



August 2020

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## Considerations for Healthcare in Schools

### Operating Schools During COVID-19

As some communities in the United States open K-12 schools, CDC offers the following considerations for ways in which schools can help protect students, teachers, administrators, and staff and slow the spread of COVID-19. Schools can determine, in collaboration with [state and local health officials](#) to the extent possible, whether and how to implement these considerations while adjusting to meet the unique needs and circumstances of the local community. Implementation should be guided by what is feasible, practical, acceptable, and tailored to the needs of each community. School-based health facilities may refer to CDC's [Guidance for U.S. Healthcare Facilities](#) and may find it helpful to reference the [Ten Ways Healthcare Systems Can Operate Effectively During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). These considerations are meant to supplement—**not replace**—any state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which schools must comply.

For more information go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>.

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## Mental Health Services in the Schools

COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, is a global pandemic that has shut down much of society, including many schools. The stress associated with this virus may understandably increase worry and anxiety in students, staff, families, and communities. The National Center for School Mental Health, wants to support you as you protect your health and the health of those around you.

To that end, they have accumulated resources and tips for you to use and share with others in your networks. They will continue to update these resources as they learn more. COVID-19 OBSSR Research Tools can be found at the following link. [https://www.nlm.nih.gov/dr2/COVID-19\\_BSSR\\_Research\\_Tools.pdf](https://www.nlm.nih.gov/dr2/COVID-19_BSSR_Research_Tools.pdf)

## Head back-to-school with 4 Be's for mental health

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused much stress and uncertainty for students, parents, teachers and staff. "For students and the adults who care for them, the desire is so strong to have our lives return to normal, which also involves schooling," says Craig Sawchuk, Ph.D., a Mayo Clinic psychologist. "School is one of the most important places that we learn and grow intellectually, socially and emotionally." Whether classes meet in person or online, or use a hybrid approach, one thing is certain: Mental health is a vital part of the equation, Dr. Sawchuk says. To work on a healthy mindset for this school year, it may help to actively focus on these 4 Be's, Dr. Sawchuk suggests:

- **Be flexible.** Stay open to the possibility that the format of schooling might change over the course of the year.
- **Be optimistic.** Maintain a positive attitude about learning new ways to learn.
- **Be supportive.** Contribute to keeping the learning environment as safe as possible by practicing social distancing, masking and proper hand hygiene.
- **Be kind.** Be patient with each other as everyone works toward a common goal of ending the pandemic.

As schools determine their approaches, students will need varying behavioral health support based on their age and the class format, says Dr. Sawchuk.

Some people may struggle with more significant mental health difficulties, and Dr. Sawchuk encourages those who need help to talk to their primary care provider to locate local mental health resources.

"Effective treatments for mental health conditions do exist," Dr. Sawchuk says. "Please reach out for help, if needed."

Excerpts: <http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/COVID-19/> ; <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/head-back-to-school-with-4-bes-for-mental-health/>

## August is National Immunization Awareness Month

August is designated as the National Immunization Month which is an awareness campaign that aims to highlight the importance of immunizations across the different stages of life. This year, the National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC) is responsible for coordinating the different activities. This is an ideal time to inform the public about up-to-date vaccines they need before going back to school and in order to plan ahead for the future. The awareness campaign focuses on a specific population each week. The first week is for preteens and teens while the second week is for pregnant women. The third week is for adults while the fourth week is for infants and children.

Here is a list of the important information in regards to vaccination that everyone should know during certain ages:

<https://www.4029tv.com/article/arkansas-teachers-group-releases-results-of-covid-19-survey/33337647#>

[https://www.aeaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/AEA\\_COVID\\_SURVEY7.15\\_20.pdf](https://www.aeaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/AEA_COVID_SURVEY7.15_20.pdf)

[http://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/public/userfiles/Communications/Ready/ADE\\_Response\\_Levels\\_for\\_On-Site\\_Learning\\_RV5.pdf](http://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/public/userfiles/Communications/Ready/ADE_Response_Levels_for_On-Site_Learning_RV5.pdf)

Making time to talk with parents about vaccines during the well-child visit may be challenging.

