

# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CELL AND GENE THERAPY MODEL FOR ACHIEVING EXPANDED ACCESS FOR SICKLE CELL DISEASE

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## SUMMARY

The [Cell and Gene Therapy Access Model](#) (henceforth referred to as Access Model) is a voluntary model that tests whether a CMS-led approach to developing and administering outcomes-based agreements (OBAs) for cell and gene therapies (CGTs) improves Medicaid beneficiary access to innovative treatment, improves health outcomes for Medicaid beneficiaries, and reduces health care expenditures. In this issue brief, we outline how states should prioritize enrolling in the Model to improve the lives of this population.

## Overview of the CGT Model

CGTs are a growing class of transformative, one-time medicines designed to treat previously intractable diseases. The Access Model will focus initially on CGTs for Sickle Cell Disease (SCD), a genetic blood disorder that affects 100,000+ people in the U.S. People with SCD have:

- An average lifespan more than 20 years shorter than average life expectancy in the U.S.
- Excruciating pain episodes, which can cause multiple hospitalizations.

The CGT Access Model is open to all U.S. states, D.C., and territories that participate in the Medicaid Drug Rebate Program (MDRP). Each state is eligible to fund up to \$9.55 million under Cooperative Agreements. Under the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), there are two types of funding available under Cooperative Agreements:

**Implementation funding** to support required and optional Model implementation activities that involve staff/contractor time and infrastructure costs.

**Optional Milestone Funding** contingent on completed research projects related to expanded access to SCD CGT and promoting comprehensive care for SCD beneficiaries considering or receiving SCD gene therapy.

States should apply in response to the CMS [Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) by **February 28, 2025**.

## The Importance of Applying the Model to Your State

- Individuals living with SCD and their families will have expanded access to cell and gene therapies to improve their quality of life.
- Treatment centers in Arkansas will have the resources and capacity to support SCD patients.
- Providers and community-based organizations (CBO) will have access to the necessary resources required to support beneficiaries.

It is critical for states to participate in the Access Model to ensure that individuals living with SCD can receive life-changing CGT. Without participation, Medicaid beneficiaries with SCD and their families will continue to face barriers to access, limiting their ability to receive these innovative treatments that will improve their quality of life. Beneficiaries could be forced to seek care out of state or forgo treatment altogether if their state forgoes participation in the model. Participation in this model also ensures that providers and CBOs have access to essential financial, educational, and logistical resources to support beneficiaries throughout their treatment journey. This will help enhance patient outcomes for one of the most underserved populations in the country.

## Your State's Current Participation Status

To ensure Medicaid beneficiaries with SCD in [STATE] have access to life-changing CGT therapies, it is critical to assess the state's engagement with the CMS Access Model. The following outlines Arkansas's current participation status, including past engagement efforts, Medicaid leadership involvement, treatment centers and CBOs in your state or surroundings.

- As of February 17, 2025, Arkansas has yet to formally announce participation in the CGT Access Model.
- As of March 13, 2024, Sick Cells implemented a State-Level Engagement plan with Arkansas Medicaid Director on the importance of applying the Model.

### SCD Treatment Centers in Surrounding States

*\*No SCD CBOs in AR*

State	Treatment Center	Address	Therapy Type
Missouri	Barnes-Jewish Hospital	1 Barnes-Jewish Hospital Plaza, St. Louis, MO 63110	Lyfgenia
	St. Louis Children's Hospital (SLCH)	1 Children's Place, St. Louis, MO 63110	Lyfgenia
Tennessee	The Children's Hospital At Tristar Centennial	2410 Patterson St., Nashville, TN 37203	Casgevy
	Vanderbilt University Medical Center	1301 Medical Center Dr, Nashville, TN 37232	Casgevy
Texas	Cook Children's Medical Center	801 7th Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76104	Casgevy
	Children's Medical Center of Dallas	1935 Medical District Dr, Dallas, TX 75235	Casgevy, Lyfgenia
	Medical City Dallas Hospital	7777 Forest Lane, Dallas, TX 75230	Casgevy, Lyfgenia
	Texas Children's Hospital	6621 Fannin St., Houston, TX 77030	Casgevy, Lyfgenia
	Methodist Hospital	4410 Medical Drive, San Antonio, TX 78229	Casgevy
Louisiana	Children's Hospital of New Orleans	200 Henry Clay Ave., New Orleans, LA 70118	Casgevy, Lyfgenia

### SCD CBOs in Surrounding States

*\*No SCD CBOs in AR*

State	CBO
Missouri	Sickle Cell Foundation of St. Louis
Tennessee	The Sickle Cell Foundation of Tennessee
Texas	Marc Thomas Sickle Cell Foundation
Louisiana	Sickle Cell Association of South Louisiana
	SCDAA Northwest Louisiana Chapter
	Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation

