



Build Your 5-Minute Sickle Cell Story

Before You Begin...

It is important to ask yourself a couple of questions to frame your story.

- **Who am I trying to reach?**
Often your audience may not know much about sickle cell disease, so it will be important to include **background information**.

- **What is the one thing I want them to remember?**
It's normal to feel like you have too much to say and that you can't possibly communicate it all in one conversation. But because people usually only remember **one thing from a conversation**, picking a single message and sticking to it is important.

- **What is the narrative that highlights my message?**
You should select a story that **highlights the message** you're trying to communicate. It's common to feel like you need to relay multiple stories to get your point across, but you should only pick one that best highlights your point.

- **What should they do with the information?**
After you've shared your story, finish by tying in specific actions you want them to take. Always give a **call to action**.

- **How can I make it personal?**
The more personal you can make your story, the more compelling it becomes. **Personal details** resonate with people because they are emotionally powerful. While you should only share as much as you are comfortable sharing, the more detail you can include, the better.



Craft Your SCD Story...

Sharing your story can motivate your audience to be advocates for the SCD community.
link

Step 1: Provide an Overview

- Use our [Sickle Cell Fact Sheet](#) to provide background information about the message you want to highlight and help others learn about sickle cell
- Include information about the topic that best highlights your point.

Step 2: Give Specific, Memorable Examples

- Real life stories are able to evoke a far more powerful response than just facts and figures and will make an **emotional connection** with the listener.
- Identify the struggles, whether emotional, financial, physical, then explain what you learned from your struggle and describe how it has impacted your life and your future.
- Frame your story in a positive way by mentioning hope or suggesting a solution. **Consider the end goal** and know how you want the listener to feel at the conclusion of your story.

Step 3: Include a Call to Action

- Have a clear purpose and call to action for the audience.
- Finish with a strong line that will remain in the listener's mind.

Once You Have Your Story...

These tips and tricks will help you prepare your testimony so it is ready to share with others.

- **Keep it brief.** In most spaces, you only have three to five minutes to tell your story. Sticking to your key talking points will allow you to get your point across.
- **Practice out loud.** Telling a compelling story is difficult without practice. Practice out loud. The first run might be rough, but don't worry, that's why you are practicing. Practice in front of an audience, and elicit their feedback. Ask them what points, stories or facts resonated the most. It might surprise you to hear what others think are the most captivating details.
- **Continue refining.** After every conversation, ask yourself what worked and what didn't. As you continue to tell your story, it will begin to feel more natural, but there is always room to refine and create different versions depending on what the call to action is, or with whom you are meeting.

Navigate to other Sick Cells Resources:

[Meet your Legislators](#) | [Sickle Cell Facts](#) | [The Importance of State-Level Advocacy](#)