Board Award
The Lung Association

Primary Care Asthma Program

The Lung Association's Primary Care Asthma Program began life in 2002 as a pilot project at eight sites funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. It's a standardized, evidence-based program that supports best practices for assessment, diagnosis and management of asthma, and its success has seen it spread to 187 sites provincewide, many of which are FHTs.

The evaluation of the program demonstrated positive outcomes that were considered statistically significant for measures that showed an increase in the level of asthma control, an increase in the quality of life as well as a decrease in emergency department visits, which is a shared goal of AFHTO's quality improvement initiatives. Thanks to these positive outcomes, 36 sites across the province have received sustained funding for Certified Respiratory Educators to run this program.

Research has shown that the positive outcomes include: decrease in asthma-related hospitalizations; decrease in yearly asthma mortality rate; decrease in yearly mortality of diseases of the respiratory system; increase in pulmonary function testing used for correct diagnosis of asthma; a decrease in the use of multiple corticosteroids; decrease in the use of multiple bronchodilators; and a decrease in multiple yearly asthma visits to primary care physician.

The spread of the Primary Care Asthma Program across the province has allowed many primary care sites to offer better quality care for people suffering from respiratory diseases and to obtain positive health outcomes for them.

This program is a bonus for clinics that would not otherwise have the funding or the capacity to offer these services.

Key Facts:
- 187 primary care sites province-wide
- Certified respiratory educators funded at 36 sites
- Results monitored via Ontario Asthma Surveillance Information System
- Positive outcomes include a decrease in asthma-related hospitalizations and in the yearly asthma mortality rate