

## **THE BENEFITS OF A DEDICATED ASTHMA EDUCATOR IN THE ACUTE CARE HOSPITAL SETTING**

Authors: Claudia Arrieta, BS, RRT, AE-C; Scott Pettinichi, MEd, RRT, NPS, AE-C, Cherise Wilson, BS, RRT; Honey Pezzimenti, MEd, RRT, AE-C

### Introduction

Asthma remains one of the most prevalent childhood illness affecting seven million children in the U.S. The number of people diagnosed with asthma grew by 4.3 million from 2001 to 2009. Currently, we see approximately 7000 visits for asthma annually with Asthma being the number one admitting diagnosis at Children's National Medical Center. We propose that having a dedicated asthma educator to develop individualized care plans, focusing on specific patient needs and goals will have significant impact on health outcomes for children with asthma.

### Methodology

In 2014, The Department of Respiratory Care Services at Children's National created the role of Certified Asthma Educator. The purpose of this role was work with a interdisciplinary team to develop, implement and oversee a comprehensive asthma education program at Children's National Medical Center.

The asthma educator coordinated patient and family education plans which focused on specific goals to achieve effective self-management through: patient and family specific health literacy, knowledge of triggers, behavioral determinants, and the use of medication and technique. The asthma educator function as a program coordinator to create and maintain a defined process among all professionals, track and report compliance, and identify barriers to the streamlined process of managing patients with asthma.

### Results and Conclusions

Asthma readmission data were analyzed before and after implementation of the dedicated asthma educator at 30- and 90-day periods post discharge. Results showed that after the implementation of a dedicated asthma educator there was a 33% decrease in readmission over 30 days and a 20% decrease over the 90 day period.

These outcomes are attributed to the asthma educator's function as a program coordinator; adding the benefits of consistency in educational message and increase in patient and family knowledge of asthma management. As a future endeavor, research on the impact of the asthma educator on patient satisfaction is warranted.

\*Submitting Author

Name: Claudia Arrieta

Degrees: BS,RRT,AE-C Professional Title: Asthma Educator

Organization/Institute: Children's National Medical Center

Organization Address: 111 Michigan Ave NW

City/State/Zip: Washington, DC, 20010

Email Address: carrieta@cnmc.org Preferred Phone: 202-476-5105

Additional Authors (List all authors. Use a separate sheet for additional names.)

Additional Author: Scott M Pettinichi

Degrees: MEd,RRT,NPS,AE-C Professional Title: Director, Respiratory Care Services

Organization/Institute: Children's National Medical Center

Organization Address: 111 Michigan Ave NW

City/State/Zip: Washington, DC, 20010

Email Address: spettini@cnmc.org Preferred Phone: 202-476-5105

Additional Authors (List all authors. Use a separate sheet for additional names.)

Additional Author: Cherise L Wilson

Degrees: BS,RRT Professional Title: Clinical Manager, Respiratory Care Services

Organization/Institute: Children's National Medical Center

Organization Address: 111 Michigan Ave NW

City/State/Zip: Washington, DC, 20010

Email Address: chwilson@cnmc.org Preferred Phone: 202-476-5105

Additional Authors (List all authors. Use a separate sheet for additional names.)

Additional Author: Honey Pezzimenti

Degrees: MEd,RRT,AE-C Professional Title: Education Coordinator, Respiratory Care Services

Organization/Institute: Children's National Medical Center

Organization Address: 111 Michigan Ave NW

City/State/Zip: Washington, DC, 20010

Email Address: hpezzime@cnmc.org Preferred Phone: 202-476-5105