

June 2009

**Upcoming PAP****Events:**

Check out the new events calendar online!

Remember to place your own asthma related events to attract more individuals!

Contact Sara (info@paasthma.org) for more information on how to post your own events!!

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Partners Sharing

Featured Partner...

Laura Smith: A Mother, An Asthmatic, A Consumer

Laura Smith, an asthmatic and mother of two asthmatics has found the Pennsylvania Asthma Partnership (PAP) through the American Lung Association (ALA) to be a great help and investment of her time. She takes great comfort in knowing the work she is doing with PAP has the potential to help many others with asthma.

Diagnosed in 1997, Laura had severe asthma that was relatively uncontrolled and would spend time in the hospital due to asthma episodes. Laura's asthma is now well controlled and has been followed by a pulmonologist for the past 10 years. She reports that the cold and flu season, as well as the allergy seasons, are particularly challenging for her and her family due to the fact that colds and allergies can trigger asthma.

On any given day, you can find the Smith family following a very strict routine in the morning. At the breakfast table, both mother and children calculate their peak flow using the peak flow meter and administer their medication accordingly. For her son, they found some of his asthma symptoms were associated with allergies so he also takes an allergy medication. This routine has helped the entire family to control their asthma.

As a consumer and a nurse in the York Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Laura has found it important to be involved with the partnership because there are many unreached and uneducated asthmatics that need the proper care and education. Initially, Laura began contact with the Pennsylvania Pediatric Adult Asthma Coalition (PPAAC) while researching how to advocate her son's right to carry his rescue inhaler at school. Through Laura's hard work, her son is now able to carry his rescue inhaler at school. Through PPAAC, she became involved with Department of Health (DOH) stakeholders and was part of writing the Pa State Asthma Action Plan.

Laura's vision for being part of the PAP as a consumer is to make Pennsylvania a better place for

both adults and children with asthma. She wants those who need it, including schools and workplaces, to see that more education about asthma reaches employers and employees. She wants to be an inspirational advocate for those that need to discuss the effectiveness of their medication with their physician. Laura also wants to educate the state's political officials about why asthma is important and why having clean air both inside and outside is essential.

Laura is definitely a role model for both having controlled her family's asthma and being such a dedicated consumer member to the Partnership. As this newsletter's featured partner, please join me in congratulating Laura on all she has helped to accomplish so far for PA asthma. She and many others continue to work diligently through PAP to reduce the burden of asthma in PA.

Bridging the Language Gap in Public Health

To provide useful and current public health information, CDC translates its communication products into many different languages. CDC provides health and safety messages in several languages during emergencies, natural disasters, severe weather, and disease outbreaks.

<http://www.cdc.gov/other/languages>

Upcoming Events...

For a full listing of asthma events in PA, check out the brand new section of PAP's website. Go to: <http://www.paasthma.org/news/event-calendar>

If you have any program information that you would like to be advertized in the calendar, please email info@PAasthma.org for directions on how you can post events!

Six Short Asthma-Related Videos

The American Association of School Administrators is proud to present six web-based videos on asthma in schools. These videos were created by the Wisconsin team of the Leadership Forum for Healthy Students and Healthy Schools.

The team created six short "rich media" presentations that are available online and free of charge at <http://www.wasda.org/public/resources/Asthma.asp>. I encourage you to share them with anyone you think might benefit.

The Leadership Forum for Healthy Students and Healthy Schools is an activity of AASA's cooperative agreement with the CDC to build the capacity of school leaders to work on asthma issues. To that end, and in close partnership with the National School Boards Association, we convened a five-state partnership to bring together superintendents, school board members, and state health, education, and asthma leaders. These videos are one result from the partnership in Wisconsin.

Nancy Dorman of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards is the team lead of the project. Miles Turner, executive director of the Wisconsin Association of

School District Administrators, provided the technology base, and various team members contributed to the content.

For more information about the asthma work at AASA in general, please visit <http://www.aasa.org/focus/content.cfm?ItemNumber=1951> for an overview of the project.



GIP Report

Guidelines Implementation Panel Report for Expert Panel Report 3 - Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma. The Guidelines Implementation Panel (GIP) Report, "Partners Putting Guidelines Into Action," presents recommendations and strategies for overcoming barriers to the acceptance and utilization of the updated NHLBI clinical practice guidelines for asthma. At the heart of the GIP Report are six key messages to address those issues considered to be the most likely ones to result in significant impact on asthma care processes and outcomes if the broader asthma community were to focus its attention and resources on them. The GIP Report is a call to action by the full range of guideline end-users, including medical professionals, office support staff, educators, administrators, policy makers, purchasers and payers of healthcare services in both the private and public sectors.

To view this report and/or to purchase it, visit http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/asthma/gip_rpt.htm You may also request copies by phone at (301) 592-8573.

Workgroup Update...

Executive Committee: During the month of March the Executive Committee had several meetings to assist in guiding the future direction for the CDC grant renewal. One major decision reached was to support efforts of the Chronic Care Model through work with the Chronic Care Commission.

