

BREATHING EASIER *in* MONTANA



SUCCESS STORIES FROM
THE MONTANA ASTHMA
CONTROL PROGRAM

“Asthma is an environmental illness. It’s not something you can just treat inside a doctor’s office. (Without CDC funds) we would lose much of our capacity to do these projects. We’d see an increase in asthma morbidity, an increase in asthma costs and a decrease in asthma-related quality of life.”

KATIE LOVELAND

program manager

MONTANA ASTHMA
CONTROL PROGRAM

THE PROBLEMS:

- About 84,000 Montana residents are living with asthma, including 9 percent of the adult population and 7 percent of the state's children.
- About 60 percent of adults and children with asthma say the chronic respiratory disease limits their activities.
- About 10 percent of adults with asthma cannot afford to see a doctor, and more than 15 percent forgo needed medication because of cost.
- In 2010, the cost of asthma-related hospitalizations reached \$5 million.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO ASTHMA:

The Montana 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 community stakeholders, and help residents manage their own health. And their efforts are paying off.

- Montana’s Asthma home visiting Project (MAP) trains local health workers to empower the families of children with uncontrolled asthma with the knowledge and tools they need to manage the disease. The MAP includes six visits with a nurse, who assesses the environment for asthma triggers and educates the families on asthma self-management. As a result, proper medication use has improved, daily symptoms have decreased, and many more children have a documented asthma action plan.
- More than 600 school personnel have received hands-on training in creating supportive environments for students with asthma. In a survey conducted in 2011, 60 percent of school administrators reported receiving a school-based asthma resource guide and 23 percent reported receiving related training. Schools where administrators have received training are significantly more likely to have asthma-friendly policies and practices in place.
- The state asthma program is assisting hospitals to implement the Asthma Hospital Patient Education, Action Plan, and Discharge (AHEAD) Protocol. The AHEAD Protocol promotes the use of evidenced based care and education to empower patients to better manage their asthma after a trip to the emergency department. By August 2012, nine of Montana’s 45 hospitals had adopted the protocol.
- Before the state asthma program, Montana had only seven certified asthma educators. Today, more than 30 certified asthma educators are raising awareness about effective asthma control. Also, more than 300 health care providers have been trained in asthma care and prevention.
- In Montana, asthma results in millions of dollars in health care costs—costs that are largely preventable. Thanks in part to the Montana Asthma Control Program and its partners, asthma-related hospitalizations are on the decline.



CDC’s National Asthma Control Program

Montana 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.

