The Important Role of the Asthma Educator

Outline
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Network Host:
Mary Hart, MS, RRT, AE-C, FAARC, FCCP
Director of Research
Allergy & Asthma Network is the leading nonprofit organization whose mission is to end the needless death and suffering due to asthma, allergies and related conditions through outreach, education, advocacy and research.

Karen Gregory, DNP, APRN-BC, CNS, RRT, AE-C, FAARC

Today's Speaker
Important Role of Asthma Educators

Asthma Educators play an important role - in the Schools and the Community

Asthma Stats

- 25 MILLION Americans diagnosed
- 1 in 10 CHILDREN
- $80 BILLION annual costs
- 3,168 DEATHS annually
- 75% more for black persons than white persons
- 13.8 MILLION missed school days per year
- 14.2 MILLION missed work days per year
- 3 in 5 limited physical activity
- 71% misuse inhalers
- 1 in 5 cannot afford medications
Understanding Asthma

Each person’s asthma is unique to them.

Who is an Asthma Educator?

An asthma educator is an expert in counseling individuals with asthma and their families how to manage their asthma and to minimize its impact on their quality of life.
Licensed Healthcare Professionals

- Physicians (MD, DO)
- Physician Assistants (PA-C)
- Nurse Practitioners (NP)
- Nurses (RN, LPN)
- Respiratory Therapists (RRT, CRT)
- Pulmonary Function Technologists (CPFT, RPFT)
- Pharmacists (RPh)
- Social Workers (CSW)
- Health Educators (CHES)
- Physical Therapists (PT)
- Occupational Therapists (OT)

The Asthma Educator - -

- Has comprehensive current knowledge of asthma pathophysiology & human development
- Understands asthma diagnosis & treatment
- Teaches medication action & use
- Helps patients implement an Asthma Action Plan
- Serves as a patient & community resource
Where Do Asthma Educators Practice?

- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Pharmacies
- Schools
- Telehealth
- Any where people need asthma education!

Telehealth for Asthma Ed

Asthma Educators can use telehealth to assess, evaluate, educate patients
The Time for Telehealth

People with asthma have unique needs

Each case of asthma is unique

Patients need asthma management that works for THEM

Where they are - When it's convenient

Benefits of Telehealth

ACCESS
- Ability to increase care access for all patient populations
- Decrease barriers of transportation, travel distance, scheduling conflicts, or childcare for young siblings

HEALTH
- Minimizes the risk of virus exposure to patients and healthcare workers

EDUCATION
- Health/asthma educational opportunities
Telehealth & Asthma Coaching

Telehealth and health coaching go hand-in-hand. Telehealth coaching:

- Makes it more convenient for you to show up for appointments
- Provides tools for you to share important data on their lifestyle habits such as food intake, exercise, sleep and medication.
- Enables healthcare professionals to easily refer you to an asthma or food allergy coach, dietitian or other support.

COVID-19 - Telehealth

COVID-19 has hastened the acceptance of telehealth

Can visit with care provider, educator

- Still socially distance
- Avoid exposures

Telehealth is here to stay!
Telehealth Programs

Allergy & Asthma Network
- Our asthma coaches are certified asthma educators with additional licenses as respiratory therapists, pharmacists or registered nurses. These coaches follow the validated PRIDE program developed by the University of Michigan’s Center for Chronic Disease Management.

The PRIDE program helps people learn asthma self-management skills including:
- proper inhaler technique
- how to deal with environmental triggers
- how to keep asthma under control.
The coaches use motivational interviewing and shared decision making to support behavior change for you and your family.

Navigating Severe Asthma

Asthma Educator can help high risk patients navigate throughout the continuum of care
Severe Asthma

Severe asthma is asthma that, despite all that you do:

- Requires high-dose inhaled corticosteroids plus long-acting beta2-agonists and/or additional controller medication or
- Requires oral corticosteroids to prevent it from becoming uncontrolled or remains uncontrolled despite therapy.

Severe Asthma

- People with severe asthma often experience high rates of emergency department visits, hospitalizations and school or work absenteeism.
- They often find themselves unable to perform simple activities of daily living.
How the Asthma Educator Can Help

- Navigate healthcare system
- Help the patient know what to ask
- Provide basic & enhanced asthma education
- Help the patient to live their best life!

Personal Experience with an Asthma Navigator Program

“Asthma Patient Navigator Program Helps High Risk Asthma Patients Gain Better Control of Their Asthma” - Baylor Dallas

- 2-year Pilot project/private funding
- In patient/Outpatient hospital
- Adults
- High risk – multiple ED visits/hospitalizations for asthma

Using AE-C – Lung Center visited hospitalized high-risk asthma patients

- Connected with patient: Assess, Evaluate, Educate, follow-up
- Lung center – face/face, telephone visits FU – received diagnostic testing, education

Results: Those who continued to work with AE-C – 1st year - 0 ED visits, 0 use of OCS, ability to verbalize asthma control methods
Methods
The Asthma Patient Navigator Program was designed and tested using a collaborative and interactive approach. The Asthma Patient Navigator was a registered nurse with training in asthma management. The program was designed to facilitate and navigate the patient through the process of obtaining their hospitalization to determine barriers to good asthma control and to facilitate their enrollment in the program. During this visit the patient signed a compliance agreement and the APN assessed, educated, and set up their first appointment at the asthma center. The patient was given an asthma action plan/medication plan to monitor their asthma symptoms and to evaluate patient compliance. Patient referrals were sent to their primary care provider and to the hospital asthma management.

