

IMPROVING ACCESS TO SPECIALTY BASED ASTHMA CARE FOR UNDERSERVED  
CHILDREN

Abstract Submission for Poster Presentation

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Asthma remains one of the most common chronic conditions of childhood, with urban minority children experiencing higher rates of morbidity and mortality due to various factors. Novel approaches to asthma care are key to increasing access to quality asthma care in vulnerable populations. The University of Maryland Children's Hospital Breathmobile Program aims to address barriers to asthma care for children in Baltimore City. The Breathmobile is a mobile, specialty-based asthma clinic that provides asthma care to children for free at Baltimore City schools. The goal is to increase access to care by providing preventive asthma care in the community. Patients receive a comprehensive history and physical, spirometry and exhaled nitric oxide testing, allergen skin testing, asthma action plan, provision of medications and devices, and extensive asthma education. Children are followed every 1-3 months according to individual patient needs. Between 2002-2013, 2,571 children were evaluated and treated on the Breathmobile. The mean patient age was 6.9 years, 90% were African-American, and 80% had Medicaid or no health insurance. At baseline, 70% had persistent asthma, with more than half requiring an emergency department visit in the prior year. Through guideline based care, the Breathmobile program has shown to improve patient outcomes, including significant reductions in emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and missed school days before and after entering the program. This data suggests that a mobile, community based approach is an effective approach to improving asthma outcomes in high-risk children with asthma.

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