



About Us



Sick Cells is a national advocacy nonprofit organization co-founded by sibling duo, Marqus and Ashley Valentine in 2017. Marqus gained his warrior wings on June 22, 2020, but Sick Cells remains committed to continuing his legacy.

Sick Cells' mission is to **elevate the voices** of the sickle cell disease (SCD) community by telling their stories of resilience. In highlighting the grave disparities this community faces, we seek to **influence** decision makers, **propel** change, and **empower** the SCD community.

Ambassador Program

Faces of SCD Storytelling Program



Who live in **26+** states
We have **200+** Ambassadors



Over **250** interviews
Stories shared with **20,000+** people on social media

The Ambassador Program connects SCD advocates to legislators, provides advocacy tools, training, resources to ambassadors, and **serves as a policy hub for the community as a whole.**

The Faces of SCD Storytelling Program is our keystone program inspired by Marqus's vision to educate and connect through human experience. This program **captures the stories of patients and caregivers to eliminate stigma** and influence decision-makers.

- Through our Ambassador Program, we:
- **Host** monthly Tea Chats to engage the community
 - **Coordinate** monthly Priority Topic Meetings to provide advocacy training
 - **Connect** with legislators across the country
 - **Publish** toolkit resources

- Through the Faces of SCD, we:
- **Publish** educational blogs
 - **Interview** community members
 - **Produce** audio, visual, & video stories to share on social media

Check Out Our Website to Learn More





Featured Projects

Sick Cells' mission is to eliminate stigma associated with SCD. We strive to shape public policy and improve the quality of life for the sickle cell community.

We share stories from patients, siblings, parents, medical professionals, and others affected by sickle cell disease. Read more to learn about our current projects and initiatives beyond our keystone programs.

Policy & Legislation

- Submitted 2022 [Comments](#) on the CDC Opioid Prescription Guidelines Update
- Wrote the Community [Congressional Hearing Request Letter](#)
- **140+** Congressional meetings in 2023 at the [National SCD Policy Forum](#)
- Publish monthly [policy memos](#)!

Research & Publications

- **Co-published** "[Advancing Care for SCD: A Strategic Roadmap](#)"
- **Co-Published** "[SCD Patient & Caregiver Preference Study](#)"
- **Published** "[2022 Medicaid Access & Landscape review for SCD](#)"
- **Co-published** "[Finding Equity in Value](#)"

Access & Coverage

- Have prepared **33 advocates** to provide oral or written comments at state Medicaid coverage decision meetings
- Host annual [Coverage for SCD Summit](#)
- Worked to ensure **community representation** in 2019 & 2023 [ICER reviews for SCD](#)

Community Support

- [Hispanic Outreach Promoting Equity \(HOPE\)](#) to increase reach in the Hispanic/Latinx community
- Partnership with Caregiver Action Network to provide SCD [caregiver resources](#)
- Collection of [toolkit resources](#) to inform community initiatives



 Learn more

