

Lessons in Asthma

(A cluster funded community based sustainable healthcare project)

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• Background

Respiratory conditions in children represent a burden for the child, the family, the healthcare system and the environment.

Repeated reports and audits recommend changes and improvements to how we manage these conditions.

• Aim

Improve the management of respiratory conditions in primary school children through a targeted community-based intervention in line with the principles of sustainable healthcare.

Work with A+LUK to make schools safer spaces for learners with a respiratory condition by becoming 'Asthma Fit'.

• Project Approach

To achieve our aim, we radically changed our approach to the problem.

We reviewed the patients close to home in the child-friendly school environment. We had full read/write access to the surgery records so could conduct a full respiratory review.

Having more time allowed us to educate and empower the patient and their parents.

We concentrated on the high value interventions highlighted in repeated reports and audits.

We prescribed treatment with a lower global warming potential in line with the All Wales guidelines.

Everyone was issued with a personal asthma action plan (PAAP).

We liaised closely with both primary and secondary care, education and housing.

We have seen almost 600 pupils from 49 primary schools in Pembrokeshire

1. Prevention

The project looks to address health inequalities by targeting a vulnerable group and delivering the service in their community making it more accessible and efficient.

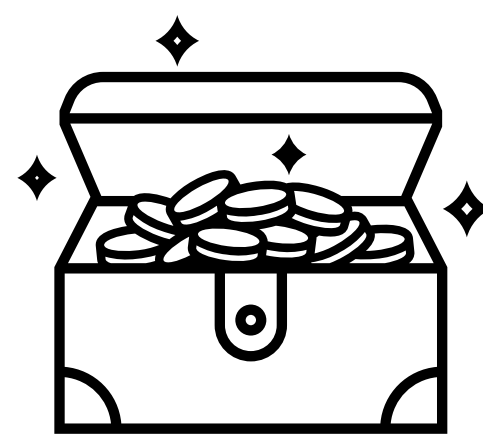
5. Sustainable Operational Resource Use

Conducting the reviews in the community reduces the carbon emissions associated with surgery and hospital visits

We estimate we have stopped 125 OOH/A&E attendances and over 500 GP appointments which is equivalent to over 3000 average car journeys.



We estimate the HCP appointment savings to be over £30,000



4. Low Carbon Alternatives

The patients have been treated according to the All Wales Paediatric Respiratory Guidelines. Every patient has been matched to an inhaler they can and will use to control their symptoms. The default inhaler switch is to one with a lower global warming potential.



We calculate that our inhaler switches have saved the equivalent of 62,900 car miles, which is more than twice around the Earth

2. Patient Self-Care

The project promotes health and prevents disease by educating and empowering these individuals to manage the condition themselves.

3. Lean Service Delivery

The project delivers the service efficiently through targeted interventions in a vulnerable group, the results show a reduction in unscheduled care appointments and admissions.

• Project Impact

The findings at the initial consultation showed a general lack of understanding of the condition, poor preventer adherence and poor inhaler technique.

583 pupils seen so far, after the second consultation

- over two-thirds of pupils reported a clinically important difference in their symptom control,
- over 65% of patients had their treatment changed in line with the All Wales Guidelines,
- every pupil was given a written worsening symptom management plan. The school was also issued a copy of this plan,
- reduced GP and unscheduled care attendances reported,
- 37 pupils were referred to secondary care.

Poor housing was addressed in a timely manner

There were carbon savings from inhaler switches and reduced medical appointments

• Reflections

When planning, implementing and evaluating projects it is worthwhile considering the environmental impacts in addition to the clinical and financial impacts as part of the 'triple bottom line'.

Collaborating with partners such as Asthma + Lung UK on their 'Asthma Fit' schools programme is a valuable opportunity which promotes a whole-school approach to the management of respiratory conditions.

Considering the wider determinants of health such as the impact of damp housing on asthma management has led to poor housing being addressed in a timely manner.

• Next Steps

We will continue to spread this initiative to more children and more schools – aiming for 1000 'Asthma Fit' schools across Wales by April 2030.

We will continue working with Asthma + Lung UK to achieve our mutual goals.

This project is a Bevan Exemplar (Cohort B) and is funded via South and North Pembrokeshire Clusters, Hywel Dda University Health Board. The professional lead is Dr Helen Wang (South Pembrokeshire Locality Lead) and the project lead is Lucie-Jane Whelan-Hughes (Primary Care Service Manager). The service provider is Dave Edwards (Respiratory Pharmacist).