

Improving Asthma Care: An Update for Managed Care

This supplement to *The American Journal of Managed Care* describes the clinical and economic burden of asthma, and reviews guidelines for the diagnosis and management of asthma, including recommended pharmacologic therapy. It discusses the efficacy of new and emerging therapies in asthma, and their impact on patients' quality of life. This supplement also describes how asthma care can be quantified and explains how managed care programs can improve asthma control.

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Continuing Education

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Intended Audience

The audience for this supplement consists of medical directors, pharmacy directors, and other managed care professionals who oversee the care of patients with asthma.

Statement of Educational Need

This educational activity will educate and inform managed care professionals about the clinical and economic burden of asthma, the importance of achieving asthma control, and various strategies to help improve asthma outcomes. One strategy includes the use of new and emerging asthma therapies, which may help managed care organizations optimize the management of asthma.

Asthma exacts a severe national burden through patient morbidity and mortality, rising healthcare costs, and employee presenteeism and absenteeism. To improve diagnosis and treatment, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute established the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program guidelines in 1997. Although these guidelines have been updated periodically and provide recommendations for appropriate management, evidence suggests that they are not being properly implemented. Other barriers to effective asthma management include failure to properly diagnose asthma and patient nonadherence to therapy. Knowledge deficits exist on the part of providers and patients regarding several aspects of asthma control, including the clinical definition of asthma, awareness of environmental factors and triggers, what to do in cases of severe, persistent asthma, and awareness of the newer and emerging therapies.

Managed care organizations can help increase adherence to guideline recommendations, increase the percentage of patients on long-term medications, decrease hospitalizations, educate providers and patients, and improve patient satisfaction with care and quality of life. Addressing these deficits is critical to improving asthma management.

Educational Objectives

After completing this activity, the participant should be able to:

- Describe the significance of unmet needs among people with asthma and elucidate contributing factors to poor asthma control.
- Discuss the pharmacoeconomics of asthma therapy as it relates to clinical outcomes.
- Examine new and emerging therapies for asthma and assess their role in the treatment of asthma.
- Identify strategies for improving asthma control.

Disclosure Policy

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Physician Continuing Medical Education

Accreditation Statement

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the University of Cincinnati. The University of Cincinnati is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

Credit Designation

The University of Cincinnati designates this enduring material activity for a maximum of 2.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)[™]. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Pharmacist Continuing Education



Accreditation and Credit Designation

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