

**CHANGE
THE WORLD**
ONE PINT AT A TIME

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Blood Services of Illinois

CONTACT

Kirby Winn

Manager, Public Relations

kwinn@mvrbc.org | (563) 349-1571

World Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day is June 19, 2019;

Blood transfusions play a key role in treatment of patients with Sickle Cell Disease

(June 12, 2019 | Danville, Ill.) –Community Blood Services of Illinois (CBSI) will join other blood centers, patients, and advocates in recognizing June 19, 2019 as World Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day. The international awareness day is observed annually with the goal to increase public knowledge and understanding of sickle cell disease, and the challenges experienced by patients and their families and caregivers.

On June 19, the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America will collaborate with other agencies to carry out a 24-hour social media campaign to “Shine the Light on Sickle Cell.” Those interested in organizing or attending a “Shine the Light on Sickle Cell” event are asked to email ShineTheLightOnSickleCell@gmail.com and to follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ShineTheLightOnSickleCell.

In the United States, Sickle Cell Disease primarily affects African-American and Latino populations. Patients with Sickle Cell Disease rely on regular blood transfusions as part of their treatment. Transfusions of red blood cells can replace “sickled” cells with healthy red blood cells, thereby relieving pain and complications that come with Sickle Cell Disease. Suitable blood components for Sickle Cell Disease patients most often come from African-American and Latino donors. As a result, the Blood Center continually looks to increase the rate of blood donation within these populations.

“Sickle Cell patients often require many transfusions over long periods of treatment,” said Dr. Yasuko Erickson, Chief Medical Officer. “Quality and longevity of life are at stake. Increasing the diversity of our donor base means we can ensure the availability of well-matched blood components for sickle cell patients when they need it.”

Blood donor Ashley Morgan says she is motivated to give blood on a regular basis because blood transfusions were so important to her late cousin’s treatment for Sickle Cell Disease. “Christopher passed away a few years ago, but I continue to give blood because I know how important it is for my blood type to help people with sickle cell.”

For more information on World Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day and to access campaign materials for World Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day, see www.bloodcenter.org/sickle.



This summer: \$10 gift cards for all presenting donors; \$500 Visa gift card drawing during critical weeks

During the challenging months of summer, all presenting donors will receive a voucher for a \$10 gift card for the donor’s choice of Amazon, Casey’s General Stores, Dairy Queen, or Domino’s. And, during the most critical weeks of the year, donors will be automatically entered in one-week pop-up drawings for a \$500 Visa gift card (see dates, below).

-more-

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGIONAL BLOOD CENTER

CENTRAL ILLINOIS COMMUNITY BLOOD CENTER • COMMUNITY BLOOD SERVICES OF ILLINOIS

\$500 Visa Gift Card Drawings:

June 17 - 23
June 24 - 30
July 1 – 7

July 22 - 28
July 29 - Aug. 4
Aug. 26 - Sept. 1

Sept. 2 – 8
Sept. 9 - 15

CBSI is the provider to OSF HealthCare Sacred Heart Medical Center in Danville, Carle Foundation Hospital, OSF HealthCare Heart of Mary Medical Center in Champaign-Urbana, and Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center in Mattoon. The Blood Center operates the Danville Elks Blood Donor Center at 300 E. Liberty Lane and holds mobile blood drives across the region.

Donors may schedule an appointment to give blood at an MVRBC Donor Center or mobile blood drive by calling (800) 217-4483, scheduling online at www.bloodcenterimpact.org, or via the IMPACT mobile app (www.bloodcenter.org/app).

About Community Blood Services of Illinois

Community Blood Services of Illinois (CBSI) is a division of Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center, provider of blood products and services to 95 hospitals in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Wisconsin, including Carle Foundation Hospital and OSF Heart of Mary Medical Center in Champaign-Urbana, Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center in Mattoon, and OSF Sacred Heart Medical Center in Danville. The Blood Center is based in Davenport, Iowa, where MVRBC's testing, processing and primary distribution center handles more than 250,000 units of blood components each year. MVRBC is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. To find a nearby Donor Center or mobile blood drive, call (800) 217-4483 or check schedules online at www.bloodcenterimpact.org. For more information, www.bloodservices.org.

-end-