Here's some help: CDC, AAP, and AAFP created these materials to help you assess parents' needs, identify the role they want to play in making decisions for their child's health, and then communicate in ways that meet their needs. These resources are collectively called *Provider Resources for Vaccine Conversations with Parents*.

Help strengthen communication between you and parents, and get information about:

[Talking to Parents about Vaccines](#)

[Understanding Vaccines and Vaccine Safety](#)

[Immunization Schedules](#)

[Creating a Culture of Immunization within your Practice](#)

Download and print these materials to help parents understand vaccine benefits and risks.

[If You Choose Not to Vaccinate Your Child, Understand the Risks and Responsibilities](#)

[Vaccine - Preventable Diseases Fact Sheets](#)

[Vaccine Resources to Share with Parents](#)

Excerpts: National Immunization Awareness Month: Increase your Awareness <https://www.consumerhealthdigest.com/health-awareness/national-immunization-awareness-month.html>; <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/conversations/index.html>





## CES Waiver Codes

The 2020 Community and Employment Supports (CES) Waiver codes, modifiers, and rates went into effect on April 1, 2020. The previous waiver codes and rates sunset on June 30, 2020 and will no longer be available for use effective July 1, 2020. Prior authorization requests should be submitted for all Empower waiver members.

Authorizations may be submitted through the portal at [www.getempowerhealth.com](http://www.getempowerhealth.com).

If you have additional questions about using the new codes and rates, please email

[UtilizationManagement@empowerhcs.com](mailto:UtilizationManagement@empowerhcs.com).

## Avoid Claim Denials and Rejections

Empower is committed to paying claims appropriately and timely. In the future there will be hard validation against the state file, so please ensure the following information is updated with Arkansas Medicaid and Empower.

- Provider name (as noted on current W-9 form)
- National Provider Identifier (NPI) –does not apply to atypical providers
- Medicaid Identification Number – does apply to atypical providers
- Tax Identification Number (TIN)
- Taxonomy code
- Physical location address
- Billing name and address (as noted on current W-9 form)

Please reach out to [Arkansas Medicaid Provider Enrollment](#) to ensure your information is up to date.

## Provider Closings 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](mailto:empower.network@empowerhcs.com) due to COVID-19:

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

## 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:

- ◆ [Coronavirus Use of Telemedicine Services for Substance Abuse Assessment 7.7.20](#)
- ◆ [Use of T2020 UA Supplemental Support Services 6.12.20](#)
- ◆ [Use of Well Checks for EIDT and ADDT providers during COVID-19 Outbreak 6.1.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Telemedicine Services to be Provided by FQHC and RHC 5.8.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Provider Alert Summary 4.27.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Additional Services Ready to Bill 4.23.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus-FQHC & RHC Flexibilities in Service Provision 4.21.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus-Additional Services Ready to Bill 4.17.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Services Ready to Bill 4.14.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Telemedicine Mental Health Diagnosis 4.14.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Telemedicine Master Treatment Plan Services 4.10.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Telemedicine Marital and Family Behavioral Health Counseling 4.10.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Telemedicine Crisis Intervention 4.10.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Mobile Clinics and COVID-19 Screenings 4.7.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - EIDT/ADDT Nursing 4.7.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Autism EPSDT 4.7.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - PT, OT, ST Assistant Telehealth 4.3.20](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus - Nurse Practitioners Telehealth 4.3.20](#)
- ◆ [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.

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 Alerts

### Psychiatric Inpatient Providers and Hospitals 7.31.20

Psychiatric Inpatient Providers (including Psychiatric admissions to Hospitals)

Empower Healthcare Solutions has updated the billing codes for Psychiatric Inpatient services to align with CMS guidelines. Empower will begin using the CMS codes below effective **October 1, 2020**. For claims to be processed timely and with no errors, please use the codes listed below when billing Empower for Psychiatric Inpatient services.

It is a Medicaid requirement that the appropriate condition code be submitted on the claim for private room justification.

Service/Bed Type	Current Code Until 09-30-2020	CMS Codes Effective 10-01-2020
<b>Acute Inpatient &lt;21</b>	0114	0114—Private; 0124—semi private
<b>Acute Inpatient &gt;21</b>	0154	0114—Private; 0124—semi private
<b>Psych Residential-Acute Hospital</b>	0124	1000—General Psychiatric
<b>Psych Residential Free-Standing</b>	1001	1001

### Extension of T2020 UA Supplemental Support Services (Correction) 8.6.20

The use of T2020 UA as a supplement to Supportive Living H2016 has been extended until September 1, 2020. T2020 UA is available in the new model as described in the Waiver Code Descriptions found [here](#).

