



COVID-19 Weekly Bulletin #8

Monday, May 18th

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](#).

In case you missed SCDAA's "Cultivating Calm in the Midst of COVID-19" Webinar, you can [view their webinar here](#).

COVID-19 Updates

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

- Several states have begun initiating "reopening plans." **What does this mean for our sickle cell patients?** SCDAA's Medical and Research Advisory Committee issued guidance for economic reopening. Read their recommendations [here](#).
- People with [sickle cell disease are considered a "vulnerable" population](#) during the reopening of the U.S. economy and **need to remain at home as much as possible**.
 - If you are considered part of a "vulnerable" population, **continue to stay at home except for essential trips**.
- Patients with sickle cell disease should **continue to work from home as much as possible**.
 - For those who cannot work from home, it is recommended that special accommodations be available at your workplace (e.g. physical distancing, masks, hand sanitization, etc.).
 - For those which neither of those options is possible, talk with your local sickle cell provider to find an appropriate resolution.
- **The [CDC recommends](#) wearing face coverings in public**. Cloth face coverings are especially important to wear in public in areas like grocery stores and pharmacies..Continue to follow the instructions and recommendations of your local and state authorities and the CDC guidelines.
- [Be The Match](#) is now offering **free counseling services** to sickle cell warriors and their loved ones. The pandemic may result in increased stress during this time. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions. One of their licensed social workers can provide you with one-on-one support for personal and emotional issues.
- **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. You can review [updated summary information and data](#) from the registry.



- **Are you a provider caring for sickle cell patients during the time of COVID?** Refer to [ASH's Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information about best practices for the care of SCD patients.
- **Are you caring for someone with COVID-19** at home or in a non-healthcare setting? Follow the CDC's "[Recommendations for Caregivers](#)."
- **The American Red Cross needs the help of blood and platelet donors** and blood drive hosts to ensure the health of our communities. Learn more about [COVID-19 and blood donations](#) on their website.

Policy Updates

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

- The second round of the **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)** is underway. If you are a small organization, you can [submit your application](#) today. The American Institute of CPAs published [a five-step guide](#) instructing PPP borrowers how to calculate their loan forgiveness.
- 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](#). The Proposal submission deadline is May 25, 2020.
- **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.
- **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** to assist sickle cell, non-profit organizations in helping their community members with health care, food insecurity, and other related concerns. Visit the [SCDAA website](#) to learn more.



Wellness Resources

This week, we want to highlight how **some things are worth celebrating** even in these difficult times! Around the world, people have found creative ways to continue celebrating birthdays, weddings, and anniversaries while keeping their social distance. In doing so, we are able to learn a new perception and heal our weary souls.

Continuing on our **theme of celebrating**, we share some notable celebrations for the Class of 2020 Graduates:

- Watch LeBron James' [#GraduateTogether event](#) where musical guests, actors, and influencers joined in.
- Listen to commencement speeches from [Former President Barack Obama](#) and [Oprah Winfrey](#) who offer their insight and advice to the Class of 2020.
- Enjoy the ["Show Me Your Walk"](#) event, celebrating the thousands of graduates of Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Join for the ['Dear Class of 2020'](#) event hosted by YouTube this Saturday (**June 6th**) to celebrate with appearances from the Obamas, Lady Gaga, and more.

From us at Sick Cells, we are sending a big congrats to our SCD warriors who are graduating this year! We understand how difficult it can be, and especially during these trying times. You deserve to be celebrated!

Hey SCD Warriors, what are you celebrating? Tag us on socials so we can see!
#SCDSticksTogether #WeeklyBulletin