Awareness/Education:

School Programs— The schools asthma 101 presentation has been fully approved and is now being taken into schools across the state for presentation and testing. Over time, individuals from any workgroup will be able to present this material. The subcommittee would first like to confirm the content is fully appropriate for the target audience.

World Asthma Day — This subcommittee assisted in the coordination of items for the World Asthma Day education at the Capital. The workgroup also organized separate activities in honor of World Asthma Day. These included local magazine articles and educational health fairs.

Programs — Will continue to gather programs from around the state to add onto the program listing within www.PAasthma.org. Please send any known programs to Info@PAasthma.org for addition to the website. This subcommittee has also organized unconventional capacity building workshops in different areas of the state. On March 12, 2009 a successful Capacity Building Workshop was held in the southeast region of Pennsylvania. A second regional workshop was canceled, due to lack of attendance in the Northeast region. Comments were very positive despite this result. The subcommittee will reevaluate their efforts and effectiveness in upcoming workgroup meetings.

Disparities: The PA Pediatric Asthma Toolkit continues to be distributed through the Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers (PACHC). PACHC is individually teaching health centers about the kit as they complete site visits. The entire Disparities workgroup has also broken themselves up to participate in every workgroup. They want to integrate disparities education into each area of PAP's efforts.

Environment/Workplace: The group has been researching workplace asthma education programs in use by other states. This listing is now posted online for download. They have also found that awareness and education on work-related asthma is lacking within Pennsylvania. In time, the workgroup hopes to move forward in developing Pennsylvania's own workplace asthma education program. The workgroup is also looking into asthma and environmental educational programs for childcare facilities.

Providers: PAP's second Asthma Champion Conference was held on June 10, 2009. Continuing education credits have been awarded through Geisinger Medical Center. The conference engaged medical professionals in quality asthma management per the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) and introduced successful asthma treatment and education techniques. This year's session was taped in full, with the goal of providing continuing education credits online in the future.

Public Policy: The group worked along with the awareness/education workgroup to plan the World Asthma Day at the Capital on May 5, 2009. A Proclamation in honor of World Asthma Day will be read on the floor of the House and the Senate. This workgroup also hand-delivered educational packets for all legislators that day.

Surveillance: The committee completed publication of the 2009 Pennsylvania Burden Report. Currently working on analyzing the data from the public policy Act 187 school nurse survey. A report will follow and will be released online.

Environmental Health Tools Now Available in Spanish

The National Environmental Education Foundation's pediatric environmental health tools are now available in Spanish for health care professionals serving the Hispanic community.

Children are highly susceptible to environmental pollutants. Furthermore, minorities and low income families are disproportionately exposed to a variety of environmental hazards, leading to higher rates of adverse health outcomes. Hispanic children are almost twice as likely to be hospitalized for asthma as white children, and those under six are nearly three times as likely to have elevated blood lead levels.

The tools include "Environmental Management of Pediatric Asthma: Guidelines for Health Care Providers," (<http://www.neefusa.org/health/asthma/asthmaguidelines.htm>) are designed to help pediatric primary care providers advise families about environmental interventions to help reduce or eliminate triggers for children diagnosed with asthma, the nation's leading pediatric chronic illness. For more information, read our press release in English (http://www.neefusa.org/healthReleaseENGLISH_03172009.pdf) and Spanish (http://www.neefusa.org/healthReleaseSPANISH_03182009.pdf)



Statins May Keep Asthma Patients Out of the ER

Asthma sufferers taking statins in addition to their regular medicine required significantly fewer trips to the hospital, according to a study that provides the latest suggestion of added benefits from the widely-used cholesterol lowering drugs.

Among adults on inhaled corticosteroids in the 6,574-patient study, those also taking statins reduced their chances of an asthma-related hospitalization or emergency room visit by 33 percent, according to data presented at the American Academy of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology meeting in Washington.

Statins, including Pfizer Inc's Lipitor, lower levels of bad LDL cholesterol in the blood and have been shown to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke. They have also demonstrated anti-inflammatory properties that could play a role in helping with asthma and other diseases.

The incidence of a recurrent hospitalization or ER visits was 29.4 percent for those not taking a statin but fell to 20.5 percent for those patients on a cholesterol fighter, researchers said.

For the full report visit: <http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSTRE52F2TV20090316>

Asthma Control Via Cell Phone

Asthma control is always enhanced by having a solid, customized Asthma Action Plan. But what if that plan could be updated and developed on the fly, as things in your world and with your condition changed? And what if those changes and asthma coaching could come to you via your cell phone? Pretty radical and futuristic, huh?

Well, according to a recent press release, this concept will be a reality in our not too distant future. A medical software company called WellDoc is partnering with pharmaceutical giant, AstraZeneca, to create a patient-support program to help patients manage all aspects of their asthma through web & mobile device technology.

Here is what will be included:

- A virtual messenger service via cell phone
- Air quality & pollen count alerts
- Online patient support tools that will help you manage your asthma in conjunction with your asthma treatment plan

Hopefully, this will become available fairly soon. Check the below link or with AstraZeneca directly, for updates on the official launch date.

