Report Highlights:

- Updates from the Montana Asthma Control Program.
- Recent asthma-related research, including:
  - Planned updates to the clinical practice guidelines for asthma;
  - Impact of neighborhood walkability on asthma; and
  - Clinical quality improvement initiatives.
- Information about upcoming events and educational opportunities.

Quarterly Asthma Newsletter

News

1) The most recent webinar from the Montana Asthma Control Program, “Acute and Chronic Disease Management in People with Substance Use Disorder” with Dr. Alyssse Wurcel from Tufts University, was recorded and is available for viewing in the MACP’s online webinar archive.

2) The School Health Program and the Montana Office of Public Instruction opened the Allergies and Anaphylaxis Readiness online training course on the Montana Teacher Learning Hub on September 5, 2018. This 1-2 hour self-paced online learning course was designed to educate school staff in Montana. In its first month, 17 school staff completed the training. The Creating Asthma Friendly Schools course opened in May of 2017. Since its inception, more than 170 school staff have taken the training to learn how to support students with asthma. Healthcare providers can help young patients avoid asthma exacerbations in school by encouraging families to speak with school staff about creating safe and healthy learning environments. Other stakeholders can do their part to promote healthy school environments by sharing these trainings with their school contacts. Trainings can be found at learninghub.mrooms.net.

3) The EXHALE technical package is available online from the CDC. This resource describes a group of evidence-based strategies to improve asthma control and reduce health care costs and includes approaches for implementing those strategies. It is intended to inform decision-making in communities, organizations, and state governments.

3) The Montana Asthma Control Program recently published its findings from the Montana Asthma Home Visiting Program (MAP) in the Journal of Asthma. Since June 2010, over 500 children have participated in the MAP to help learn about their asthma and reduce environmental triggers, and 45% completed all six visits. Participants who finish the program report significant improvements in asthma control test scores, self-management skills, and self-efficacy related to asthma management. These results improve the longer a person remains in the program. Thank you to everyone who continues to make this activity possible across the state! Adults are now enrolling in some locations; check with the asthma home visiting program near you for details.

4) The New York City Health Department maintains a website with asthma management materials that can be translated into over 20 different languages. In the upper right corner, users can access a drop down menu to translate the entire website.
Updating the Expert Panel Report (EPR)-3 to the EPR-4

The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program Coordinating Committee (NAEPPCC) Expert Panel Report (EPR) 4 Working Group was established in 2018 to update the clinical practice guidelines for the diagnosis and management of asthma, which were last updated in 2007.

Learn more about members of the Working Group, the five systematic reviews that will be used to inform the update, and other related publications from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute website. Topic areas to be examined include:

- Role of immunotherapy in the treatment of asthma;
- Intermittent inhaled corticosteroids and long-acting muscarinic antagonist for asthma;
- Effectiveness of indoor allergen reduction in management of asthma;
- Effectiveness and safety of bronchial thermoplasty in management of asthma; and
- Clinical utility of fractional exhaled nitric oxide (FeNO) in asthma management.


Authors state asthma “is the most prevalent chronic respiratory disease worldwide,” and outline protocols, key questions, methodology, and analytic framework to support the update of the 2007 National Asthma Education and Prevention Program Expert Panel Report on the diagnosis and management of asthma in adults and children. In particular, the panel will be looking into the evidence for the efficacy of various treatment strategies by subpopulations of interest and by setting (clinic, emergency department, and home). The panel will also be looking into the effectiveness of specific environmental interventions such as carpet removal or cleaning, covers for bedding and furniture, and pet removal or bathing, among others. When complete, the draft guideline report will undergo peer review and be available for public comments before publication.

Asthma remission


Researchers recruited 200 adult patients who had been diagnosed with asthma within the previous year and followed them for five years. Clinical, functional, and inflammatory measurements were collected at baseline and during annual visits. Authors defined remission as absence of asthma symptoms for 1 year or longer, and no asthma medication use for a year or more. Of the 200 patients in the cohort, 170 were ultimately included in the final analysis.

Asthma remission was seen in 15.9% of patients. Patients with persistent asthma were generally older, with worse control over their asthma, required higher doses of controller medications, and more severe airway hyperresponsiveness, more often had nasal polyps, and higher levels of blood neutrophils than patients who experienced clinical remission.

One in six patients with adult-onset asthma experienced remission within the 5 year study period. Authors concluded that, in patients with moderate to severe bronchial hyperresponsiveness and nasal polyposis, “the chance of remission is close to zero.”
Neighborhood Walkability


Researchers investigated the relationship between childhood asthma neighborhood walkability, which captures features in a community that promote walking and has been shown to protect against chronic conditions like obesity and diabetes. Data from the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences provided a cohort of 326,383 children in Toronto born between 1997 and 2003. Home neighborhood walkability was measured with a validated walkability index that includes four dimensions: population density, dwelling density, access to retail and services, and street connectivity.

