



GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR ASTHMA MANAGEMENT AND PREVENTION

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Global Strategy for Asthma Management and Prevention 2009 (update)

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PREFACE

Asthma is a serious global health problem. People of all ages in countries throughout the world are affected by this chronic airway disorder that, when uncontrolled, can place severe limits on daily life and is sometimes fatal. The prevalence of asthma is increasing in most countries, especially among children. Asthma is a significant burden, not only in terms of health care costs but also of lost productivity and reduced participation in family life.

During the past two decades, we have witnessed many scientific advances that have improved our understanding of asthma and our ability to manage and control it effectively. However, the diversity of national health care service systems and variations in the availability of asthma therapies require that recommendations for asthma care be adapted to local conditions throughout the global community. In addition, public health officials require information about the costs of asthma care, how to effectively manage this chronic disorder, and education methods to develop asthma care services and programs responsive to the particular needs and circumstances within their countries.

In 1993, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute collaborated with the World Health Organization to convene a workshop that led to a Workshop Report: *Global Strategy for Asthma Management and Prevention*. This presented a comprehensive plan to manage asthma with the goal of reducing chronic disability and premature deaths while allowing patients with asthma to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

At the same time, the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) was implemented to develop a network of individuals, organizations, and public health officials to disseminate information about the care of patients with asthma while at the same time assuring a mechanism to incorporate the results of scientific investigations into asthma care. Publications based on the GINA Report were prepared and have been translated into languages to promote international collaboration and dissemination of information. To disseminate information about asthma care, a GINA Assembly was initiated, comprised of asthma care experts from many countries to conduct workshops with local doctors and national opinion leaders and to hold seminars at national and international meetings. In addition, GINA initiated an annual World Asthma Day (in 2001) which has gained increasing attention each year to raise awareness about the burden of asthma, and to initiate activities at the local/national level to educate families and health care professionals about effective methods to manage and control asthma.

In spite of these dissemination efforts, international surveys provide direct evidence for suboptimal asthma control in many countries, despite the availability of effective therapies. It is clear that if recommendations contained within this report are to improve care of people with asthma, every effort must be made to encourage health care leaders to assure availability of and access to medications, and develop means to implement effective asthma management programs including the use of appropriate tools to measure success.

In 2002, the GINA Report stated that "it is reasonable to expect that in most patients with asthma, control of the disease can, and should be achieved and maintained." To meet this challenge, in 2005, Executive Committee recommended preparation of a new report not only to incorporate updated scientific information but to implement an approach to asthma management based on asthma control, rather than asthma severity. Recommendations to assess, treat and maintain asthma control are provided in this document. The methods used to prepare this document are described in the Introduction.

It is a privilege for me to acknowledge the work of the many people who participated in this update project, as well as to acknowledge the superlative work of all who have contributed to the success of the GINA program.

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