<http://asthma.about.com/b/2008/10/29/asthma-control-via-cell-phone.htm>

Heating Assistance/ LIHEAP

The Pennsylvania Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps low income residents pay their heating bills through home heating energy assistance and crisis grants. You do not need an unpaid bill to receive home heating energy assistance. You can receive this money without being in the Cash Assistance program -- a family of four with an annual income of up to \$44,443 can qualify for assistance. No lien is placed on your property if you receive this help.

You can apply for and renew your benefits using COMPASS, the online resource for cash assistance, Food Stamps, help with child care, health care coverage, home heating assistance (LIHEAP), school meals, SelectPlan for Women and long

-term living services.

Crisis Grants

Additional money may be available if you have an emergency situation and are in jeopardy of losing your heat. Emergency situations include: broken heating equipment or leaking lines that must be fixed or replaced, lack of fuel, termination of utility service or danger of being without fuel or of having utility service terminated.

For more information and a list of counties and services please check out www.dpw.state.pa.us/ServicesPrograms/LIHEAP/

The 2009 version of EPA's asthma materials order form has been uploaded to the PAP Toolkit.

Remember to download and print your version today!

<http://www.paasthma.org/asthma-resources/asthma-toolkit/community>

US Bans More Inhalers

The United States has acted to end distribution of both albuterol and epinephrine inhalers that are propelled by ozone damaging substances. Effective January 1, 2009, the United States banned sale or distribution of CFC propelled albuterol inhaler products in the US, enforcing a rule which was issued over three years ago. Now, the US has announced that it is banning the epinephrine inhalers that are sold over the counter as Primatene Mist™ and private label store brands. If you rely on these inhalers, act now. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) urges patients to talk with their health

care professionals now about any questions related to the new HFA-propelled albuterol inhalers. View our materials on this transition at www.transitionnow.org, and reach out to your physician for additional advice. In addition, AAFA has added new information on www.aafa.org that explains in detail, how to use, prep, and clean each of the four HFA inhalers.

The Primatene ban will take effect in three years (12/31/2011). The FDA has ruled that over the counter epinephrine inhalers emit an ozone depleting substance, substitutes are feasible to produce, epinephrine inhalers do not provide a greater therapeutic benefit than similar bronchodilators, and that its over-

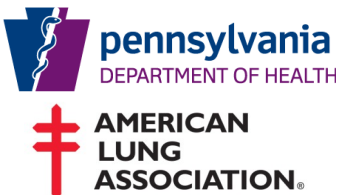
the-counter distribution does not provide an important public health benefit. Further, the FDA expressed concern about the risks of self-treatment by patients with over-the-counter medications for asthma. This ban will not affect the availability of epinephrine auto injectors, like the EpiPen®.

For more information, contact AAFA's Director of Public Policy & Advocacy, Charlotte W. Collins, at charlotte@aafa.org.



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The Pennsylvania Asthma Partnership (PAP) is the joining together of all individuals interested in reducing the asthma burden throughout Pennsylvania. Partners work on short, medium and long-term outcomes, which when implemented can be measured. The ultimate goal is to decrease asthma morbidity, mortality, and costs to increase the quality of life for those with asthma. Partners participate in workgroups such as: Surveillance/Evaluation; Environment/Workplace; Awareness/Education; Provider; Disparities; and Public Policy. Workgroups move towards achieving the goals within the 2006 Pennsylvania Asthma Action Plan. Membership is free and open to anyone.

The Pennsylvania Asthma Partnership is a collaboration between the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the American Lung Association. This collaboration is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For your own copy of the 2006 Pennsylvania Asthma Action Plan please visit www.health.state.pa.us.

Have an interesting article you'd like featured in the newsletter? Let us know! Send a copy to us at Info@PAasthma.org

Pennsylvania's Health and Human Services Call Center

Pennsylvania's **Health and Human Services Call Center** provides information, brochures, application and renewal assistance for health care coverage, and also hosts a searchable referral database for residents of Pennsylvania accessible at www.HelpinPA.state.pa.us. The Health and Human Services Call Center responds to callers on behalf of

the Pennsylvania Departments of Health, Public Welfare, Aging, and Insurance.

- Healthy Kids Line 1-800-986-KIDS
- Healthy Baby Line 1-800-986-BABY
- Adult Basic Line 1-800-GO BASIC
- Long Term Care Line 1-866-286-3636
- PA Recreation and Leisure Line 1-800-986-4550
- Special Kids Network Line 1-800-

986-4550

- Brain Injury Help Line 1-866-412-4755
- Lead Information Line 1-800-440-LEAD

Trained specialists can answer the Helpline's phones in English, Spanish and Russian. They are able to serve all the caller's needs in a single call. For example, families calling the Healthy Kids helpline for CHIP coverage can also receive information and referrals for a child who needs adaptive clothing as well as services for their aging parent and program information for a relative who experienced a recent brain injury.

*The PAP website was updated!!!
It can be found at www.PAasthma.org
New features within the site are:*

****An online membership form, an events calendar and updated PAP workgroup tasks****

BE SURE TO CHECK IT OUT!!!