



For Immediate Release

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Amida Care Applauds Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York State Legislature Action on GENDA, Ban on Conversion Therapy

New York, NY (January 15, 2019) – Doug Wirth, the President and CEO of [Amida Care](http://AmidaCare.com), New York’s largest not-for-profit Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP), issued the following statement in response to the New York State’s legislature passing, and Governor Andrew Cuomo’s expected signing of GENDA and a ban on conversion therapy into law today:

“We’re grateful to Governor Andrew Cuomo and New York State lawmakers for prioritizing this long-overdue legislation. The Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) legally codifies protections for transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) people against discrimination in employment and health care. This legislation is more important now than ever. By repeatedly changing regulations to exclude TGNC people from protections against discrimination in health care, the Trump administration has embarked on a campaign to effectively erase them. GENDA is essential to ensuring gender equity in New York State.

Conversion therapy is a harmful and widely discredited form of ‘treatment’ that aims to change an individual’s sexual orientation. There is absolutely no place for it in New York health care or anywhere else—it is insulting, discriminatory, and dangerous to the LGBTQ community. Conversion therapy is already banned in 14 states and DC. This law will prohibit mental health professionals from practicing conversion therapy with patients under the age of 18, which provides critical protection to youth against this destructive practice. At Amida Care, we believe that everyone should be free to live their lives authentically.

These measures come at a critical moment in New York’s effort to end the HIV epidemic. The state continues to see a decline in new HIV diagnoses, but that progress is threatened by federal efforts to remove patient protections and basic rights for LGBTQ Americans, who already experience significant health disparities and disproportionately high rates of HIV. By advancing these two measures today, we’re one step closer to making New York a safer, more compassionate place for the LGBTQ community.”

Amida Care Inc. is a not-for-profit health plan that specializes in providing comprehensive health coverage and coordinated care to New Yorkers with chronic conditions, including HIV and behavioral health disorders, and people who are of transgender experience or 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.