

Montana Asthma Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 29, 2024

1:00pm – 3:00pm

MACP Updates/Evaluation/Surveillance

- **CDC Asthma Grant application submitted in May!**

The MACP is anticipating notice from the CDC/National Asthma Control Program in August. If successful, the MACP will be updating our state 5-year strategic asthma plan. The MACP would consult with partners on various sections of the strategic plan and hold special planning meetings.

- **World Asthma Day/Asthma Awareness Month**

- Press release sent to local news outlets
- Look for social media to share on partner accounts (SM Username- *Public Health in the 406*)

- **Stock Albuterol Efforts**

- Montana Stock Albuterol in School Coalition has met twice. The next bi-monthly meeting will be held June 25th.
- The coalition has helped refine draft legislative language and shared input on what may be helpful to include in guidance resources and support documents.
- The MACP and other coalition partners will be reaching out in an attempt to find stories from students/families that have experienced school absenteeism and missed work days due to the child's asthma.

- **Asthma News**

- **Pharmaceutical companies capping monthly out-of-pocket cost of asthma inhalers at \$35**

- See meeting presentation slides for more details about what inhalers are covered and when the price caps go into effect.
- All companies stated that they will continue to offer patient assistance programs, discounts, and rebates for inhalers, but they cannot control fees added on by pharmacy benefit managers.
- Generic replacement for Flovent is not currently included under their price cap from GSK.
- These decisions do not impact challenges with prior authorizations, which can be a barrier.

- **Studies of Interest**

- ***SMART Prescriptions Lag Among Eligible Patients with Asthma***

Zimmerman Z, et al. Utilization of single maintenance and reliever therapy (SMART) for moderate and severe asthma. Presented at: American Thoracic Society International Conference; May 18-22, 2023; San Diego. <https://www.abstractsonline.com/pp8/#!/11007/presentation/4440>

The aim of this study was to identify trends in SMART prescription among patients with moderate to severe asthma at an academic healthcare system in the Northeastern United States. An electronic medical record search was used to identify patients with at least one pulmonary or allergy clinic visit between January 2021 and August 2023, a diagnosis of asthma, no alternative pulmonary diagnoses, and a prescription for maintenance ICS-long-acting beta-agonist (LABA) or ICS. 1502 patients were included in the final analysis.

There were two important findings from this study that could help inform MACP and partner strategies in Montana.

- 93% of pulmonary clinicians aware of SMART role in current guidelines, but 44% of

- pulmonary and allergy clinicians had not adopted it.
- 15% (219/1502) were prescribed SMART; of those, 89% (195/219) were co-prescribed a SABA reliever, even though the inhalers used in SMART are designed to be used as rescue therapy.

Implications for the MACP

- More patient education material can be developed around SMART therapy.
- More can be done to improve clinician education and bolster clinician support to adopt SMART through clinician decision support tools and better integration of outpatient pharmacy support.

- **Online Inhaler Technique Resources Often Overlook Critical Steps**

Luu B, et al. Respir Med. 2024;doi:10.1016/j.rmed.2024.107607.
[https://www.resmedjournal.com/article/S0954-6111\(24\)00081-7/fulltext](https://www.resmedjournal.com/article/S0954-6111(24)00081-7/fulltext)

This study assesses the content and quality of online resources describing inhaler techniques. Online resources tend to feature more steps on inhalation technique and frequently overlook important preparation steps and device care/maintenance

Implications for the MACP

- The MACP should stay informed of newly developed resources from partners like the Allergy & Asthma Network and make inhaler technique resources readily available on the asthma.mt.gov website and through other avenues.

