

Blue Tag Gala 2014

October 25, 2014

Benefiting the Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center at
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia®



Eric, age 4

What is the “Blue Tag” Gala and how can we participate?

The 14th Annual Blue Tag Gala benefits the Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. This year's event will be held at the Hyatt at The Bellevue on Saturday, October 25, 2014, starting at 6 p.m. with cocktails, followed by dinner and dancing. (Black tie attire suggested.) The Blue Tag name stems from the need patients with sickle cell disease have for many blood transfusions. Since it is best for them to receive blood that closely matches their own, donors can ask for a “Blue Tag” to notify the American Red Cross that a blood donation is designated for a sickle cell center.

There are many sponsorship levels for friends of the Hospital to showcase their leadership support of the Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center. Sponsorship reservations must be received by Monday, August 4, to be included in the invitation and by Friday, September 12, to ensure listing in the program book.

Pain as a Part of Life

Millions of people worldwide, including more than 80,000 in the United States, are affected by sickle cell disease (SCD) and, as a result, suffer from increased risk of infection and painful episodes called crises. The disease is estimated to occur in one in 500 African Americans and one in 1,000 to 1,400 Hispanic Americans. The red blood cells of people with SCD are hard and “sickle” shaped, causing them to block blood flow and leading to organ damage, especially in the lungs, kidneys, spleen and brain.

The Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center at Children's Hospital — one of the largest in the nation — strives to reduce the devastating effects of SCD. Under the leadership of Director Kim Smith-Whitley, M.D., the Center cares for more than 1,000 patients. At this time, the only cure for SCD, bone marrow transplantation, is so limited only 300 procedures have been done. But there is hope.

Hope on the Horizon

Alan Flake, M.D., director of the Center for Fetal Research, has spent nearly 30 years developing a pioneering procedure that gives real hope for a cure. It involves bone marrow stem cell transplants from the mother to her child. Dr. Flake estimates that with philanthropic support, he will be able to begin clinical trials in humans in three years.

Philanthropic support through a Blue Tag Gala sponsorship will speed research and also allow the Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center to expand and enhance treatments for patients and families.



(l to r) Alan W. Flake, M.D., Director, Center for Fetal Research and Christian K. West, patient speaker.

The Blue Tag Gala is an elegant evening featuring live music, cocktails, fine dining, a silent auction and dancing late into the night.

