



March 2020

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

## This Issue:

- Drug & Alcohol Facts
- Providers must be enrolled in the Arkansas Medicaid Program
- Empower's Special Investigation Unit
- Provider Alert
- Educational Opportunities
- Upcoming Webinars
- Resources
- 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](http://www.getempowerhealth.com)

## Drug & Alcohol Facts Week is March 30—April 5

*National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week®* (NDAFW), an annual health observance week, connects teens with experts to *SHATTER THE MYTHS®* about drugs and alcohol, with more than 2000 local events every year. National Drugs & Alcohol Chat Day, held during NDAFW, provides an online opportunity for thousands of students from around the country to communicate directly with NIDA scientists in a Web Chat, asking questions about drugs and alcohol. Drug and alcohol facts week is March 30—April 5, 2020. For more information regarding this program see the following website: <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week>.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens. In the past few months, thousands of people have developed serious lung illnesses after vaping (using e-cigarettes). Some people have died as a result.

As of February 18, 2020:

- 2,807 cases of these illnesses have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The cases were reported by all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories (Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands)
- The illnesses have led to 68 deaths in 29 states and the District of Columbia

The CDC, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other organizations are investigating the connections between vaping and these illnesses and deaths.

In the meantime, the FDA has issued these warnings:

1. Don't use any vaping products of any kind bought online, on the street, or from family and friends.

(Continued on Page 2)

2. Don't modify (change) any vaping products purchased in stores, and don't use THC oil.

The CDC recommends:

1. Don't use any e-cigarette (vaping) products—particularly products that contain THC.
2. Don't add vitamin E acetate to any vaping products.
3. Don't add any other substances not intended by the manufacturer to products.

For more information on vaping related illnesses and deaths go to <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/blog/post/vaping-related-illnesses-and-deaths-what-we-know-so-far>

### What are the negative consequences of underage drinking?

There are increased risks and a range of negative consequences related to underage drinking. It is dangerous because it:

- **Causes many deaths.**

On average, alcohol plays a role in the deaths of 4,358 young people under age 21 every year. The deaths include:

- 1,580 deaths from car crashes
- 1,269 from murders
- 245 from alcohol poisoning, falls, burns, and drowning
- 492 from suicides

- **Causes many injuries.**

Drinking alcohol can cause young people to have accidents and get hurt. In 2011 alone, about 188,000 people under age 21 visited an emergency room for injuries related to drinking alcohol.

- **Increases the risk of physical and sexual assault.**

Young people under age 21 who drink are more likely to carry out or be the victim of a physical or sexual assault after drinking than others their age who do not drink.

- **Can lead to other problems.**

Drinking can cause teens to have trouble in school or with the law. Teens who drink are more likely to use other drugs than teens who don't.

For more information on consequences of underage drinking go to <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/alcohol>.

### Opioid addiction

One of the biggest challenges our country faces today is the damage that opioid addiction inflicts on individuals, their families, and in the communities where they live.

The current opioid addiction epidemic has been termed the worst drug crisis in American history by a near-endless number of news outlets. Opioid addiction is a major problem for people across the US.

As of 2012 (which is the last available year in this particular dataset), there were 12 states in the US, that had more opioid prescriptions written, than human beings living within the state in question.

America's opioid addiction epidemic is a national problem. The opioid epidemic also plagues individuals of all ages—even babies. More information on this article can be found at the following website.

<https://clearskyibogaine.com/american-opioid-addiction-epidemic/>

**Excerpts:** National drug alcohol facts week; Addiction the 5 most commonly abused drugs by teens; American opioid addiction epidemic ; National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens







## Empower providers need to be enrolled in Arkansas Medicaid

Any Provider seeking reimbursement from Empower must be enrolled as a valid/active Arkansas Medicaid Provider. To become an Arkansas Medicaid Provider, please visit AR Medicaid Provider Enrollment by clicking here. <https://medicaid.mmis.arkansas.gov/Provider/Enroll/Enroll.aspx>

## 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 (DHS/DMS).

SIU activities are initiated by referrals, which are concerns submitted to, or identified by, the SIU 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

### 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
- Referring 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.

