



April 2020

This newsletter alerts providers to upcoming changes and other information or procedural updates from Empower.

This Issue:

- Coronavirus
- Coronavirus Provider Alerts
- April is National Autism Awareness Month
- Empower's Special Investigation Unit
- Upcoming Webinars
- Resources
- Educational Opportunities
- Important Contact Information

Empower Healthcare Solutions

P.O. Box 211446

Eagan, MN 55121

Member Services: 866-261-1286 | TTY
711

Provider Services: 855-429-1028

Fax: 888-614-5168

Website: www.getempowerhealth.com

Coronavirus

What is Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. People may have mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

How does COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is a new disease and we are still learning how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

(continued on page 2)



How can employers protect their workers?

Keeping the workplace safe

Stay abreast of guidance from federal, state, or local health agencies, and consider how to incorporate those recommendations and resources into workplace-specific plans.

Practice good hygiene

- Stop handshaking—use other noncontact methods of greeting
- Clean hands at the door and schedule regular hand washing reminders by email
- Create habits and reminders to avoid touching their faces and cover coughs and sneezes
- Disinfect surfaces like doorknobs, tables, desks, and handrails regularly
- Increase ventilation by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning

Be careful with meetings and travel

- Use videoconferencing for meetings when possible
- When not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces
- Consider adjusting or postponing large meetings or gatherings
- Assess the risks of business travel

Employee's should stay home if...

- They are feeling sick
- If they have a sick family member in their home

Avoid crowding

- Use booking and scheduling to stagger customer flow
- Use online transactions where possible
- Consider limiting attendance at larger gatherings

For transportation

- Keep windows open when possible
- Increase ventilation
- Regularly disinfect surfaces

For more information regarding workplace safety go to <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

For updates on Coronavirus 2019 check Empower's website [here](#) and Empower's [Facebook](#) page.

Excerpts: Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for Covid-19—OSHA.gov; Resources for Businesses and Employers—CDC.gov

Coronavirus Provider Alerts

Empower is taking steps to prepare for the unique challenges related to the developing COVID-19 outbreak and resulting declared state of emergency in Arkansas.

The uncertainty posed by a public health emergency can cause stress and anxiety among many individuals.

Therefore, core to our plan is ensuring that members have access to routine and emergency services.

The following is a list of alerts related to COVID-19:

- [COVID-19 Lab Fees 3-26-20](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus - Behavioral Assistance 3.24.20](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus - New Modifier for Supplemental Support Services 3.24.20](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus - PT, OT, ST Telehealth 3.24.20](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus - BH Telehealth 3.20.20](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus - Physician Telehealth 3.20.20](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus - Developmental Disability CES Waiver Billing 3.16.20](#)
- ♦ [COVID-19 CMS Codes 3.13.20](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus - Provider Voluntary Self-Report 3.13.20](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus 3.12.20](#)

As we execute our plan, we will keep you updated via alerts, our [website](#), and our [Facebook](#) page. Please click [here](#) for the most up to date information regarding COVID-19.

Empower has a page dedicated to Coronavirus/COVID-19 updates. Go to our website and click on “Coronavirus”.

For Up to Date and Additional Key Information regarding COVID-19:

CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

Arkansas Department of Health

<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/>

Provider Closing due to COVID-19

Empower needs your assistance to ensure members have necessary access to needed care. Please report the following to empower.network@empowerhcs.com due to COVID-19:

- Any closings
- Changes in open or closing times
- Implementing special or extended services





April is National Autism Awareness Month

The first National Autism Awareness Month was declared by the Autism Society in April 1970.

The aim of this month is to educate the public about autism. Autism is a complex mental condition and developmental disability, characterized by difficulties in the way a person communicates and interacts with other people. Autism can be present from birth or form during early childhood (typically within the first three years). Autism is a lifelong developmental disability with no single known cause.

Briefly, these characteristics include:

- ◆ Lack of empathy
- ◆ Lack of speech
- ◆ Lack of social skills
- ◆ Doesn't like physical contact
- ◆ Doesn't like sudden changes to their environment
- ◆ Or changes to behavior and routine.

Autism is widespread, awareness about this condition is NOT. In the United States, autism affects 1 in every 110 children. National Autism Awareness Month aims to make the public more aware about this widespread disability and the issues which arise in the autism community. As about 1 in 150 people in America have autism, the chances are that you know someone with this disability. A better informed public will be more empathetic and supportive towards people with autism.