Results
Twenty-two high-risk patients were referred to our asthma center. Ten of these patients were being treated by the APN. Patients were 25-60 years old, 6 female, 5 male, 1 Hispanic, and 8 Black. All had previous hospitalizations (1 with over 20 hospital visits) and all had hospitalizations, or readmissions. The Classification and Regression Tree method identified 4 important variables (CHOP): change [C] in peak expiratory flow severity in the past year, severity in the past year, previous severe exacerbation (e.g., intubation or ICU admission for asthma), and smoking status. Other risk factors: lack of a written asthma action plan, sensitivity to the environment, past or present treatment with illegal drugs or (6) inability to contact patient. All other referrals were (5) unable to visit our center due to barriers such as the ability to pay the discounted price for treatment or (2) the continued use of illegal drugs or (6) inability to communicate. Twenty-two high-risk patients were referred to our asthma center. The Asthma Patient Navigator collaborated with key hospital personnel who established a formal referral plan of notifying the APN when a high-risk patient was admitted with asthma. We developed the APN Program that included components of the National Asthma Education Prevention Program. The APN collaborated with the emergency department and inpatient hospital units to identify patients admitted with asthma. The use of national asthma guidelines and the CHOP method identified the ability to pay for treatment or (2) the continued use of illegal drugs or (6) inability to contact patient. The Asthma Patient Navigator Program was designed and tested using a collaborative and interactive approach. The Asthma Patient Navigator was a registered nurse with training in asthma management. The program was designed to facilitate and navigate the patient through the process of obtaining their hospitalization to determine barriers to good asthma control and to facilitate their enrollment in the program. During this visit the patient signed a compliance agreement and the APN assessed, educated, and set up their first appointment at the asthma center. The patient was given an asthma action plan/medication plan to monitor their asthma symptoms and to evaluate patient compliance. Patient referrals were sent to their primary care provider and to the hospital asthma management.

Presented at ATS 2012

Conclusions
The Asthma Patient Navigator Program using a Respiratory Therapist to facilitate and negotiate the patient through the process of obtaining asthma control and finding ways to minimize the use of medical resources should be considered as an expected improvement in overall patient care, quality of care and patient satisfaction. Reducing the number of emergency department visits and inpatient hospital unit visits significantly reduces the higher cost of inpatient hospital unit visits associated with asthma. The goal of the Asthma Patient Navigator Program is to facilitate and navigate the patient through the process of obtaining asthma control and finding ways to minimize the use of medical resources.

AE-C Certification

If you’re not Certified - here’s where to go to find out more information!
What is the NAECB Exam?

- The NAECB exam is a voluntary testing program used to assess qualified health professionals knowledge in asthma education.

  - An evaluative process that demonstrates that rigorous education and experience requirements have been met.
  - Certification is voluntary and is not required by law for employment in the field, although some agencies may use AE-C® certification as a basis for employment, job promotions, salary increases, or other considerations.
## Who is eligible to sit for the AE-C Exam?

There are two kinds of eligibility.

A candidate must fulfill ONE of the requirements.

- Licensed or credentialed health care professionals OR
- Individuals providing professional direct patient asthma education and counseling with a minimum of 1,000 hours experience in these activities.

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## What steps should I take if I want to take the Exam?

- Visit [https://naecb.com](https://naecb.com)
- Click on Certificants
- Go to “Get Certified”
- You’ll want to read the entire Candidate Handbook
Asthma Educator Tools

Allergy & Asthma Network
Association of Asthma Educators
And more!

Web Pages – Allergyasthamanetwork.org

Asthma
Severe Asthma
Telehealth
Schools & Asthma
Web Pages – Asthmaeducators.org/

- About Us
- Join Us
- Asthma Education Courses
- News & Events

Posters

Respiratory Tools

Respiratory Treatments
Understanding Asthma and more!

- **Understanding Asthma** – An “Asthma 101” guide written at a 6th grade reading level.

- **Asthma is Not Stopping Me featuring the Fabulous Me, Piper Lee** – Piper Lee is off and running -- keeping her asthma triggers away, so she can breathe easy every day.

- **Peter’s Perfect Pipes** – With the help of an old friend and two new friends – an inhaler named Piper and his sidekick, a holding chamber named Aerial – Peter learns how his medications work, how to use them correctly and how to manage his asthma.

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**Asthma Care at School Post COVID-19 Outbreak**

A student presents at the school health office with report of respiratory symptoms. Could it be viral?

Answer for additional symptoms:
- Yes for additional symptoms:
  - Fever of over 100.4°F
  - Chills
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Cough
  - Choking
  - Rapid heartbeat
  - Confusion
  - Severe or persistent headache
  - Severe or persistent abdominal pain
  - Persistent, severe vomiting or diarrhea
  - New loss of taste or smell

Answer for additional symptoms:
- No

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**Asthma and COVID-19**

What you need to do...
- **Protection**
  - Wash hands often
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when you cough or sneeze
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick

- **Prevention**
  - Stay home if you are sick
  - Avoid being around others
  - Clean and disinfect surfaces

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**Asthma is Not Stopping Me featuring the Fabulous Me, Piper Lee**

Piper Lee is off and running -- keeping her asthma triggers away, so she can breathe easy every day.
App & Online Patient Videos

Asthma Storylines  Patient Learning Pathways

Questions?

Write your questions in the Question Box on your Control Panel
Look for the Handouts Pane to download your Certificate of Attendance & Handouts – Do that NOW (you can’t at the end of the program)
5 Things to Know

- Thanks for listening!
- Contact Mary with questions
- mhart@allergyasthamanetwork.org

www.allergyasthamanetwork.org