Providers can use existing authorizations and add the Z1 modifier, as noted below, for any hours related to COVID. An extension of Benefits (EOB) can be requested.

H2016 UF Z1 Supportive Living 1:1 Staffing Level 1

H2016 UH Z1 Supportive Living 1:1 Staffing Level 2

H2016 U1 UQ Z1 Supportive Living Shared Staffing Level 1: 2-4 members

H2016 U3 UQ Z1 Supportive Living Shared Staffing Level 2: 2-4 members

H2016 U5 US Z1 Supportive Living – Shared Staffing (Monitoring for Health and Safety) - More than 4 but less than 10 members



## Provider Alerts (Continued)

### Pain Management Codes 7.31.20

Effective September 1, 2020, Empower will be lifting the prior authorization requirements for some pain management codes. All other pain management codes will continue to require a prior authorization. It is the responsibility of the provider to only bill for services they are approved for and certified to provide.

For a list of codes that have a benefit limit of 6 per year with an extension of benefits allowed and a list of nerve block codes that should not require a PA if the POS is a hospital. Click [here](#).

### Empower's SIU—News

#### Documentation Requirements – What is required?

Empower SIU audits provider documentation to ensure compliance with the Empower Provider Handbook, the Arkansas Medicaid Provider Manual, and any other applicable requirements.

Per the Empower Provider Handbook, providers must keep accurate and complete medical records for Empower members. Medical records are defined as, “the complete, comprehensive member records including, but not limited to, x-rays, laboratory tests, results, examinations and notes, accessible at the site of the member’s participating primary care physician or other provider, that documents all medical services received by the member, including inpatient, ambulatory, ancillary, and emergency care, prepared in accordance with all applicable state rules and regulations, and signed by the medical professional rendering the services.”

For more information on medical record standards and documentation requirements, please refer to the Empower Provider Handbook and the Arkansas Medicaid Provider Manual.

Please note – failure to adequately document billed services may result in the recoupment of funds or other adverse actions.

Empower Provider Handbook:

<https://www.getempowerhealth.com/>

Arkansas Medicaid Provider Documents:

<https://medicaid.mmis.arkansas.gov/provider/docs/docs.aspx>

### Provider Satisfaction Survey

Empower Healthcare Solutions will launch its first Provider Satisfaction Survey in September 2020. SPH Analytics (SPH), a research firm, has been contracted by Empower to administer the survey. This Provider Satisfaction Survey will be conducted with PCPs and medical and behavioral health physicians in the Empower network to measure their satisfaction with the health plan. SPH includes both physicians and office managers in the survey because research indicates that both have unique experiences working with the health plan that they can share and each perspective is important to capture.

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# Provider Satisfaction Survey (Continued)

## Provider Satisfaction Survey Timeline

The Provider Satisfaction Survey process is expected to begin September 1, 2020. Providers will receive the survey, a cover letter, and an invitation to take the survey electronically. The communication will include a URL link to complete the survey via the internet. For those who do not respond initially, a replacement survey letter will be sent. For those who do not complete the survey electronically, surveyors will then make telephone calls (up to three attempts) in order to complete the survey by telephone.

Survey Activities	Timeline	Approximate Dates ± 2 weeks
<b>Initial Survey</b> Survey, cover letter, and invitation to take the survey via internet is mailed.		9/01/2020
<b>Replacement Survey</b> Survey, cover letter, and invitation to take the survey via internet is mailed to non-responders.	20 days following Initial Survey	9/20/2020
<b>Telephone Interviews</b> Telephone calls to conduct survey via telephone interview for those who did not respond to internet-based survey	20 days following Replacement Survey Continue for 30 days	10/10/2020 through 11/10/2020
<b>Survey Data Collection Ends</b>		11/10/2020
<b>Survey Results Published</b> On the Empower website and in the Empower Provider Newsletter		Winter 2020-2021

## Provider Satisfaction Survey Tool

The SPH Provider Satisfaction Survey was developed to measure and compare the performance of health plans in key service areas among providers and office staff of the provider community. The current survey was tested and released in 2013. The survey includes 33 scaled questions, 7 demographic questions, and one open-ended question.

