

BREATHING EASIER *in*

CONNECTICUT



SUCCESS STORIES FROM
THE CONNECTICUT ASTHMA
CONTROL PROGRAM



“Asthma places an enormous toll on the health of Connecticut residents, and its impact is growing. Our program identifies the populations that suffer the greatest asthma burden, and works with providers and other partners to tailor initiatives that meet the needs of those who are disproportionately affected.”

EILEEN BOULAY, RN

program manager

CONNECTICUT'S ASTHMA

CONTROL PROGRAM

THE PROBLEMS:

- In Connecticut, asthma is a growing problem for kids and adults. From 2000 to 2010, the number of adults with asthma rose by almost 18 percent.
- In 2010, more than 11.3 percent of the state's children were living with the chronic respiratory disease.
- Asthma-related hospitalizations and emergency department visits among adults and children have been on the rise.
- In 2009, Connecticut spent more than \$80.25 million on asthma-related hospitalizations and more than \$32.6 million on asthma-related emergency department visits.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO ASTHMA:

The Connecticut Department of Public Health's (CT DPH) 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.

- The Putting on AIRS (Asthma Indoor Risk Strategies) Program provides one-on-one education and environmental assessments to asthma patients and their families. The program helps empower families with the knowledge and tools they need to effectively control asthma. In 3 years, Putting on AIRS and its local partners have reached 600 Connecticut families. Health officials report the effort resulted in a decrease in asthma-related hospitalizations and emergency department visits and fewer school absences.
- The CT DPH Asthma Control Program and its partners have trained about 1,100 Connecticut health care providers in the latest asthma care and management guidelines via the Easy Breathing[®] Program. The training helps providers determine asthma severity as well as develop written asthma action plans for patients. The program has resulted in dramatically better medication use as well as decreased hospitalization and emergency department visits among pediatric asthma patients.
- More than 800 Connecticut schools have received training on creating healthy indoor environments for students with asthma through Tools for Schools. The Asthma Program is now working to develop an online training curriculum for school nurses.
- The CT DPH is making a difference, and state policymakers are taking notice. As a result, efforts are underway to conduct a reimbursement pilot for asthma patient self-management education to provide an evidence base for future state Medicaid policy changes.
- In Connecticut, 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

Connecticut 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.