- **No Link Between COVID-19 and Asthma in Children**

Hill DA, et al. Pediatrics. 2024;doi:10.1542/peds.2023-064615
<https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/153/5/e2023064615/197089/COVID-19-and-Asthma-Onset-in-Children?autologincheck=redirected>

This was a retrospective cohort study of 27,423 children aged 1 through 16 years in the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia Care Network who received a PCR test during the first year of the pandemic. Researchers found no association between a positive COVID-19 test and the development of asthma in children. The authors stated that “Because there is considerable evidence that viral respiratory infections other than SARS-CoV-2 increase risk of asthma development, it was a welcome surprise but, surprise nonetheless”.

- **Surveillance & Evaluation**

- Surveillance Resources

- 2024 Burden Report
 - Asthma Self-Management Education Quick Fact
 - Medicaid Surveillance Report
 - LGBT+ Asthma Factsheet
 - Occupational Asthma
 - Asthma Healthcare Professionals Map
- Recently Created**

Under Development

- Evaluation

- Big Sky Pulmonary Conference
- AS-ME Evaluation
- Linkages Evaluation

- New MACP Staff
 - Mary Anderson- Health Educator
 - Project Coordinator for EPA Wildfire Smoke Preparedness in Community Buildings Grant
 - Angela Brakefield- Asthma Health Educator
 - Will oversee healthcare provider and caregiver asthma education initiatives as well as asthma education for the general public.

Healthy Equity Efforts

- Community Health Support Workforce

Beth Ann Carter, Assistant Director, Behavioral Health Programs
Montana Office of Rural Health/AHEC Program Office
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 - Community Health Worker Training- Offered Since 2018
<https://healthinfo.montana.edu/bhwet/chw/>
The Montana Community Health Worker (CHW) Fundamentals training provides the knowledge and skills necessary to become a Community Health Worker.
 - 6 online learning modules
 - Modules 1-5 are approximately 60 hours of online training.
 - Module 6 (Supervised Experience) is 25 hours, for a grand total of 85 hours of training.
 - Behavioral Health Related Grants
 - HRSA Grant Received in 2023- “Community Health Support Network Grant”
 - Main purpose of this grant work is to explore strategies to sustain the community health workers/community paramedics workforce. This includes giving people in these positions the tools and training needed to continue to be successful in their work and giving employers the information they need to embrace and support this workforce.
 - Exploring certification and state standards for CHWs
 - Trying to work with providers to encourage the use of billing codes that may be available for use by CHWs under supervision of providers.
 - Working on strategic planning and garnering membership
 - Annual Community Health Worker Summit
 - Encourages networking and mentorship
 - Employer Advocacy
 - Educating employers on how to best utilized community health support workforce
 - Professional pathways
 - Mapping out and creating career ladder examples for CHWs
 - Community Health Worker Association
 - Committee working on defining scope of work for CHW profession
 - Quarterly Meetings- Next Meeting on June 26th
 - Interested parties can contact Beth Ann at beth.carter@montana.edu.
 - Online Learning Library for CHWs and other healthcare professionals
 - Most courses 3-5 hours, self-paced

Social Determinants of Health Update

Margaret Mullins, MS

SDoH Program Coordinator

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- Healthcare and Community Collaboration
 - Health Equity Projects
 - Support for clinical SDOH screening and referrals to community organizations
 - CDC is allowing funding to go to community-based organizations, which is a welcome change that encourages more engagement from these partners.
- Rural Research
 - Surveys and interviews to identify needs in Montana rural communities
- Addressing Health Equity and SDOH in Healthcare Settings: *An introductory guide for providers and staff*
(Currently under internal review and will be shared widely when available)
 - Includes:
 - SDOH Screening Tools Comparison Table
 - Referral Process & Resources
 - Clinical Health Equity Project Roadmap w/ detailed steps on recording and utilizing data within EHRs, referring, and using data to address community priorities
 - SDOH Flyer for clinic waiting rooms
- Talking Health in the 406 Podcast
- Libraries and Community Connection
 - Blood pressure kits/pedometers being made available in public libraries in Montana to make resources more available outside of normal healthcare visits.
 - Working on developing chronic disease programming modules (info sharing) to highlight different chronic diseases, including asthma.
- SDOH Website
(under development)
 - Subpages on different SDOH topics with articles, resources, podcasts and other media.
- Health Equity Basics- Learning Module (Mountain Pacific Quality Health)
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLOZjFk4ccVk7k0GL3LLcjZMvS2hUM4Uc->
 - Only 30 minutes with several 3-5 minutes segments
 - Adaptable to a variety of settings/professions

