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ImpactLife
Changing The World Together

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Introducing "Red4Life" program to support patients with sickle cell disease

New donor program designed to increase diversity of donor base, increase inventory for sickle cell patients

(Sept. 1, 2021 | Davenport, Iowa) – ImpactLife announces the rollout of "Red4Life," a new program designed to increase diversity within the blood center's donor base and increase the number of products available to effectively serve patients with sickle cell disease. Under the Red4Life program, donors whose blood is tested and identified as an appropriate antigen match for patients with Sickle Cell Disease will be invited to become a Red4Life donor. After making their fourth donation each year, Red4Life donors will receive an additional 800 points to use in the ImpactLife Donor Loyalty Store. At the same time, the ImpactLife donor relations teams are engaged in additional outreach to prospective blood donor groups to expand the blood center's donor base. To schedule appointments for donation, please call (800) 747-5401, schedule online at www.bloodcenter.org, or by using the blood center's mobile app (www.bloodcenter.org/app).

About Sickle Cell Disease

Sickle Cell Disease is an inherited blood disorder that affects red blood cells. It is the most common hereditary disorder and currently affects more than 100,000 Americans, predominantly people of African descent. The red blood cells in patients with sickle cell disease can become "sickled" in shape, which can cause the cells to become stuck in small blood vessels. Patients can experience pain and anemia and are at increased risk for strokes and other types of organ damage. When patients experience a sickle cell crisis, red cell transfusion is a major form of therapy to relieve symptoms.

With more frequent blood transfusions, however, alloimmunization (development of antibodies directed against red blood cell antigens) can occur. The antigen-negative blood types needed for patients with sickle cell disease are more generally found in donors of African descent. "As a blood provider serving 125 hospitals, we serve a broad cross section of communities within our region. So, we need to recruit a donor base that represents the community as a whole," said Amanda Hess, Director, Donor and Public Relations. "This is especially important for providing a sufficient blood supply matched appropriately for patients with Sickle Cell Disease. With the Red4Life program, we'll have a new way to thank, encourage, and motivate the donors who can help those impacted by Sickle Cell Disease."

Tiffani Jackson receives frequent blood transfusions to treat sickle cell disease. View Tiffani's story at www.bloodcenter.org/sickle.

Blood Donors Make a Difference!

"Donating blood is very important for sickle cell and my survival as a whole," said Tiffani Jackson, a college student who is treated with blood transfusions for sickle cell anemia. "That's because sickle cell attacks threaten your oxygen, it makes it feel like glass is being shattered all over your body, and you really just don't know if you're going to survive the attack once it happens. When I get to the hospital and all pain treatments have been exhausted, meaning no medications are helping, nothing is working, blood does. It's the most hopeful feeling in the world to know that I get a second chance at life because someone else thought about me."

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About ImpactLife

ImpactLife is a not-for-profit community organization providing blood services to more than 120 hospitals in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, and Wisconsin, as well as resource sharing partners across the country. Services extend from southcentral Wisconsin to St. Louis, Missouri and from Danville, Illinois to Chariton, Iowa. ImpactLife operates 20 Donor Centers and holds approximately 5000 mobile blood drives annually to provide blood components needed for patient transfusions at hospitals throughout our region.

ImpactLife recently announced its new name. For more information on the name change, see www.bloodcenter.org/impactlife. For more information, see www.bloodcenter.org and find us @impactlifeblood on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat.

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