



Statewide Easy Breathing Program Status

As of the writing of this newsletter, the CT State Department of Public Health will not fund the Statewide Easy Breathing program in FY17. Regardless, this lack of funding should not stop you from continuing to use the program, as several of you have been doing. Several sites have been faxing, emailing or mailing us completed forms. We review forms for accuracy and if a treatment plan is submitted, we verify that the plan adheres to the national asthma guidelines and then we enter the forms in our statewide database. Clarification questions and/or feedback on treatment plans are returned to the sites. We appreciate your continued use of the program and your commitment to providing optimal asthma care to your patients. Contact information for submitting forms is provided at the bottom of page 2 of this newsletter.

SPOTLIGHT—EASY BREATHING, TOP 5 UTILIZERS

In this newsletter we are highlighting the Top 5 utilizers for each of three Easy Breathing program areas; enrolling participants into Easy Breathing, assessing asthma control via the Asthma Control Test and providing patients with asthma treatment plans. See Table 1 below and keep up the Good Work!

Table 1: Top 5 Easy Breathing Utilizers in Three Program Areas, 2017*

| Number of newly enrolled Easy Breathing participants, 2017 | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Clinic/Practice | City | Number |
| Community Health Center, Inc. | Hartford | 887 |
| Pediatric & Medical Associates, PC | Cheshire | 326 |
| Community Health Services | Hartford | 313 |
| Vernon Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine | Vernon | 203 |
| Somerset Pediatrics | Glastonbury | 202 |
| Number of Asthma Control Tests submitted (cACTs/ACTs), 2017 | | |
| Clinic/Practice | City | Number |
| Community Health Center, Inc. | Hartford | 1681 |
| Staywell Health Center , Children's Health Center | Waterbury | 590 |
| Staywell Health Center, Phoenix Location | Waterbury | 584 |
| Meriden Pediatric Associates | Meriden | 471 |
| Daykimball Health Care, Putnam Pediatric Center | Putnam | 160 |
| Number of Asthma Treatment Plans submitted, 2017 | | |
| Clinic/Practice | City | Number |
| Staywell Health Center, Children's Health Center | Waterbury | 200 |
| Community Health Center, Inc. | Hartford | 175 |
| Rocky Hill Pediatrics | Rocky Hill | 150 |
| Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine of Cheshire, LLC | Cheshire | 74 |
| Farmington Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine | Farmington | 63 |

Highlights

- Status of Easy Breathing
- Top 5 utilizers
- Pulmonologist's Corner
- Boxed warning removed
- EPR-4 guidelines

*2017 data for Burgdorf Clinic, Hartford not available.

Pulmonologist's Corner—Dr. Tregony Simoneau, Asthma Center Co-Director

- ◆ Many children with asthma encounter their asthma triggers on a seasonal basis and many cases of seasonal asthma occur in the winter due to the increased burden of respiratory viruses. For others, their asthma is triggered in the spring and fall with pollen/allergen exposure. Accordingly, asthma treatment plans may specify that controller medications only be taken during the child's high trigger season. It is our recommendation that severity for these children be classified based upon their worst season. For example, a child who has moderate persistent asthma during the winter months, but intermittent asthma during the summer, should be classified as moderate persistent.
- ◆ The flu has been rapidly spreading and CT is one of the states with widespread activity. As of mid-January there have been 32 flu deaths reported in CT. Children with asthma are more likely to experience severe disease and complications from the flu. It is not too late for children to receive the flu vaccine and flu vaccination is recommended for everyone with asthma over 6 months of age .



A Message from the American Academy of Pediatrics Connecticut Chapter (CT-AAP)

In December 2017, a pediatric practice in Connecticut received a letter from Department of Public Health stating the practice was charging a fee to a patient for the blue school form. DPH said that the practice could not charge more than \$.65/page because it was a "medical record," and that they needed to keep a copy or the original in the patient's record for 7 years. Attorneys from CT-AAP contacted DPH and clarified that blue forms/yellow forms/camp forms are patient-requested forms and are separate from the medical records that a healthcare provider is required to keep for 7 years. DPH reconsidered its policy, and has agreed that the CT-AAP was correct in its interpretation. So, the bottom line is that these forms are not considered medical records, may be charged for, and are not required to be kept in the patient's medical record.

Statement from U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Issue: The FDA "Black Box Warning" has been removed from the drug labels of ICS/LABA combination medications. Four large clinical safety trials showed that treating asthma with long-acting beta agonists (LABAs) in combination with inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) does NOT result in significantly more serious asthma-related side effects than treatment with ICS alone. Using LABAs without an ICS is associated with an increased risk of asthma-related death; therefore, the Boxed Warnings stating this will remain on labels of all single-ingredient LABA medications.

This is exciting news that will help to alleviate some of the barriers to utilizing these effective asthma controller medications!

National Asthma Guidelines to be Updated

- ◆ The last update to the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) guidelines came from the Expert Panel Report 3—Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma (EPR-3) in 2007.
- ◆ When the new Guidelines are released, the Easy Breathing program will evaluate them and decide whether changes should be made to the program.



CONTACT EASY BREATHING

A Program of Connecticut Children's Medical Center
Jessica Hollenbach, PhD, AE-C— Co-Director of Asthma Center
Tregony Simoneau, MD—Co-Director of Asthma Center
282 Washington, St. Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-545-9442 Fax: 860-837-5342

E-mail: easybreathing@connecticutchildrens.org

Website: <https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/community-child-health/community-child-health-programs/asthma-center/>