## Empower's Special Investigations Unit Continued

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

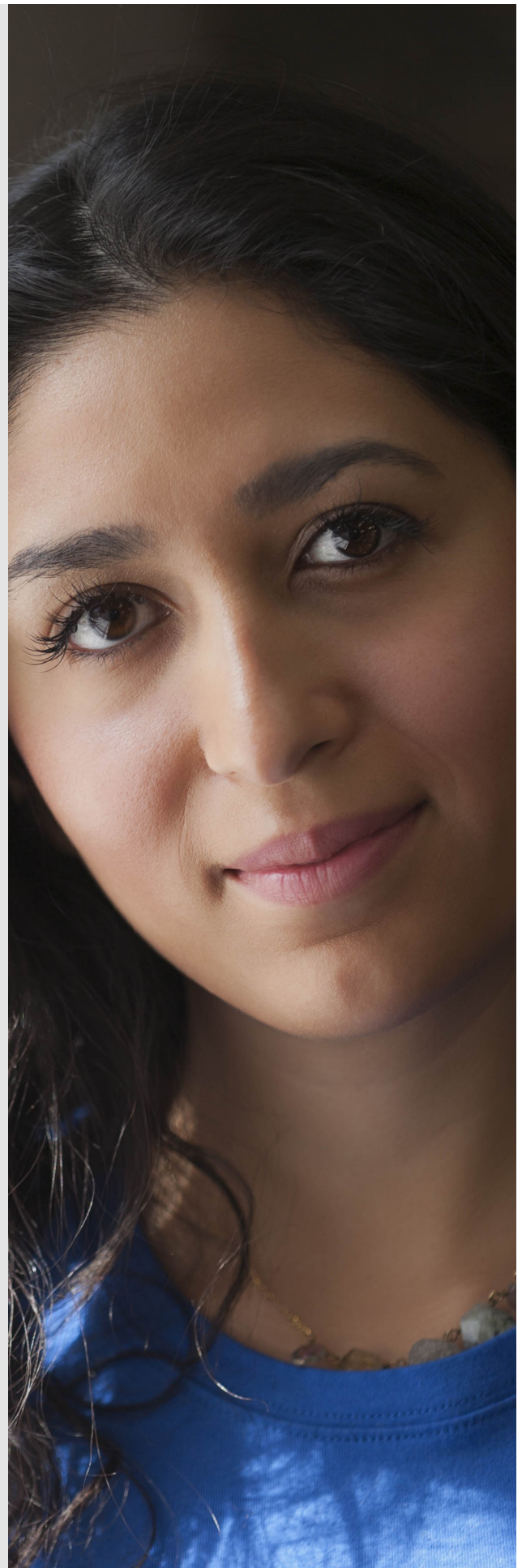
To report Fraud, Waste or Abuse to Empower's SIU:

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

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

Email: [SIU@beaconhealthoptions.com](mailto:SIU@beaconhealthoptions.com)

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





## Provider Alert

### Billing Physical and Occupational Therapy

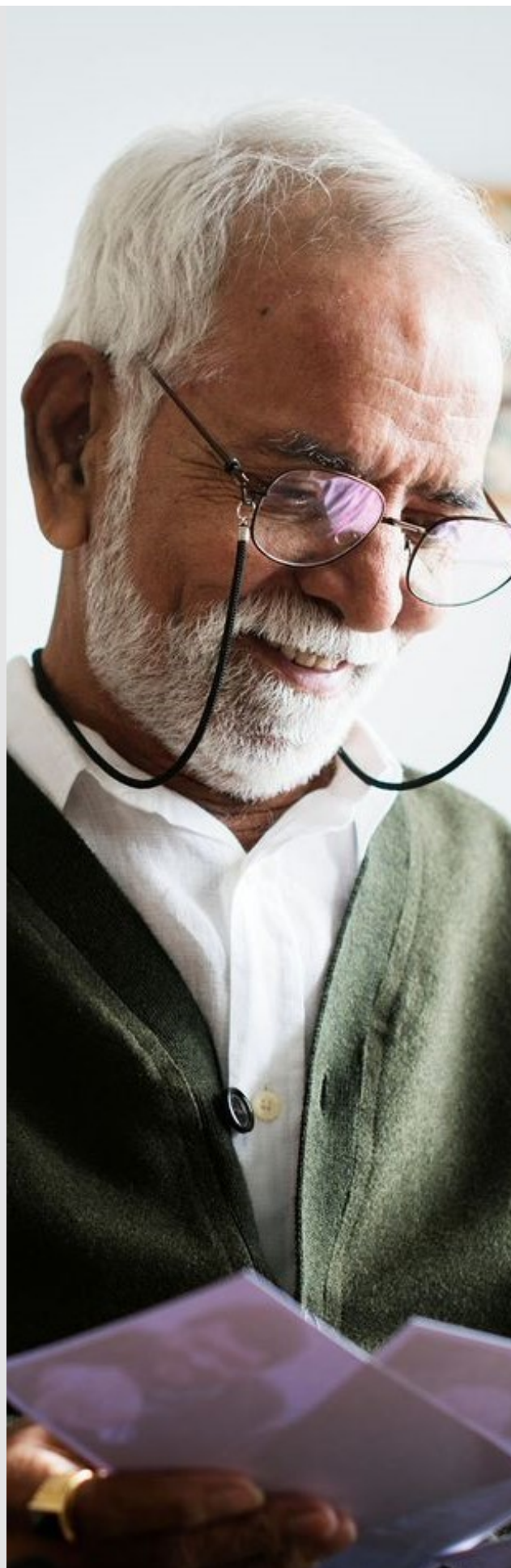
After a review of ongoing issues and concerns expressed by Physical and Occupational therapy providers, Empower has determined a need to lift certain system based edits in order to allow providers to bill for the full services rendered. The review included ongoing discussion with Arkansas Department of Human Services on expected changes to their billing and fee schedule and will align us with the policies of Arkansas Medicaid from March 1, 2019 through current time.

