

Free Continuing Medical Education Program and Asthma Resources Available Online

Asthma is a common chronic disease currently affecting 430,000 adult Hoosiers and 135,000 Hoosier children during their lifetime (CDC 2008 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System). The Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition [InJAC] is focused on helping these populations and has recently unveiled a new, **free Continuing Medical Education [CME] program** based on the 2007 National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's *Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma*.

Compared to the 1997 and 2002 versions, these guidelines more clearly define how to assess asthma severity and control. Asthma severity measures disease intensity when the patient is not on long-term control therapy, and asthma control measures the extent to which symptoms of disease are minimized and guides decisions on maintaining or adjusting therapy. Severity and control also each involve two domains: current impairment and future risk.

Additionally, the guidelines have tailored disease assessment and treatment plans to three age groups: 4 years of age and younger; 5 to 11 years of age, and 12 years of age and older. These help direct treatment, however, asthma varies widely among patients and does require individualized therapy.

The Health Care Provider Workgroup of InJAC has condensed the information from the 2007 NHLBI Guidelines into a five section, free online CME program.

The Indiana University School of Medicine Division of Continuing Medical Education is offering CME credit for health care providers who view the modules and complete a post test. The program is accessible for free on the InJAC Web site: www.InJAC.org. The CME credits are available through September 15, 2010.

The Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition also offers other free resources for health care providers and their patients. A **web-based Asthma Resource Guide** is available to help connect Hoosiers with resources to learn more about asthma and the asthma services available in the community. The guide lists national and local resources, along with tools to help health care providers and their patients better understand how to control asthma symptoms.

The asthma resources in this guide are divided into seven categories for easy use: General Information, Toll Free Numbers, Local Programs & Resources, Environment, Activities for Children, Health Insurance, and Asthma Care Providers. Health care providers and patients can view the guide online or print in PDF format.

This Asthma Resource Guide is available 24-7 and is free to view and use. To access the guide please visit the InJAC Web site at www.InJAC.org.

For more information on asthma, InJAC, or other resources and programs offered, please visit InJAC's Web site at www.InJAC.org. By following the 2007 NHLBI Guidelines and providing asthma resources to patients, health care providers can help reduce the burden of asthma in Indiana. It is important for individuals with asthma to know the disease can be controlled. All people with asthma deserve to lead active, healthy lives.

