



**Division of Medical Services**

P.O. Box 1437, Slot S418, Little Rock, AR 72203-1437

P: 501.682.8292 F: 501.682.1197

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January 31, 2022

Mitch Morris, CEO  
Empower Healthcare Solutions  
1401 W Capitol Ave, Suite 430  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Mr. Morris:

Per 42 CFR § 438.66, the Arkansas Department of Human Services (“DHS”) required Empower conduct a partial readiness review due to a change in managing ownership of the PASSE as of January 2022. The Arkansas Department of Human Services (“DHS”) appreciates Empower’s participation in the readiness review process, which has been ongoing since August 2021.

As cited in DHS’s letter to Empower on December 21, 2021, the readiness review consisted of desk and onsite reviews as well as systems testing to assess the capacity of Empower to perform satisfactorily in all major operational areas:

- Staffing
- Grievances and Appeals
- Provider Network
- Provider Relations
- Member Information
- Marketing
- Business Requirements
- Quality and Utilization
- Care Coordination
- Program Integrity
- Provider Reimbursement
- Claims Management
- Enrollment and Eligibility
- Systems testing

All components of readiness review were conducted by teams from the Division of Medical Services (“DMS”) PASSE Compliance Unit, PASSE Beneficiary Support, DMS Pharmacy, DMS contracted external consultants and subject matter experts, and with the aid of staff from the Division of Disability Services (“DDS”) and Division of Adult, Aging and Behavioral Health Services (DAABHS).

In addition to completing an on-site and desk review by the aforementioned parties, Empower was required to meet Arkansas Insurance Department (“AID”) licensure and solvency requirements and demonstrate that the PASSE retained ownership of all members’ historical health data, claims history, and care coordination records and crucial systems containing this information as well as the PASSE’s credentialing verification system.

DHS also required that Empower ensure all members were provided updated contact information for all existing and newly assigned care coordinators prior to December 24, 2021 and that all open Fraud, Waste, and Abuse (FWA) cases be transferred over to Empower by December 31, 2021.

Furthermore, in the December 21<sup>st</sup> letter to Empower, DHS requested that Empower address the contracted external assessor’s major and minor findings and provide DHS with a list of pending provider network agreements, Care Coordination records (including current PCSPs and service authorization data for current members), an updated organization chart and list of PASSE ownership, and daily updates on the transfer of phone numbers and email addresses for Care Coordination and progress towards updating members on this change in information. DHS also requested that Empower set up extended hours for their call center for the first two weeks of January 2022 and provide daily updates to DHS on the transition between January 1<sup>st</sup> and January 14<sup>th</sup>.

Empower has fulfilled all of the requirements within the stipulated timeframes. DHS has determined that these requirements were met and has finalized the formal readiness review. DHS will continue to monitor Empower and will hold regular meetings with Empower for enhanced monitoring. Effective February 1, 2022, DHS will cease daily payment reviews with the PASSE. On February 7, 2022, auto assignments to the PASSE will resume.

Thank you for your cooperation throughout this process. We look forward to continuing to improve the PASSE program for our clients. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me either by phone or email at [Kristin.koenigsfest@dhs.arkansas.gov](mailto:Kristin.koenigsfest@dhs.arkansas.gov).

Sincerely,

**Kristin Koenigsfest | Arkansas Department of Human Services**

Division of Medical Services | Assistant Director

700 Main Street | Little Rock, AR 72203

501-396-6409

[Kristin.Koenigsfest@dhs.arkansas.gov](mailto:Kristin.Koenigsfest@dhs.arkansas.gov)