



For Immediate Release

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Amida Care Supports Governor Andrew Cuomo's Actions to Expand Medicaid to Inmates 30 Days Before Release

New York, NY (August 16, 2019) – Doug Wirth, president and CEO of Amida Care, New York's largest not-for-profit Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan, released the following statement in response to Governor Andrew Cuomo's request for Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to expand Medicaid to incarcerated New Yorkers with substance abuse diagnoses, HIV/AIDS, and certain other conditions, 30 days before their scheduled release:

“Governor Andrew Cuomo's request to CMS to expand Medicaid to incarcerated New Yorkers will go a long way towards ensuring that individuals exiting the criminal justice system are connected to care upon release. For individuals living with HIV/AIDS, those with a history of substance use, and other chronic conditions, this measure provides critical support to ensure that they are able to take control of their health. For people living with HIV, continuing to receive the treatment they need to become virally suppressed means that they are unable to transmit HIV to others, which is a key component of the NYS Blueprint to End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic.”

“We know that people with criminal justice involvement are more likely to experience interruptions in treatment, face discrimination in health care settings, and struggle to access the medications they need to be well. By expanding Medicaid coverage to take effect a full 30 days before release, New York is doing its part to help people transition and reintegrate into their communities, which also makes it less likely that they'll end up back in prison. Health care is a basic human right, and we urge CMS to grant this waiver to help make New York a healthier, more just community.”

According to data recently released by the New York City Health Department, people with a history of criminal justice involvement have higher rates of chronic and mental health conditions, infectious diseases, and substance use than the general population. People with a history of criminal justice involvement can face complex challenges in accessing health care, which is why removing barriers to care is so important.

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 chronic 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.