



## Medical and Research Advisory Committee Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc.

### **MARAC Advisory Statement for SCD Patients Who are Teachers, Administrators, and Other Support Staff during School Reopening**

#### **SHOW THIS TO YOUR EMPLOYER TO HELP THEM HELP YOU.**

**July 31, 2020** – The Medical and Research Advisory Committee (MARAC) of the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America finds that individuals with sickle cell disease are more vulnerable to severe COVID-19 than the general population. This position has also been supported by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Society of Hematology (ASH) COVID-19 guidelines.<sup>1,2</sup> **We recommend that all vulnerable teachers, administrators, and support staff should work from home if they are able to do so.** Educators with sickle cell disease should be given priority for providing distance learning from home, if possible. Innovative approaches should be used such as lecturing from home or an isolated location away from students in the classroom supervised by paraprofessionals on site. Administrators should make special accommodations for vulnerable individuals at work if working from home is not possible. Recommendations about controlling exposure have been put forth by the CDC<sup>1</sup> and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health with modification by Johns Hopkins University.<sup>3</sup> An excellent framework for implementation has been provided in a monograph by the American Federation of Teachers.<sup>4</sup> Measures to be considered include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining physical distancing.
- Implementing an effective system for testing, tracing, and isolating new cases.
- Using public health tools and age appropriate education to minimize risks of transmission to students, teachers and support staff stressing:
  - Physical distancing
  - Screening
  - Personal protective equipment and sanitation
  - Campus programming and organization to minimize unnecessary contact between people.
- Strong psychological and social support for all staff members.

#### **What does this mean for individuals living with sickle cell disease?**

We recommend that individuals with sickle cell disease follow the advice of their local healthcare providers and their local and state authorities. They need to follow the rapidly changing local COVID-19 infection status and have ongoing discussions with their education administrators about how to minimize their health risks while providing their students the best educational, psychological, and social experience possible.

**For More Information, contact [info@sicklecelldisease.org](mailto:info@sicklecelldisease.org)**

#### **References:**

1. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Evidence used to update the list of underlying medical conditions that increase a person's risk of severe illness from COVID-19. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/evidence-table.html>
2. COVID-19 and Sickle Cell Disease: Frequently Asked Questions <https://www.hematology.org/covid-19/covid-19-and-sickle-cell-disease>
3. Caitlin Rivers et al., "Public Health Principles for a Phased Reopening During COVID-19: Guidance for Governors," Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, April 17, 2020, <https://www.centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/publications/public-health-principles-for-a-phased-reopening-during-covid-19-guidance-for-governors>.
4. American Federation of Teachers. A PLAN TO SAFELY REOPEN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES: Guidance for imagining a new normal for public education, public health and our economy in the age of COVID-19. [https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/covid19\\_reopen-america-schools.pdf](https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/covid19_reopen-america-schools.pdf)

## **SCDAA Medical and Research Advisory Committee Members**

### **Miguel R Abboud, MD**

Professor of Pediatrics and Pediatric Hematology-  
Oncology  
Chairman  
Department of Pediatrics and Adolescent  
Medicine  
American University of Beirut, Lebanon

### **Biree Andemariam, MD**

Chair, Medical and Research Advisory Committee,  
Sickle Cell Disease Association of America  
Chief Medical Officer, Sickle Cell Disease  
Association of America  
Director, New England Sickle Cell Institute  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
University of Connecticut Health  
Farmington, Connecticut

### **Shawn Bediako, PhD**

Professor  
Department of Psychology  
University of Maryland Baltimore County  
Baltimore, Maryland

### **Andrew Campbell, MD**

Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders  
Children's National Health System  
Associate Professor of Pediatrics  
George Washington University School of Medicine  
and Health Sciences  
Washington, DC

### **Raffaella Colombatti, MD, PhD**

Physician Azienda Ospedaliera-Università di  
Padova  
Department of Womens' and Child Health  
Clinic of Pediatric Hematology Oncology  
Via Giustiniani 3  
35129 Padova Italy

### **Lori Crosby, PsyD**

Co-Director, Innovations in Community Research,  
Division of Behavioral Medicine & Clinical  
Psychology  
Co-Director, CCTST, Community Engagement Core  
Psychologist, Research, Behavioral Medicine &  
Clinical Psychologist  
Cincinnati Children's  
Professor, UC Department of Pediatrics  
Cincinnati, Ohio

### **Deepika Darbari, MD**

Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders  
Children's National Health System  
Professor of Pediatrics  
George Washington University School of Medicine  
and Health Sciences  
Washington, DC

### **Payal Desai, MD**

Associate Professor  
Director of Sickle Cell Research  
The Ohio State University  
JamesCare at Ohio State East Hospital  
Columbus, Ohio

### **James Eckman, MD**

Professor Emeritus, Hematology & Medical  
Oncology  
Emory University School of Medicine  
Department of Hematology and Medical Oncology  
Atlanta, Georgia

