



## COVID-19 Weekly Bulletin #5

Monday, April 27th

We are extending our support by sharing resources through the Sick Cells' Weekly Bulletin to educate and empower the community during this unprecedented time. **#SCDSticksTogether**

### SCDAA Health Updates

Follow [SCDAA's Health Alerts](#) to stay regularly informed about COVID-19 and what you need to know as SCD patients and caregivers. The SCDAA medical advisory committee is in constant communication with health authorities and will continue to provide updated recommendations for COVID-19 preparedness. For the provider advisory, click [here](#).

### COVID-19 Updates

*This section provides the latest information to provide an overview of the outbreak.*

- Sick Cells & Avalere Health partnered to take a closer look at how the **COVID19 crisis highlights health disparities for sickle cell**. Read more on [the Sick Cells blog](#).
- Sick Cells is a co-sponsor of the upcoming webinar, the **National Briefing with CDC on COVID-19 and the Chronic Disease**, scheduled for Wednesday April 29 from 2 to 3 p.m. EDT. [Register for the event here](#).
- The CDC has now added **six more symptoms** that may come with the COVID-19 virus: chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell. [Read the full list of symptoms here](#).
- Several governors are taking tentative steps to reopen their states. Under the White House's "[Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#)", **individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including sickle cell disease, should continue to shelter in place** through Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the approach. Stay informed about your [state policy actions](#).
- Americans have been urged to continue [wearing face coverings](#) in public and practicing [physical distancing](#). Here is a [helpful tutorial](#) on how to make a face covering.
- The [SECURE-SCD registry](#) is designed to capture pediatric and adult COVID-19 cases that are occurring across the world in patients living with sickle cell disease. Providers caring for these patients are asked to report all cases to this registry.
- [The American Red Cross](#) needs the help of **blood and platelet donors** and blood drive hosts to ensure the health of our communities. Check out [this flyer](#) with information about the importance of African-American blood donations.
- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has started [a clinical trial](#) to analyze the presence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies (proteins the immune system produces to fight the COVID-19 virus). They are collecting at-home blood samples from **healthy volunteers**. For more information, contact [clinicalstudiesunit@nih.gov](mailto:clinicalstudiesunit@nih.gov).
- **Fully recovered COVID-19 patients may be eligible to help those currently sick.** Once a person recovers from COVID-19, his or her blood contains antibodies in its plasma that can fight the virus. For more information, check out [the National Covid-19 Convalescent Plasma Project](#) or the [Red Cross' website](#).



## Policy Updates

*This section highlights executive orders and legislation in response to the COVID-19 crisis.*

- An additional [\\$484 billion coronavirus relief package](#) was signed in to law on Friday to provide some aid to **small businesses and the healthcare system**. It grants \$75 billion to hospitals struggling to cover costs during the crisis, and \$25 billion for efforts to ramp up testing for the disease.
- The bill includes additional funding for the small-business-lending program that ran out of money earlier this month. **The relief package makes \$310 billion in funds available** for the program, which offers forgivable loans for companies with a maximum of 500 employees. **The loans are forgivable in full** if the companies use 75% of the federally backed money on paying and retaining their employees. **If you are a small non-profit organization, you can [submit your application](#) today.**
- If you are still waiting for your CARES Act stimulus check, you can [check your payment status here](#).
- To receive **unemployment benefits**, you need to file a claim with the unemployment program in the state where you worked. [Here's how to get started](#) applying for unemployment benefits in your state.
- [Here are some key things](#) you may need to know about how **student loans** are impacted by the CARES Act.

## Sickle Cell Disease Emergency Funds

*In this section, we highlight relief funds that may be available to support the community.*

- **PhRMA is offering grant money to fund interventions aimed at addressing the alarming health inequalities** highlighted by COVID-19. Learn more about the [PhRMA grant and application process here](#).
- **NORD launched a Financial Assistance Program for rare disease community members impacted by COVID-19**. Through [the new program](#), NORD will provide financial assistance to eligible patients, covering up to \$1,000 annually. To apply, email [COVID19assistance@rarediseases.org](mailto:COVID19assistance@rarediseases.org).
- **HealthWell has launched a new fund to provide copayment and premium assistance to support the sickle cell community**. Through the fund, HealthWell will provide up to \$10,000 in financial assistance for a 12-month grant period to eligible patients who have annual household incomes up to 500 percent of the federal poverty level. For more information visit HealthWell's [Sickle Cell Disease](#) Fund page.
- The Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA) launched a COVID-19 Emergency Fund with the goal of raising \$100,000. In just 24 days, they surpassed the goal and have raised \$173,547. The funds will be distributed to sickle-cell non-profit organizations to help their community members with health care, food insecurity, and other related concerns. Visit the [SCDAA website](#) to learn more.



## Wellness Resources

This week, we suggest boosting your mood by **helping others**. Research has many examples of how doing good, in ways big or small, not only feels good, but also does us good. During the pandemic, we may not be able to hug a friend, partner or family member, but we can do small acts to lift the spirits of others. Here are some ways you can send some “pick-me-ups,” which may act as a mood-booster for you, too:

- **Share positive news with your community.** Your good news positively influences your friends, who in their turn positively influence their friends. With one positive post you can brighten up the day of someone you have never met. Share uplifting stories using community boards like the [oneSCDvoice](#) platform.
- **Start a gratitude ritual and share with others.** As you make your breakfast in the morning, think of three things you are grateful for today. Write it down and stick it on the fridge. Then, share this list with a partner, family member, or friend. Sharing your gratitude helps boost happiness for the listener, too.
- **Make physical distancing fun.** Drive by the homes of your friends, family members, and acquaintances and blow your horn and wave, or decorate their sidewalk with chalk art. It’s a friendly greeting that can brighten their day without personal interaction.
- **Donate blood.** During the COVID-19 crisis, your blood donation may help save lives. [Listen to Mia Robinson](#), SCD Warrior and professional patient advocate, share her story during the pandemic and discuss the importance of donating blood to help others.
- **Looking for other ways to help?** Impact Your World has compiled a list of organizations, donation opportunities, and [tips to help those affected by the crisis](#).

**How are you helping others during this time? Tag us on socials so we can see what you are doing to improve your mental and physical health. #SCDSticksTogether #WeeklyBulletin**



*SCD Warrior Tristan works out at home while on quarantine.*