous success helping our members of transgender experience who are living with HIV become virally suppressed or undetectable, meaning that they are unable to sexually transmit HIV to others. Of our 1,200 transgender members, more than 60% are living with HIV, and 80% of them are undetectable.

Amida Care stands firm in our stance against any legislation that undermines transgender health care, and we call upon lawmakers to reject these measures.”

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.