

# BREATHING EASIER *in*

# HAWAII



## SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE HAWAII STATE ASTHMA CONTROL PROGRAM

Asthma is more than just a clinical disease; it's an environmental disease too. And a lot of asthma's management comes not only from the physician, but from the community as well. Without CDC's support, the guidance and leadership that the (Hawaii) asthma program provides to make sure different partners work together... all that would be lost.

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HAWAII STATE ASTHMA  
CONTROL PROGRAM

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

## THE PROBLEMS:

- More than 106,000 Hawaii residents are living with asthma, and about one-third of those are children. The chronic respiratory disease occurs most commonly among those 11 years old and younger.
- Every year, about 5,000 people in Hawaii visit the emergency room due to asthma and another 1,500 are hospitalized.
- Infants and very young children make up the majority of asthma-related medical emergencies and hospitalizations.
- Every year, asthma costs the state \$4.2 million in emergency room visits and \$14 million in hospitalizations.



## THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO ASTHMA:

The Hawaii State Asthma Control Program and its partners focus on communities 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.

- From 2003 to 2010, Hawaii's Asthma Control Program funded the Hawaii Childhood Rural Asthma Project. The project focused on training community health center providers in the latest asthma care protocols and teaching community outreach workers to conduct home-based asthma interventions. The project reached about 200 families, and it reduced asthma medication use, reduced doctor's visits, and resulted in fewer daily asthma symptoms. Now, community health center providers have the training to continue to serve at-risk asthma patients effectively.
- Hawaii's Asthma Control Program partnered with the state's first College of Pharmacy to educate students in asthma care. During their rotations, student pharmacists ask patients if they have a written asthma action plan, administer asthma control tests, and demonstrate proper inhaler techniques. The goal is to graduate pharmacists who will continue such work in the future.
- As a member of the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawaii, the Asthma Control Program is part of a statewide movement toward smoking-free housing. Thus, asthma staff provided information and messaging for a website that offers residents of multiunit dwellings tips on how to approach landlords about secondhand smoke. The program is also working to implement a new smoke-free policy in public housing.
- Thanks to the Asthma Control Program, the Hawaii Volcano Helpline offers tips on how to reduce asthma risks related to volcanic emissions. Since 2008, the helpline has responded to more than 20,000 calls.
- In Hawaii, asthma results in millions of dollars in health care costs, much of which is preventable through an evidence-based, public health approach to asthma control. Thanks in part to the efforts of the Hawaii State Asthma Control Program, asthma-related hospitalizations are on the decline among adults and children.

## CDC's National Asthma Control Program

Hawaii 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](http://www.cdc.gov/asthma).

