



# Asthma Program Evaluation Guide

LEARNING  
AND GROWING  
THROUGH  
EVALUATION

*2021 Updates*



Copies of *Learning and Growing through Evaluation: Asthma Program Evaluation Guide* can be viewed or downloaded from [http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/program\\_eval/guide.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/program_eval/guide.htm)

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National Center for Environmental Health,  
Division of Environmental Health Science and Practice,  
Asthma and Community Health Branch  
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<sup>1</sup> International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals. *Ann Intern Med* 1988; 108:258–265.

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## Introduction and Overview

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Asthma Control Program and asthma programs across the country are mobilizing their resources to reduce the burden of asthma in our communities. Following the sound evaluation practices detailed in *Learning and Growing through Evaluation* ensures that we use those resources effectively, efficiently, and in service of health equity; that we have a means of demonstrating the value of our programs; and that we are developing a body of knowledge that tells us what works.

*Learning and Growing* is an evaluation guide for public health departments that are receiving CDC funding for asthma programs. Other groups that focus on improving asthma management practices, whether or not they receive CDC funding, may also find elements of the guide useful for designing and implementing their own program evaluation activities.

CDC’s approach to public health program evaluation takes into account the great variety among public health programs and offers a framework that can be tailored. As diverse as asthma programs are, all share common aspirations with each other and with CDC’s Asthma and Community Health Branch (ACHB). Our aspirations are that

- People with asthma have better control of their disease and better quality of life.
- Comprehensive, evidence-based asthma control services are expanded and sustained.
- Funded jurisdictions have fewer disparities in asthma care and management and have improved health outcomes.
- Programs develop and use practice-based evidence about effective approaches to asthma control.

As its title suggests, this guide focuses on **learning** together how we can reach our goals and **growing** in our capacity to systematically examine, or evaluate, our efforts.

### Organization of the Guide

The six modules in the guide provide an overview of the CDC *Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health* (MMWR, 1999) as applied to various aspects of asthma programs.

An emphasis on generating information or knowledge that will be useful to the many people invested in a program’s success is fundamental to CDC’s approach. Whether you are new to program evaluation or have years of experience, becoming familiar with this approach will give us a common vocabulary and support our work together.

Module 1 applies the CDC Framework to evaluation planning. The module addresses both creating a strategic evaluation plan to prioritize the use of scarce evaluation resources and planning sound evaluation strategies for use in evaluating specific program activities. Module 2 describes methods for implementing evaluations and is designed as a resource to be consulted when considering evaluation strategies and preparing individual evaluation plans. Modules 3–6 cover additional topics relevant to asthma programs. Modules 3 and 4 provide insights on how to evaluate partnership and surveillance activities—two important components of asthma program infrastructure. Module 5 offers guidance on using the CDC

Framework to evaluate services and systems interventions. Module 6 assists readers in framing and answering questions concerning costs by describing how to conduct economic evaluations using the CDC Framework.

### **Tools and Templates**

Throughout the guide you will find templates and checklists to facilitate your evaluation planning and practice; they will be particularly useful if you are new to evaluation. You can easily adapt the tools to the context in which your program operates. The examples given are illustrative only and are not meant to promote one particular evaluation question or method over another. By following the planning process outlined in the guide, you will arrive at your own conclusions regarding proposed evaluations. Blank evaluation templates and companion resources are available at [https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/program\\_eval/default.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/program_eval/default.htm).

CDC is committed to supporting asthma programs as they discover and share what works. By learning and growing together through evaluation, we can contribute to America breathing easier.

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### EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Josephine Malilay, Ph.D., M.P.H.  
Chief, Asthma and Community Health Branch

Pamela Collins, M.P.A., M.S.A.  
Deputy Chief, Asthma and Community Health Branch

Erik Svendsen, Ph.D.  
Director, Division of Environmental Health Science and Practice

### AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

*Fierro Consulting, Inc.*

Leslie A. Fierro, Ph.D., M.P.H.  
Ann Marie Castleman, M.P.H.  
Heather Codd, M.A., M.P.A.

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Thomas Chapel, M.B.A.	Elizabeth J. Herman, M.D., M.P.H.	Maureen Wilce, M.S.
Kari H. Cruz, M.P.H.	Tursynbek Nurmagambetov, Ph.D.	Amanda Savage-Brown, Ph.D.
Sheri Barrera-Disler, B.A.	Ayana Perkins, Ph.D.	Meredith Stocking, M.P.H.
Sarah Gill, M.A.	Robin Shrestha-Kuwahara, M.P.H.	

and

Carlyn Orians, M.S.  
*Independent Consultant*

Meenu Anand, M.S., M.B.A., M.P.H.  
*Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education*

*Assisted by Obinna Okeke, M.D., M.P.H., and James Guest, B.S., Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education*

## DESIGN AND PRODUCTION STAFF

### *Sensis staff*

Adrienne Peschard  
Javier San Miguel  
Nia Hand  
Rachel Ament

## REVIEWERS

### *Asthma Program staff members or State Department of Health staff members*

Carina Blackmore (Florida)	Debra Hodges (Alabama)	Alejandro Amil Rosario (Puerto Rico)
Kristine Caroppoli (Pennsylvania)	Carrie Huisingsh (Massachusetts)	Sarah Schillie (Illinois)
Manzoor Choudry (North Carolina)	Peng Li (Oklahoma)	Elizabeth Traore (New Hampshire)
Vadim Drobin (Pennsylvania)	Van Nguyen (Illinois)	Elizabeth Wasilevich (Michigan)
Rebecca Giles (Utah)	Justin Peng (Connecticut)	Lei Zhang (Mississippi)
Marcia Henning (New Mexico)	Deanna Rossi (California)	