

Amida Care Celebrates 20 Years Serving New Yorkers Affected by HIV

Amida Care provides gender-affirming care, PrEP, hepatitis C treatment and more.

August 10, 2023 By Laura Schmidt

New York City's largest Medicaid Special Needs health plan, Amida Care, which specializes in comprehensive [health coverage](#) for people with HIV, celebrates its 20th anniversary this month.

Founded in 2003 by community-based HIV/AIDS providers, the nonprofit currently serves more than 9,000 New Yorkers and has been instrumental in efforts to end the HIV epidemic. Amida Care works in partnership with its members, or clients, prioritizing their feedback to best address their needs and serve as a bridge between members and providers.

"Two decades ago, no one believed that seven community-based health care organizations with no experience with Medicaid managed care could launch a health plan. But thanks to the vision of our provider founders, we have been able to help thousands of New Yorkers live healthy, fulfilling lives by creating an innovative model of care that puts the needs of people impacted by HIV first," said Doug Wirth, president and CEO of Amida Care, in [a news release](#).

It's our anniversary! We're celebrating 20 years of service to New Yorkers! Since the visionary plan by community-based [#HIV](#) service providers that formed us, we have grown into our state's largest [#Medicaid](#) managed care Special Needs Health Plan. More at: <https://t.co/XieFoKpct9> pic.twitter.com/MJJ6833VXz
— Amida Care (@AmidaCareNY) [August 7, 2023](#)

By working with Medicaid—a health insurance plan for low-income and disabled Americans—Amida Care is able to provide communities most impacted by HIV with access to lifesaving care and resources. [Amida Care](#) offers primary care, [gender-affirming procedures](#) and mental health support services. What’s more, the health plan covers [PrEP \(pre-exposure prophylaxis\)](#) and [PEP \(post-exposure prophylaxis\)](#), the pills and long-acting injectable that prevent HIV.

In the past 20 years, according to its press statement, Amida Care has reached several milestones, including:

- Achieving viral suppression for 80% of members living with HIV, an increase from 60% in the early 2000s;
- Curing over 1,200 members of hepatitis C, a leading cause of death among people living with HIV; and
- Helping over 60% of transgender, gender non-conforming and non-binary members access gender-affirming care, including surgeries, within three years of membership.

Amida Care was one of the first plans to advocate for gender-affirming care, including hormone therapy and surgeries, as well as hepatitis C testing and treatment, which is now covered for all Medicaid members.

Two thirds of Amida Care members are living with significant mental health issues, 40% have experienced homelessness at least once since their HIV diagnosis and 90% have a history of substance abuse. Black and Latino members make up 55% and 32% of Amida Care’s current membership, respectively, highlighting the disproportionate impact HIV has on communities of color.

“Over 20 years, we have grown and evolved,” Wirth said, “but our commitment to addressing health disparities, ending HIV, breaking down barriers to care for marginalized communities and addressing racism as a public health crisis remains steadfast.”