



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
April 21, 2022

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## **Historic State Funding for Sickle Cell Disease Brings First-Ever Comprehensive Care Clinic to Adults in Fresno**

*UCSF Fresno joins Networking California for Sickle Cell Care*

**FRESNO, CA** – Today, [Networking California for Sickle Cell Care](#) (Network) announced the opening of a new clinic to join the state’s historic network of specialty Sickle Cell Disease clinics. Located at the Community Cancer Institute in Clovis, UCSF Fresno is the [first](#) and only Sickle Cell Disease clinic offering multi-disciplinary care to adults in the greater Fresno area. The Network is proud to serve local Fresno patients and improve the overall health of Californians with Sickle Cell Disease (SCD), a medically vulnerable population that has suffered decades of inattention and neglect, leading to poor care, and too many deaths of adults under the age of 40.

“Our priority is to ensure patients receive timely care so that their disease, and the pain and complications that accompany it, can be well-managed, allowing patients to live their lives to the fullest,” said Diane Nugent, MD, Founder, President, and Medical Director, Center for Inherited Blood Disorders. “Sickle Cell Disease is a devastating, complex, chronic condition and it’s time that this population finally receives the care and attention they need and deserve.”

In 2019, the California State Legislature approved funding to establish [Networking California for Sickle Cell Care](#). Since then, the Network has expanded access to specialty care; supported workforce expansion for coordinated health services; conducted surveillance to monitor disease incidence and prevalence; and strengthened education and awareness of SCD through competitive grants. Currently, there are at least 150 known patients living with SCD in the Fresno area out of an estimated 7,000 in California<sup>1</sup> – and experts say there are likely more. Before California began public health surveillance of SCD, no one knew how many people in the state lived with the disease. Because of [Tracking California's](#) work on the California Sickle Cell Data Collection Program, the Network has more recently been able to identify the counties with the largest numbers of patients living with SCD, including Fresno County.

“Our partnership with UCSF Fresno helps address a history of neglect and brings expertise and care where it is most needed,” said Mary Brown, President and CEO, Sickle Cell Disease Foundation. “Prior to UCSF Fresno’s clinic, adults living with Sickle Cell Disease in the Greater Fresno area did not have access to coordinated care – this was simply unacceptable. Now, they have a community-based, comprehensive framework of care that includes access to specialized providers and supportive services.”

In the absence of specialized clinics, preventable pain crises and other complications frequently lead to emergency department visits and hospitalizations at an estimated cost of \$2.4 billion per year nationally. A conservative estimate based on Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) data for 2014-16 indicates the charges for hospitalization and emergency department visits for adults with SCD exceeded \$226 million in California alone.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.trackingcalifornia.org/sickle-cell-disease/sickle-cell-disease-in-california>

Last year, the Network launched its “[Neglected No More](#)” campaign to raise awareness around SCD and elevate patient voices that have been silenced for far too long. Supporters and people with SCD can follow the campaign on social media through the hashtag, #NeglectedNoMore.

**Location and contact information for the new Sickle Cell Clinic at UCSF Fresno:**

785 North Medical Center Drive West, Suite 203  
Clovis, CA 93611  
559-387-1900

**Clinic services provided by UCSF Fresno help address the range of health problems faced by adults with Sickle Cell Disease. These include:** Outpatient comprehensive care; transition from pediatric to adult care; and outpatient apheresis.

For more information about Sickle Cell Disease and new treatment clinics around the state visit <https://sicklecellcare-ca.com>.

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***About the Center for Inherited Blood Disorders***

*The Center for Inherited Blood Disorders (CIBD) has cared for hundreds of children and adults in Southern California, offering a safety net clinic that provides health care services specifically to patients with inherited blood disorders. CIBD has been able to increase access to care for those who are economically challenged by providing medical care regardless of ability to pay. CIBD is also a national leader in directing federal initiatives to promote regional blood disorder networks that provide team-based clinical care and uniformly track health outcomes. Learn more by visiting [www.cibd-ca.org](http://www.cibd-ca.org).*

***About the Sickle Cell Disease Foundation***

*The Sickle Cell Disease Foundation (SCDF) was incorporated in 1957 and is the first and oldest Sickle Cell Disease community-based organization of its kind in the nation. As the only organization in California approved to provide Hemoglobin-Trait Counseling Services and direct the Sickle Cell Educator/Counselor Certification Training Course, SCDF provides life-enhancing education, services and programs for individuals living with Sickle Cell Disease. SCDF broadens public awareness, delivers effective advocacy initiatives, and promotes innovative therapies to ultimately find a cure. Learn more by visiting [www.scdfc.org](http://www.scdfc.org).*

***About Networking California for Sickle Cell Care***

*Networking California for Sickle Cell Care (Network) is the state’s first and only network of specialized adult Sickle Cell Disease clinics. The Network was developed through advocacy and stakeholder engagement supported by data. Learn more by visiting [www.sicklecellcare-ca.com](http://www.sicklecellcare-ca.com).*