### **Mark Gladwin, MD**

Professor and Chair  
Department of Medicine  
Founder, Pittsburgh Heart, Lung, and Blood  
Vascular Medicine Institute  
University of Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

**Jo Howard, MB Bchir, MRCP, FRCPath**

Head of Red Cell/Sickle Cell Service  
Guy's and St Thomas'  
NHS Foundation Trust  
London, United Kingdom

**Lewis Hsu, MD, PhD**

Co-Chair, Medical and Research Advisory  
Committee, Sickle Cell Disease Association of  
America  
Vice Chief Medical Officer, Sickle Cell Disease  
Association of America  
Director of Pediatric Sickle Cell  
Professor of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois

**Baba Inusa**

Professor of Paediatric Haematology  
Evelina London Children's Hospital  
Guy's and St Thomas NHS Foundation Trust  
Women and Children's Academic Health  
King's College London  
United Kingdom

**Elizabeth Klings, MD**

Associate Professor of Medicine, Boston  
University School of Medicine  
Program Director, Center of Excellence in Sickle  
Cell Disease  
Director, Pulmonary Hypertension Inpatient and  
Education Program  
Medical Director, Pulmonary Rehabilitation  
Program, Boston Medical Center  
Boston, Massachusetts

**Lakshmanan Krishnamurti, MD**

Professor of Pediatrics, Director of BMT  
Joseph Kuechenmeister Aflac Field Force Chair  
Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center  
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta/Emory University  
Atlanta, Georgia

**Sophie Lanzkron, MD, MHS**

Director, Sickle Cell Center for Adults  
The Johns Hopkins Hospital  
1800 Orleans St  
Baltimore, Maryland

**Julie Makani, FRCP, PhD**

Associate Professor  
Department of Haematology and Blood  
Transfusion  
Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences  
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

**Caterina P. Minniti, MD**

Director, Sickle Cell Center  
Montefiore Health System  
Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
Bronx, New York

**Genice T. Nelson, DNP, APRN, ANP-BC**

Program Director  
New England Sickle Cell Institute & Connecticut  
Bleeding Disorders Programs  
UConn Health  
Farmington, Connecticut  
Board Member, Sickle Cell Disease Association of  
America

**Isaac Odame, MB ChB, MRCP(UK), FRCPath,  
FRCPCH, FRCPC**

Professor, Department of Paediatrics  
University of Toronto  
The Hospital for Sick Children  
Division of Haematology/Oncology  
Toronto, Ontario

**Kwaku Ohene-Frempong, MD**

Director Emeritus, Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center  
Emeritus Professor of Pediatrics, University of Pennsylvania  
President, Sickle Cell Foundation of Ghana  
Emeritus Board Member, Sickle Cell Disease Association of America

**Gwendolyn Poles, D.O.**

Honorary Medical Staff Member  
Former Medical Director, Kline Health Center  
Faculty, Internal Medicine Program  
UPMC Pinnacle  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
Board Member, Sickle Cell Disease Association of America

**John Roberts, MD**

Yale Adult Sickle Cell Program  
Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale New Haven  
New Haven, Connecticut

**Wally Smith, MD**

Professor  
Scientific Director, VCU Center on Health Disparities  
Director, VCU Adult Sickle Cell Program  
Department of Internal Medicine  
Division of General Internal Medicine  
Richmond, Virginia

**Crawford J Strunk MD**

Pediatric Hematology/Oncology  
Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Program at Toledo Children's Hospital  
Toledo, Ohio

**Immacolata Tartaglione, MD PhD**

Department of Woman, Child and General and Specialist Surgery  
Università degli Studi della Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli"  
Naples, Italy

**Marsha Treadwell, PhD**

Director, Sickle Cell Care Coordination Initiative  
Regional Director, Pacific Sickle Cell Regional Collaborative  
Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics  
University of California San Francisco Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland  
Oakland, California

**Winfred C. Wang, MD**

Emeritus, St. Jude Faculty  
Member, Department of Hematology  
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital  
Memphis, Tennessee

**Russell E. Ware, MD, PhD**

Director, Division of Hematology  
Institute Co-Director, Cancer and Blood Diseases Institute  
Director, Global Health Center  
Marjory J. Johnson Chair of Hematology  
Translational Research  
Cincinnati Children's  
Professor, UC Department of Pediatrics  
Cincinnati, Ohio

**Julie Kanter Washko, MD**

Associate Professor  
Division of Hematology Oncology  
University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Birmingham, Alabama

**Kim Smith-Whitley, MD**

Professor of Pediatrics  
Director Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center  
Division of Hematology  
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Board Member, Sickle Cell Disease Association of  
America

**Wanda Whitten-Shurney, MD**

CEO & Medical Director  
Sickle Cell Disease Association, Michigan Chapter  
Inc.  
Board Member, Sickle Cell Disease Association of  
America  
Detroit, Michigan

**Ahmar U. Zaidi, MD**

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics  
Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center, Children's  
Hospital of Michigan, Wayne State  
University/Central Michigan University School of  
Medicine  
Detroit, Michigan