

BREATHING EASIER *in*

PENNSYLVANIA



SUCCESS STORIES FROM
THE PENNSYLVANIA ASTHMA
CONTROL PROGRAM



“Yes, people can go and be treated for asthma in a clinical setting. But we’re focusing on asthma management and control and helping people live their lives to the fullest even with a diagnosis of asthma. It really comes down to education, and a doctor’s office can only provide so much. ...Our asthma program would not exist without CDC’s support.”

MELISSA BRONSTETTER

program administrator
PENNSYLVANIA ASTHMA
CONTROL PROGRAM

All information and data provided
by the Pennsylvania Department of
Health Asthma Control Program

THE PROBLEMS:

- In 2011, almost 13 percent of Pennsylvania adults had been diagnosed with asthma at some point in their lives, and nearly 10 percent of adults were currently living with asthma.
- In 2011, about 14 percent of Pennsylvania children had been diagnosed with asthma in their lifetimes and about 10 percent were currently living with the chronic respiratory disease.
- In 2011, more than 21,400 hospitalizations due to asthma as the primary discharge diagnosis occurred in Pennsylvania.
- The average cost of an asthma-related hospitalization in 2011 was more than \$25,000.



THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO ASTHMA:

The Pennsylvania Asthma Control Program and its partners focus on groups with the greatest needs. They increase asthma awareness, educate people on how to avoid environmental asthma triggers, partner with local stakeholders, and help residents manage their own health. And their efforts are paying off.

- The Pennsylvania Asthma Control Program partners with the Pennsylvania Medical Society to train physicians in national asthma care guidelines. From 2010 to 2012, the asthma program worked to integrate asthma education into Counter Details, the society’s online training program that provides continuing medical education credits. Thanks to the partnership, more than 650 physicians completed the asthma curriculum.
- In 2009, the Pennsylvania Asthma Control Program launched its Pediatric Asthma Toolkit for school nurses. The toolkit, which is available in English and Spanish, educates school nurses in asthma basics and asthma self-management. It encourages nurses to join the Pennsylvania Asthma Partnership and teaches them how to work effectively with students, teachers, and parents. The aim is to support school nurses in becoming asthma champions in their regions. The toolkit was sent to all of the state’s 501 school districts. School nurses who use the toolkit report improved ability to help students with asthma.
- In 2013, the Pennsylvania Asthma Control Program joined the Community Asthma Prevention Program, a project of Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. The program, which targets children ages 2 to 16, is based in Philadelphia ZIP codes with the highest asthma rates and identifies participants during asthma-related hospital visits. The state asthma program helps train health workers to assess homes for asthma triggers and connect families with local asthma control resources. It also provides non-CDC funding for remediation items, such as pillow and mattress covers. Research on the Community Asthma Prevention Program finds it is effective in reducing asthma triggers, asthma symptoms, and asthma-related emergency room visits and hospitalizations.
- In Pennsylvania, asthma results in millions of dollars in health care costs — costs that are largely preventable through an evidence-based, public health approach to asthma control.

CDC’s National Asthma Control Program

Pennsylvania is one of 36 states that receives funding and technical support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Asthma Control Program. Since 1999, CDC has been leading public health efforts to prevent costly asthma complications, create asthma-friendly environments, and empower people living with asthma with the tools they need to better manage their own health. **Find out more at** www.cdc.gov/asthma.