Low birth home neighborhood walkability was associated with an increased incidence of asthma. Among children who developed asthma, low walkability in a given year of a child’s life was associated with greater odds of ongoing asthma in the same year. Researchers concluded that children living in neighborhoods with low walkability were at increased risk of incident and ongoing asthma, and suggest walkability improvement projects could be a strategy to contribute to primary asthma prevention.

The Nutrition and Physical Activity (NAPA) program at MT DPPHS administers the Building Active Communities Initiative (BACI). This project provides in-depth, interactive training, mentoring, and ongoing technical assistance for community-led approaches to develop active and healthy communities.

Enhancing guideline-based asthma care processes through a multi-state, multi-center quality improvement program

Journal of Asthma, 2018. DOI: 10.1080/02770903.2018.1463378

The American Lung Association of the Upper Midwest (ALAUM) recently published findings from its Enhancing Care for Patients with Asthma (ECPA) collaborative quality improvement initiative in the Journal of Asthma. This initiative was implemented in 65 community health centers across four states: Illinois, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas and utilized the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model to promote evidence-based strategies for diagnosing and managing asthma.

The ECPA collected data from participating health centers before and immediately after participation in the 12-month initiative, and again 6 months after completion. Participation in the ECPA was shown to be positively associated with improvement in all six measures collected at baseline and again at completion, including documentation of:

- Asthma severity;
- Asthma Control Test;
- Pulmonary function testing;
- Asthma education;
- Asthma Action Plans; and
- Controller medication.

Improvement was sustained for all six measures at the 6-month post-completion follow up.

To learn more about whether or not an ALA Quality Improvement clinical cohort is starting in your area, contact Marcy Ballman at Marcy.Ballman@lung.org. To learn more about asthma QI support programs available across Montana from the Montana Asthma Control Program, contact Stacey Wolfe at Stacey.Wolfe@mt.gov. This includes four $2,000 grants for primary care practices and emergency departments, as well as two free spirometry trainings.
For more information, contact:

asthmainfo@mt.gov

Sarah Brokaw, MPH
Program Manager
(406) 444-9154
sbrokaw@mt.gov

Dorota Carpenedo, MPH
Epidemiologist
(406) 444-0653
dcarpenedo@mt.gov

Anna Bradley, MS, CHES
Evaluator
(406) 444-7304
abradley@mt.gov

Shea Vogl
Data Analyst
(406) 444-4592
svogl@mt.gov

Stacey Wolfe
QI Coordinator
(406) 444-9729
stacey.wolfe@mt.gov

BJ Biskupiak
School Health/MAP Coordinator
(406) 444-0995
wbiskupiak@mt.gov

Program Updates

- Anna Bradley has accepted a new position in the Public Health System Improvement Office of the Public Health and Safety Division in MT DPHHS as the Strategic Planning Analyst. You can still reach her at abradley@mt.gov.

- The Montana Asthma Control Program (MACP) has a few scholarship opportunities for the Certified Asthma Educator exam available to Montana-based health care professionals. If you’re interested in accessing these scholarships, please reach out to Sarah Brokaw at sbrokaw@mt.gov. These are available on a first come, first served basis.

- The Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Bureau has released a progress report from 2016-2018 that includes all of its programs, including the MACP.

- BJ Biskupiak was interviewed by the American Public Health Association for an article on state asthma home visiting programs in the Nation’s Health newspaper. Congratulations to BJ and all of the asthma home visitors in Montana for doing nationally-recognized work!

Upcoming Events

Montana Diabetes Professional Conference
October 25-26, 2018
Fairmont Hot Springs
Register online at
www.umt.edu/sell/cps/diabetes/

Montana Asthma Advisory Group
December 6, 2018
Online or Helena, MT
For more information, please contact Sarah Brokaw at sbrokaw@mt.gov

Montana Diabetes Advisory Coalition
January 25, 2019
Helena, MT
For more information, please contact Sarah Brokaw at sbrokaw@mt.gov

Big Sky Pulmonary Conference
February 7-9, 2019
Fairmont Hot Springs
Registration is not yet open. Learn more at
www.umt.edu/sell/cps/bigskypulmonary

Online Resources

Montana Asthma Control Program
dphhs.mt.gov/asthma

Suicide prevention:
Montana Suicide Prevention
dphhs.mt.gov/suicideprevention/suicideresources

Information about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and resources
www.elevatemontana.org

Information to help prepare for winter:
MT DPHHS can pay part of winter energy bills for eligible people.
dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/energyassistance

Local Human Resource Development Councils of Montana can also help with energy assistance, weatherization, and other similar needs
housing.mt.gov/CommunityPartners/HRDC