

Original article:

Simon AE, Akinbami LJ. Asthma Action Plan Receipt among Children with Asthma 2-17 Years of Age, United States, 2002-2013. *J Pediatr.* 2016;171(1):283-289.

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Review:

The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) recommends that every patient with asthma receive an asthma action plan. Asthma action plans help provide patients with the education and tools needed to improve self-management skills. This study looked at trends over time in how many children with asthma received asthma action plans.

Data was obtained from the sample child component of the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) from 2002, 2003, 2008 and 2013. The authors evaluated how many of the children with asthma in the data set received asthma action plans. Various other sociodemographic characteristics were also analyzed.

The study found that the percentage of children with asthma that had ever received an asthma action plan increased from 41.7% in 2002 to 45.2% in 2008 to 50.7% in 2013. The authors further analyzed the 2013 data and found that children with private insurance were more likely to receive an asthma action plan (56.2%) versus those with public insurance (46.3%). Moreover, non-Hispanic black children were more likely to receive an asthma action plan (58.4%) compared to non-Hispanic white children (47.4%). There are several limitations to the study including reliance on patient reporting to determine if an asthma action plan was given, missing data in the data sets and lacking assessment of adherence to the action plans.

Although improvements have been made over time, the percentage of children with asthma who receive an asthma action plan is alarmingly low. The asthma educator plays a central role in improving this by providing individuals with asthma action plans and by educating the general medical community about the importance of patient self-management tools.