



Empower Healthcare Solutions launches Medical Management Department

Empower Healthcare Solutions is pleased to announce the inception of the Medical Management Department. Launched in March 2025, the Medical Management Department includes, Dr. Bradley Diner, Chief Medical Officer; Amanda Smith, RN, Nurse Manager; Cynthia Ball, RN, Nurse Specialist; and Beth Bittinger, RN, Nurse Specialist. The Medical Management team oversees several projects dedicated to providing resources and education for Empower members, aiming to assist them in achieving better health outcomes.

The Chronic Conditions Management program is dedicated to enhancing the management of the chronic conditions of our members. Milliman Care Guidelines are used to assist in defining a standard of care education plan specific to a member's needs. The program's approach to chronic-condition management is interdisciplinary, ensuring integrated care delivery. With a focus on member-centered goals, the program provides education on chronic conditions and ongoing assessments to assist with goal achievement that empowers members to manage their chronic conditions at home and achieve better health outcomes.

The Transitions of Care Medical program was established and designed to enhance the support provided to members and their families during hospitalizations and

transitions between care settings. The program focuses on seamless integration and quality care management that involves close collaboration and shared decision-making between members, caregivers, and providers.

The Transitions of Care Program (TOC) partnered with the Empower Maternal Health program in April 2025 to provide ongoing support for pregnant and postpartum members. The Transitions of Care Maternal program focuses on members who are at high risk for depression during and after pregnancy. The TOC maternal nurse engages with high-risk members and provides monthly assessments and education in addition to emotional and motivational support and strives to assist members with establishing or re-establishing needed services throughout the prenatal and postpartum periods.

The Quality-of-Care program focuses on ensuring quality and appropriateness of care and services rendered by monitoring for potential quality of care issues on an ongoing basis. This monitoring is completed by reviewing provider and care coordination submitted incident reports, member reports, internal and external referrals for quality-of-care concerns. Empower has a strategic process for investigating concerns and a tracking system to assist in identifying trends that affect the quality and safety of care and services rendered.

For information or inquiries, contact Smith at Amanda.smith@empowerarkansas.com or at 501-516-8135.

Empower releases 2025 Cultural Competency Plan

Empower Healthcare Solutions (Empower) is pleased to announce the release of its 2025 Cultural Competency Plan (CCP) Evaluation and Plan Description. The evaluation, based on 2024 demographic information, aims to assess and improve healthcare quality and equity by reducing health care disparities.

The CCP and Plan Description are annual requirements by the Department of Human Services as specified in the 2023 PASSE Agreement Sections 4.8 to 4.8.4, and Section 4.2.4 and the PASSE Provider Manual Section 231.400. Empower's Quality Management (QM) department is responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the CCP. Annually, the CCP is presented and approved by Empower's Medical Quality Management Committee (MQMC).

The comprehensive evaluation provides valuable insights into the behavioral health and developmental disability populations, as well as gender, race, and age demographics across various counties in Arkansas. By analyzing this data, Empower aims to address the unique needs of its diverse population and deliver culturally sensitive care.

"The 2024 Cultural Competency Evaluation allows us to identify areas for improvement



and ensure that our services meet the unique needs of our diverse member base,” shared Tripp Franks, LCSW, Quality Improvement Senior Analyst.

Franks noted several differences in demographic information in the 2025 CCP as compared to the previous year’s CCP. For instance, the total membership of Empower has increased from the previous year. At the end of 2023, the total active Empower membership was 14,189, at the end of 2024, it was 15,463.

Membership increases were seen in both the behavioral health and developmental disability populations. He also noted an increase in the number of members who used the language line for interpreter services. According to Franks, these numbers continue to increase year over year and may represent an increased comfort among Empower members in accessing culturally competent care.

In keeping with an annual focus on culturally competent care, Andrea Fuller, with the Arkansas Food Bank in Little Rock, gave a presentation to all Care Coordinators in May 2025 covering that organization’s efforts in addressing food insecurity in the state of Arkansas. Fuller discussed the different programs implemented by the Food Bank, including the *Food As Medicine* initiative.

Looking ahead, Empower has set ambitious goals for the upcoming years, with a particular focus on expanding the Cultural Competency Plan. Empower’s plan for 2025 and 2026 includes several key accomplishments and opportunities. The health-coverage savings plan hopes to further develop its training programs to enhance the cultural competency skills of staff and providers. The organization also aims to establish more robust community partnerships to better understand the unique needs and challenges of the populations we serve.