For more information on National Autism Awareness Month visit <https://www.autism-society.org/get-involved/national-autism-awareness-month/>

Empower's Special Investigations Unit

Empower's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) reviews and monitors claims and billing practices of providers by conducting audits to ensure compliance with Federal and State documentation and billing requirements, as well as to monitor the providers for fraud, waste, and abuse (FWA).

The SIU is required by law to recover any identified overpayment. Providers are expected to follow the Empower Provider Handbook and all requirements set forth by the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Medical Services (DMS).

SIU activities, are initiated by referrals, or identified by, the SIU team that indicated potential FWA. The SIU receives referrals from internal and external sources such as:

- Government agencies – federal, state and other regulatory agencies
- Empower staff
- Providers
- Members
- Empower's compliance and ethics hotline

(Continued on Page 5)

SIU Audit Process

All referrals are reviewed and evaluated by Empower SIU staff to determine the appropriate next steps. Potential actions may include:

- Accepting the referral for investigation and conducting claims data analysis and/or an audit of the provider's records
- Sending the referral to a more appropriate Empower department for review and handling
- Closing the referral without investigation because the referral does not represent a potential FWA issue or the associated risk is low.

When conducting an SIU audit, the Auditor assigned to the case will review the provider's claims data for suspicious billing activity and select a random or targeted sample of member claims for audit. The provider will be notified of the audit and the request for member records.

The auditor will review the records submitted by the provider and determine if the services were documented and billed properly per Arkansas Medicaid rules and other applicable requirements.

Upon completion of the audit, the provider will receive an audit report detailing the audit findings. If the provider disagrees with the findings and requests an appeal, the appeal will be reviewed by the Empower SIU Appeals Committee and the provider will be informed of the Committee's final decision.

When billing and/or documentation errors are identified, the following corrective actions may be required:

- Submitting a Corrective Action Plan identifying the steps the provider will take to correct the deficiencies
- Repaying the claims that were not adequately supported or billed correctly
- Referring the provider to Empower's Credentialing Committee for potential contract termination or suspension of referrals

If fraud is suspected or confirmed during the audit, the SIU will follow regulatory and contractual requirements, which may include notifying Arkansas Medicaid and/or law enforcement.

Reporting FWA

To report Fraud, Waste or Abuse to Empower's SIU:

Call the Empower Compliance and Ethics Hotline at 844-487-0329

Website: <https://empower.ethix360.com/>

Email: SIU@beaconhealthoptions.com

Mail: Empower Healthcare Solutions, LLC
PO BOX 211446
Eagan, MN 55121



Upcoming Webinars

Provider Orientation—This webinar will cover Empower related information including provider responsibilities, provider resources, member rights and responsibilities, eligibility, covered services, utilization management, care coordination, claims submission, quality improvement, the Empower portal, and more.

Provider Orientation		
Tuesday, April 21, 2020	10:00 am—11:30 am	Register Here!
Tuesday, May 19, 2020	10:00 am—11:30 am	Register Here!

Provider Portal: Prior Authorization and Claims—This webinar will cover a portal overview including member eligibility, claims submission, covered services, utilization management, submitting a prior authorization, and reimbursement methods.

Provider Portal: Prior Authorization and Claims		
Wednesday, April 15, 2020	11:00 am—12:30 pm	Register Here!
Wednesday, May 6, 2020	11:00 am—12:30 pm	Register Here!

Open Forum Calls— This forum is intended to answer questions about Empower claims, utilization management, and care coordination. Please remember this will be an open forum so you cannot reveal PHI (i.e. Empower ID, member name and/or date of birth, etc).

Open Forum Calls		
Every other Monday, April 13, 2020 through July 6, 2020	12:00 pm—12:30 pm	Join Here!

Resources:

Stay in the know with these useful links!