The Survey includes the following themes:

- Empower's Call Center Service
- Empower's Finance and Claims Processing Services
- Coordination of Care between Empower Medical and Behavioral Health Network Providers
- Utilization Management Services
- Pharmacy Services
- Provider Relations Services
- Overall Satisfaction and Loyalty

## Provider Satisfaction Survey Results

At the conclusion of the Empower Provider Satisfaction Survey, the results will be used to identify improvement opportunities and will be shared with providers, members, and Arkansas DHS. The results will be published and available via the Empower Healthcare Solutions website and provider newsletter.



## Credentialing

- Credentialing began early January 2020
- Credentialing must be completed by January 1, 2021
- Full Credentialing is required by Empower Healthcare Solutions

## Required Documentation

- Completed Application
- Completed Service Location Addendum – One per service location
- Copies of all applicable state or agency licenses
- Copy of current medical malpractice, comprehensive professional, general and/or liability insurance certificates which identifies the limits of liability and the policy period.— Document must show “Professional Liability”
- Copy of a completed W-9 form or IRS letter
- National Provider Identification
- Staff Roster (if applicable)
- Accreditation Certificates
- Other Certifications

## Credentialing for BH and DD Independent Practitioners

Beacon is contracted to provide the behavioral health credentialing functions for Empower for the following Independently Licensed Practitioners:

- Psychologists
- Independently Licensed Practitioners
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW),
- Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC),
- Licensed Marriage/Family Therapist (LMFT),
- Licensed Independent Substance Abuse Counselor (LISAC)
- Board Certified Behavioral Analysts (BCBAs)
- Independent/Non-Facility based Behavior Health APN

To credential, click [here](#) and follow the instructions.





## Credentialing for BH and DD Facilities

Beacon is contracted to provide the behavioral health and developmental credentialing functions for Empower for facilities or organizations.

Once the facility has been approved for credentialing and is contracted with Empower, or their affiliates on behalf of Empower to serve members **all licensed or certified professionals listed on the provider roster** may treat members in the facility setting.

To start the credentialing process for your facility, please reach out to

[empower.network@empowerhcs.com](mailto:empower.network@empowerhcs.com)

## Credentialing for Medical Providers

Access is contracted to provide the Medical credentialing functions for Empower for the following:

- Medical Doctors (MD)
- Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DOM)
- Nurse Practitioners (NP)
- Advanced Practice Nurse
- Physician Assistant (PA)
- Certified Nurse Midwives
- Doctor of Podiatric Medicine
- Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine
- Optometrist
- Physical Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Speech and Language Pathologist

***\*\*Note: This may not be a complete list of provider types requiring credentialing.***

To credential or for questions, please contact Annie Daniel (870) 675-8574 or [adaniell@accesshealth.services](mailto:adaniell@accesshealth.services)

## Educational Opportunities

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

- Acute and Psychiatric Residential Treatment
- 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](mailto:empowerhealthcaresolutionsPR@empowerhcs.com)

## 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, August 18, 2020	10:00 am—11:30 am	<a href="#">Register Here!</a>
Tuesday, September 15, 2020	10:00 am—11:30 am	<a href="#">Register Here!</a>

## 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](#)

## Care Coordination Helps Residents of Fifty-Six, Arkansas

In July, five care coordination team members helped out the 173 residents of Fifty-Six, Arkansas, when they found out that the town was completely out of water due to over utilization of the town reservoir. The group of care coordinators took it upon themselves to check in on members, especially the elderly and those with disabilities, who live in the nearby areas and to reach out and provide updates to city hall on a regular basis. As this was a time of particularly hot weather the team filled 2 SUV's and a pick-up truck with bottled water to provide to the residents while they waited the 10 days for a new pump and water line to be installed. Thanks to our care coordinators, Paula Frost, Shannon Riley, Brandy Beacham, Jennifer Rooney and Robert DeWar. Great job!



# Important Contact Information

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### Special Investigations Unit

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### Utilization Management

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To visit our website please go to:  
[www.getempowerhealth.com](http://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**