Wildfire Smoke Preparedness

- MT Wildfire Smoke Grants- EPA Air Quality Event- March 21, 2024
 - Highlighted EPA funding for collaborative projects happening in Montana
 - DEQ- \$1,000,000
 - Missoula County- \$1,000,000
 - Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes- \$900,000
- Wildfire Smoke Preparedness in Community Buildings Grant
 - Official Notice of Award received in April
 - 3 Focus Areas (see meeting slides)
 - Missoula/Ravalli Counties are 1st year partners/targets
 - Crossover with Asthma Strategic Plan: Environment and Public Policy section

- Digital Media Campaign
 - 3- 15s social media videos will be distributed via paid media on social media platforms during the month of June (2-wildfire smoke & air quality / 1- air quality & MAP support)
- Montana Wildfire Smoke Messaging Guide: *A Resource for Public Health Officials*
 - Updated in May 2024 and distributed to Lead Local Health Officials, may also be added to airquality.mt.gov website
- DEQ/UM Air Quality Monitoring in Schools
 - Partnership aims to supply indoor and outdoor air quality monitors to all Montana high schools
 - Many schools are already participating, with more ongoing school outreach taking place

Next Meeting: October 3rd, 2024 | In-Person (Helena) / Virtual Hybrid Meeting

Attendance:

BJ Biskupiak	MT Asthma Control Program- Program Manager
Jillian Boll, RN	Flathead City County Health Department – Map Home Visitor
Megan Brunelle, RN	Cascade County Health Department- MAP Home Visitor
Charity Middlemas	Park County Health Department- Home Visitor
Jessie Fernandes, MPH, CPH	DPHHS Health Improvement Section- Section Supervisor
Kelly Keenan, MPH	Gallatin County Health Department, Director of Prevention Services
Elaine Alston, PA, PAC	Gallatin County Health Department, MAP Home Visitor
Tracey Maruyama, MA	American Lung Association- Health Promotions Manager
Margaret Mullins, MS	DPHHS – Social Determinants of Health Program Coordinator
Courtney Geary, MPH	MT Asthma Control Program- Epidemiologist/Evaluator
Mackenzie Gress, RN, BSN	Flathead City-County Health Department, MAP Supervisor
Will Gardner, MPH, CPH	DPHHS Health Improvement Section – Lead Epidemiologist
LeAnn Harrison, RN	oneHealth (Custer County Health Department)- MAP Home Visitor
Lisa Flannagan, RN	Missoula Public Schools, School Nurse
Marion Kummer, MD	Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate- Co-Chair
Brian Duke	AstraZeneca- Biologic Sales Specialist- Medimmune Biologic Division
Bradley Adams, PA-C, MPAS	AstraZeneca- Medical Science Liaison – Respiratory and Immunology
Mary Smith, RN	St. Peter’s Health, Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Supervisor
Jennifer VandeKop, LPN	Anaconda Deer Lodge Health Department- MAP Home Visitor
Beth Ann Carter	MT ORH and AHEC- Assistant Director/Behavioral Health Workforce
Lori Byron, MD	Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate- Chair
Margaret Mullins	DPHHS- SDoH Coordinator
Kris Minard	MT OPI- Tobacco Use Prevention Education Specialist
Mary Blevins, RRT,AE-C	Montana VA Healthcare Systems- Cardiopulmonary Manager
Karen Graf, MSN, RN-BC, APHN-BC	National Association of School Nurses- Nursing Education and Practice Specialist