In addition, Empower will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of its Cultural Competency Plan through data analysis and member feedback.

The complete Cultural Competency Plan, including the evaluation results, is now available for review on the Empower Healthcare Solutions website, getempowerhealth.com. Empower encourages all stakeholders, including members, healthcare providers and community organizations, to access the report and provide feedback.

To provide feedback or for more information, contact the Empower Public Relations team at communication@empowerarkansas.com.



Empower kicks off 2025 Provider Satisfaction, Provider Access and Availability Surveys

Empower Healthcare Solutions staff is excited to kick off another season of collaboration and growth with Empower's valued providers.

The staff is pleased to introduce two pivotal surveys: the Provider Satisfaction Survey and the Provider Access and Availability Survey. These surveys are vital opportunities for providers to share their insights and help Empower improve healthcare services. Selection for these surveys is random, meaning providers may receive one, both or even none of the surveys. No matter the outcome, participation is crucial and appreciated. Provider feedback is instrumental in helping us enhance services and deliver exceptional healthcare experiences.

Provider Satisfaction Survey: Share your insights, Drive enhancement

At Empower, our staff is committed to refining and streamlining our processes, and provider input plays a vital role in achieving this objective. The Provider Satisfaction Survey is a concise questionnaire that allows providers to share feedback regarding their interactions with Empower. Empower highly values provider perspectives, insights and suggestions, which strengthen our collaboration and enhance services for Empower members.

Provider participation in the Provider Satisfaction Survey supports a culture of continuous improvement. Provider feedback will help staff address challenges, implement changes and refine practices to ensure Empower remains a trusted partner in delivering exceptional healthcare.

Provider Access and Availability Survey: Promoting healthcare excellence through enhanced provider access

Recognizing the importance of access and availability in providing high-quality healthcare, Empower will also conduct the Provider Access and Availability Survey. This survey evaluates adherence to healthcare access and availability standards, ensuring members have timely access to primary care, behavioral health and specialty providers during and beyond regular business hours.

Provider participation is invaluable, as it will help the Empower staff identify areas for improvement, eliminate barriers to care and elevate the overall member experience. The Provider Access and Availability Survey is concise, requiring only a few minutes of a provider's time, but its impact on member access and network improvements will be significant and lasting.

Transforming Healthcare Together Through Collaboration

Every provider within the Empower network is a crucial partner in Empower's mission to deliver exceptional healthcare experiences. By participating in these surveys, providers directly contribute to the ongoing improvement of Empower's services and positively impact the lives of Empower

members and the communities Empower serves.

Please expect further updates with specific timelines and participation instructions. The Empower staff appreciates all providers' time, dedication and commitment to excellence. Together, Empower and our provider network will continue to empower better healthcare for all.

**Jan. 1,
2026**

**Attention
Providers!**

New look. Same mission.

A new way to connect to improve lives.



Jan. 1, 2026, we're moving to a new administrative platform — built to streamline your access to member information, claims processing, claims payments, provider and authorization support tools, and more.

Training will be provided to help you learn the new tools with confidence. Be on the lookout for additional details from Empower on how to ensure a successful transition. Stay tuned!

getempowerhealth.com



Empower joins efforts with Included Health to

provide virtual, urgent care to members

Empower Healthcare Solutions has launched a partnership with Included Health, an all-new way for members to get the urgent care they need, the way they want — all from their phone, tablet or computer. This collaboration aims to revolutionize the way high-acuity patients receive medical attention by bringing quality urgent healthcare services directly to their homes.



With highly skilled and credentialed medical professionals, Included Health is dedicated to complementing and extending the practice of healthcare providers.

One of the key advantages of Included Health is its accessibility. Operating for all Empower members 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, including weekends and holidays, Included Health ensures that patients can access medical care whenever they need it. This round-the-clock availability eliminates the need for patients to visit an urgent care office or endure long waits in the emergency room.

Included Health can treat most non-life-threatening illnesses - from pink eye and UTIs to coughs and colds. Included Health also handles prescriptions and billing through Empower, further streamlining the process.

It is important to note that Included Health should not be used in life-threatening emergencies and does not replace a primary care provider. In such cases, members should call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. Included Health complies with all applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Empower is thrilled to partner with Included Health to bring high-quality, virtual urgent medical care to members. Together, Empower and Included Health aims to empower patients and healthcare providers alike, ensuring that everyone has access to the care they need, when they need it.

For information, go to includedhealth.com/empower.

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