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July 12, 2021

Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
7500 Security Boulevard, Maid Stop S2-26-12  
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850

**RE: Arkansas Initial HCBS Spending Plan and Narrative Submission for the American Rescue Plan Act FMAP Increase**

To Whom It May Concern:

On May 13, 2021, the Arkansas Department of Human Services received guidance from the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) related to the implementation of Section 9817 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). This guidance established several requirements, including a submission of an initial spending plan and narrative that describes the activities that the state has implemented or intends to implement to enhance, expand, or strengthen HCBS under the Medicaid program. Arkansas requested an extension of the original deadline to engage stakeholders in the process. Therefore, the proposal is due to CMS by July 12, 2021.

Arkansas has focused on three core initiatives to utilize this one-time funding and is prepared to fund the required state match to exercise this unique ARPA provision. The three initiatives include: HCBS Workforce Stabilization and Quality Improvement, Planning for the Future: Technology and Education, and Expanding and Enhancing HCBS Services. We appreciate CMS understanding that many states, including Arkansas, will also need approval from their legislature. That being said, our concepts for this funding outline the thoughts of DHS and our stakeholders but may be subject to some changes after review by our legislature.

In an effort to streamline communication, and as required in the guidance received on May 13, 2021, the Department names Elizabeth Pitman, Director of the Division of Medical Services, to serve as Arkansas's designated point of contact for all questions and communications related to the quarterly HCBS spending plans and narratives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn Stehle".

Dawn Stehle  
Deputy Director for Health and Medicaid Director