Empower Resource Links:

- [Provider Alerts](#)
- [Provider Billing FAQ](#)
- [Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Clinical Practice Guidelines](#)
- [Provider FAQ](#)
- [Empower Ethix360](#)
- [Provider Handbook](#)

Arkansas DHS Resource Links:

- [DMS: PASSE](#)
- [Office of PASSE Ombudsman](#)
- [PASSE Information for Providers](#)
- [Provider Enrollment](#)

Educational Opportunities:

The following is a list of available trainings offered by Empower Healthcare Solutions:

- Community and Employment Supports (CES) Waiver: An expansive overview of services, descriptions, and codes
- Assisting Providers with Independent Assessments at Empower
- Care Coordination Overview
- Person Centered Service Plan
- Incident Reporting for Empower Providers
- Empower Provider Orientation
- InterQual and Medical Necessity Evaluations
- Arkansas InterQual Inpatient Provider Training
- Provider Portal: Prior Authorization and Claims
- Psychiatric Residential Treatment and Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF)
- Inpatient Authorizations: Navigating Identifi and Medical Necessity
- Outpatient Services and Home and Community Based Services
- Personal Care Services
- Overview of Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, and Day Treatment Services
- Developmental Disability Services

To access a training slide deck click [here](#) and go to Educational Opportunities.

For more information or to schedule a training for your organization, please contact empowerhealthcaresolutionsPR@empowerhcs.com



Important Contact Information

Provider Services

855-429-1028

Member Services

866-261-1286

Empower Chief Executive Officer

Robert Slattery

Office: 501-859-6552

Robert.Slattery@empowerhcs.com

Cell: 423-838-8830

Empower SVP Health Management Services

Sylvia Sherrill

Cell: 423-243-8199

Sylvia.Sherrill@empowerhcs.com

Vice President of Account Partnerships

Nicole May

Office: 501-707-0951

Nicole.May@empowerhcs.com

Vice President of Clinical Services

Melissa Ortega

Office: 501-707-0919

Melissa.Ortega@empowerhcs.com

Assistant Vice President of Operations

Jennifer Daniel-Brezee

Cell: 501-607-8273

Jennifer.Daniel-Brezee@empowerhcs.com

Vice President, Medical Director

Brad Diner

Office: 501-707-0936

Brad.Diner@empowerhcs.com

Clinical Director, Children and Adolescents

Jamie Ables

Office: 501-707-0961

Jamie.Ables@empowerhcs.com

Clinical Director, Adults

Stacie Williams

Office: 501-707-0930

Stacie.Williams@empowerhcs.com

Clinical Director, Developmental Disabilities

Harold Watts

Office: 501-707-0925

Harold.Watts@empowerhcs.com

Manager Clinical Services UM

LaTosha Brown

Office: 501-707-0969

LaTosha.Brown@empowerhcs.com

Assistant Vice President of Compliance

Scott Gartenman

Cell: 501-529-1204

Scott.Gartenman@empowerhcs.com

Quality Director AR PASSE

Suzanne Murray

Cell: 803-608-7606

Suzanne.Murray@empowerhcs.com

Provider Relations Managers

Shelly Rhodes

Office: 501-707-0920

Shelly.Rhodes@empowerhcs.com

Janna Vandiver

Office: 501-707-0928

Janna.Vandiver@empowerhcs.com

Debbie McGilton

Cell: 501-353-5796

Debbie.Mcgilton@empowerhcs.com

Care Coordination

carecoordination@empowerhcs.com

Provider Complaints and Grievances

providercomplaints@empowerhcs.com

Contracting

empower.network@empowerhcs.com

Incident Reporting

incident.reporting@empowerhcs.com

Provider Relations

empowerhealthcaresolutionsPR@empowerhcs.com

Special Investigations Unit

SIU@beaconhealthoptions.com

Utilization Management

utilizationmanagement@empowerhcs.com



To visit our website please go to:

www.getempowerhealth.com

On our website you will find:

- Clinical Practice Guidelines
- Contracting with Empower
- Cultural Competency Plan
- Forms and Resources
- Incident Reporting
- Provider Alerts
- Provider FAQ
- Provider Billing FAQ
- Provider Handbook
- Provider Portal
- Pharmacy Provider Guideline

Please feel free to share this newsletter.

If you would like to receive the newsletter, provider alerts, or training information please register for the provider distribution list at the following link.

[Provider Signup](#)

Division of Medical Services
(DMS)

toll-free numbers:

Beneficiary Eligibility
800-482-8988

Beneficiary Coverage
800-482-5431

Office of PASSE Ombudsman
844-843-7351