Leveraging Medi-Cal to Improve Early Care and Prevention for Children with Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)

2,766
children (<21 years of age) in California with SCD as of January 2021.

70%
of children were covered by Medicaid during the first 3 years of life.

78%
of children covered by Medicaid are enrolled in CCS.

What is CCS?

California Children's Services (CCS) is a statewide program that provides diagnostic and treatment services, medical case management, and physical and occupational therapy for children and youth under 21 with specific chronic, disabling, or life-threatening medical conditions.

Beneficiaries by Sex

52% Male | 48% Female

Beneficiaries by Age

69% 0-14 years | 31% 15-21 years

Distribution of male and female beneficiaries by age

0-14	53% Male	47% Female
15-21	50% Male	50% Female

Preventative Care for Children with SCD

Received at least 1 developmental screening
32%

Received at least 1 oral health screening
93%

Received at least 1 blood lead screening
77%

Received at least 1 vision screening
94%

Recommended Care for Children with SCD

89%
received pneumococcal vaccines.

55%
of children between ages 2 and 15 received Transcranial Doppler (TCD) screenings to help identify risk of stroke.

31%
of children were prescribed hydroxyurea at any point.

Strengthening Care Pathways

Medi-Cal plays a critical role in shaping the health of children with sickle cell disease. Strengthening how the program supports care can ensure children receive consistent, comprehensive services.

- **Encourage enrollment in specialized care networks:** Referrals to CCS and SCD specialty centers help families access coordinated, expert care.
- **Encourage preventive and routine screenings:** Increasing use of TCD stroke screenings, developmental screenings, and other preventive services can close critical gaps in early care.
- **Encourage access to evidence-based treatment:** Expanding provider and family support for therapies like hydroxyurea can improve long-term outcomes.

About the Data

The information presented is based on data available to the California Sickle Cell Data Collection (CA SCDC) Program as of 2023 and may not fully reflect the entire population of people currently living with sickle cell disease (SCD) in the state. Other analyses using different data sources, methods, or time periods will produce different counts. Demographic data reflect all children with SCD on Medi-Cal identified through CA SCDC using linked data sources. Results for enrollment, recommended preventive care, and treatment metrics are based on children enrolled in Medi-Cal during 2017-2021. Recommended care guidelines for SCD are available from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute-- scan the QR code to the right for more information. Preventive and routine screenings shown here are based on Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) services recommended for all children enrolled in Medicaid.

California's SCDC program aims to improve access to quality healthcare, reduce health disparities, and increase awareness of the disease by providing data, conducting analyses, and communicating information to Sickle Cell Disease partners throughout the state of California.

If you are interested in learning more about California's Sickle Cell Data Collection program, please visit www.cascdc.org or contact us at scdc@trackingcalifornia.org.