

## **COVID-19 and Other Communicable Diseases: Potential Quality of Care Review of Empower Provider Policies and Practices**

The Quality Management Department is launching a Potential Quality of Care (QOC) review of Empower providers' policies and practices relative to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. This review is a part of Empower's Quality Improvement process, which seeks to improve member care and treatment outcomes. Empower Staff and Providers have the responsibility to ensure the health and safety of individuals who are enrolled in the Arkansas Medicaid PASSE program and review concerns that place the health and safety of members at risk.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Empower understands that our members are at risk of contracting the disease, as we have seen increasing numbers of our members with diagnoses of COVID-19. As with any communicable disease, our members are placed at risk by many factors, some of which include residing in group homes and facilities and staff coming and going from members' homes and facilities in which they are receiving services.

With this heightened awareness and risk, Empower wants to insure that providers have:

- Policies, procedures, protocols, and mitigation plans to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (and other communicable diseases) when there is a positive identification of provider staff or members
- Policies, procedures, and plans to insure the continuation of treatment services for members when face-to-face contact is not recommended.

For the *initial* phase of this potential QOC review, Empower is sending letters requesting related policies, procedures, and plans to **Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities** and **Intermediate Care Facilities**. The letters will provide the details of the information that providers are asked to submit to Empower.

Empower appreciates the work and efforts made by our providers to ensure the health and safety of our members and your staff! Thank you!