Welcome
Sickle Cell News is a newsletter for children, adolescents and adults with sickle cell disease (SCD) and their families, produced by the Hematology team at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. Stay tuned for more information about living with SCD, upcoming activities and special events.

Ways to Support Your Child During the Pandemic

During these difficult times, it is important to make sure you are practicing good self-care. You may also need to comfort your children and help them stay calm. Here are some tips:

- Answer questions and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that your child can understand.
- Reassure your children that they are safe. Let them know it is OK to feel upset. Share how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn from you how to cope with difficult circumstances.
- Limit your family’s exposure to news coverage of the event, including commentary on social media.
- Try to keep up with regular routines. If schools are closed, create a schedule that sets aside time for learning along with breaks for relaxing or fun activities.
- Be a role model. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members.
- Spend time with your child in meaningful activities—reading together, exercising, playing board games.
It’s Not Too Late — Don’t Forget Your Flu Shot!

Influenza is a potentially serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Every flu season is different. Influenza infection can affect people differently, but millions of people get the flu every year, hundreds of thousands are hospitalized, and up to tens of thousands die from flu-related causes. Receiving an annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to help protect against flu. Vaccination has been shown to have many benefits, including reducing the risk of flu illnesses and hospitalizations. Oh, Mom and Dad—you need one too!

Meet Our Team Members: Scott Matthews

Children’s Hospital Los Angeles is pleased to welcome Scott Matthews to our clinical care team. Thanks to the generous support of the Rauch Family Foundation, we were able to recruit Scott as a social services case worker for the PASSAGES Transition Program. In this key role, Scott helps adolescents and young adults prepare for transition into the adult health care system. He is also working to expand our network of medical providers who provide care for young adults with thalassemia, sickle cell disease and bone marrow failures. His wide-ranging background and expertise navigating the adult health care system will be great assets to our team.

In his spare time, Scott is a TV trivia buff, a modest tennis player and a fan of the outdoors. He enjoys the cultural richness of food, entertainment and the arts available in Los Angeles and is embracing this new chapter of his life at CHLA with great passion and infectious enthusiasm. Welcome to the team, Scott!

PASSAGES Transition Program

The pandemic has brought stress on all of us, but there have been a few silver linings. When patients turn 18 years old, they are scheduled for a special Transition Clinic appointment to introduce them to the skills needed to manage their own health care. We have been able to continue our Transition Clinic for patients 18 and older using telemedicine. Patients with access to Wi-Fi are able to meet with providers through videoconferencing. If you have not participated in Transition Clinic and you are over 18, please call Scott Matthews at 323-361-7096 to schedule an appointment.

We miss you!

If you have not been to see us in a while, please call the sickle cell team at 323-361-3414 to schedule an appointment.

Send your suggestions or comments about the newsletter to tpeterson@chla.usc.edu