Claims submitted for Physical and Occupational Therapy evaluations from 3/1/19 to present, which received payment based on the proposed Arkansas Medicaid Occupational, Physical, and Speech Therapy Services Fee Schedule, will be reprocessed with the corresponding fee and allowable units shown below without additional provider intervention.

Original claims submitted with more than one (1) unit billed, will be reprocessed by Empower to allow the units indicated below. If the previously submitted claim was only billed for one (1) unit and the provider determines that additional services were provided, please submit a "Corrected" claim. Directions for how to submit a corrected claim can be found on Empower's website through the billing FAQ resource found [here](#).

PT	Current	Current	Current	Allowed*
97161	\$49.44	1 unit = 20 mins	Max 2 units	Allow 4 units/per day/ only 4 max per year
97162	\$74.16	1 unit = 30 mins	Max 2 units	Allow 3 units/per day – max 3 per year – max 197.76
97163	\$98.88	1 unit = 45 mins	Max 2 units	Allow 2 units/per day/ max 2 per year
97164	\$49.44	1 unit = 30 mins	Max 2 units Re-eval	Allow 4 units/per day/ only 4 max per year
OT				
97165	\$49.44	1 unit = 30 mins	Max 2 units	Allow 4 units/per day/ only 4 max per year
97166	\$74.16	1 unit = 45 mins	Max 2 units	Allow 3 units/per day – max 3 per year – max 197.76
97167	\$98.88	1 unit = 60mins	Max 2 units	Allow 2 units/per day/ max 2 per year
97168	\$49.44	1 unit = 30 mins	Max 2 units Re-eval	Allow 4 units/per day/ only 4 max per year

\*Effective 3-1-19



## 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](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, March 17, 2020	10:00 am—11:30 am	<a href="#">Register Here!</a>
Tuesday, April 21, 2020	10:00 am—11:30 am	<a href="#">Register Here!</a>

**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, March 18, 2020	11:00 am—12:30 pm	<a href="#">Register Here!</a>
Monday, March 30, 2020	11:00 am—12:30 pm	<a href="#">Register Here!</a>

**Assisting Providers with Independent Assessments at Empower**—This webinar will cover how to effectively manage your members' Independent Assessment data including scheduling, assessment definitions, Empower IA Events, and Saturday options.

Assisting Providers with Independent Assessments at Empower		
Thursday, March 26, 2020	11:00 am—12:00 pm	<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](#)



## 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](mailto:Robert.Slattery@empowerhcs.com)

Cell: 423-838-8830

#### Empower SVP Health Management Services

Sylvia Sherrill

Cell: 423-243-8199

[Sylvia.Sherrill@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Sylvia.Sherrill@empowerhcs.com)

#### Vice President of Account Partnerships

Nicole May

Office: 501-707-0951

[Nicole.May@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Nicole.May@empowerhcs.com)

#### Vice President of Clinical Services

Melissa Ortega

Office: 501-707-0919

[Melissa.Ortega@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Melissa.Ortega@empowerhcs.com)

#### Assistant Vice President of Operations

Jennifer Daniel-Brezee

Cell: 501-607-8273

[Jennifer.Daniel-Brezee@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Jennifer.Daniel-Brezee@empowerhcs.com)

#### Vice President, Medical Director

Brad Diner

Office: 501-707-0936

[Brad.Diner@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Brad.Diner@empowerhcs.com)

#### Clinical Director, Children and Adolescents

Jamie Ables

Office: 501-707-0961

[Jamie.Ables@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Jamie.Ables@empowerhcs.com)

#### Clinical Director, Adults

Stacie Williams

Office: 501-707-0930

[Stacie.Williams@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Stacie.Williams@empowerhcs.com)

#### Clinical Director, Developmental Disabilities

Harold Watts

Office: 501-707-0925

[Harold.Watts@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Harold.Watts@empowerhcs.com)

#### Manager Clinical Services UM

LaTosha Brown

Office: 501-707-0969

[LaTosha.Brown@empowerhcs.com](mailto:LaTosha.Brown@empowerhcs.com)

#### Assistant Vice President of Compliance

Scott Gartenman

Cell: 501-529-1204

[Scott.Gartenman@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Scott.Gartenman@empowerhcs.com)

#### Quality Director AR PASSE

Suzanne Murray

Cell: 803-608-7606

[Suzanne.Murray@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Suzanne.Murray@empowerhcs.com)

#### Provider Relations Managers

Shelly Rhodes

Office: 501-707-0920

[Shelly.Rhodes@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Shelly.Rhodes@empowerhcs.com)

Janna Vandiver

Office: 501-707-0928

[Janna.Vandiver@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Janna.Vandiver@empowerhcs.com)

Debbie McGilton

Cell: 501-353-5796

[Debbie.Mcgilton@empowerhcs.com](mailto:Debbie.Mcgilton@empowerhcs.com)

#### Care Coordination

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

#### Provider Complaints and Grievances

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

#### Contracting

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

#### Incident Reporting

[incident.reporting@empowerhcs.com](mailto:incident.reporting@empowerhcs.com)

#### Provider Relations

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

#### Special Investigations Unit

[SIU@beaconhealthoptions.com](mailto:SIU@beaconhealthoptions.com)

#### Utilization Management

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



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 member 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**