

the Consortium

QUARTERLY



St. Louis Regional **Asthma Consortium**

Fall 2004

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From the desk of Keith Antone Willis, Sr.

Greetings!

I have been on board almost 10 months now, and time sure flies when you're having fun and making an impact in the community. Let's look back at what we've done! First, I would like to thank the heart and soul of the Consortium, Lucy Reinhart and Heather Kelly, for all they do, day in and day out. Let's also welcome the newest member of the Consortium, Kevin Albertina, our comptroller. Sarah Kitchen has done a great job for us and was instrumental in properly preparing Kevin to take over the reins. Thanks, Sarah, and welcome aboard, Kevin.

We have moved into our new home on the campus of Saint Louis University, the Salus Center, School of Public Health building. Our transition has been a smooth one, and we look forward to a long and productive future here.

I am very excited about adding a new committee to the Consortium's existing four committees. The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) has three primary goals: make recommendations regarding outreach to high-risk/underserved communities in the city and county areas; provide technical assistance relative to their organizational expertise; and assist in public engagement, outreach, and mobilization. You will hear more about how they will play an important role to the Consortium and be a part of an already committed group of folks on the Consortium.

Finally, Let's welcome our new members to the Consortium, our new chairs and vice chairs and our new community partners. We have made a difference in our community, and in the new year we can make a bigger impact, if we never lose sight of our mission: Close the gap that exists between people affected by asthma and the knowledge and services that will help them.

Peace & Blessings

Keith Antone Willis, Sr.
Executive Director



The General Membership Meeting (formerly the Community Meeting) is set for November 16, 2004 at the Chase Park Plaza starting with a networking hour from 5-6pm. Please RSVP to Lucy at 314-977-8253 or at ireinhart@asthma-stlouis.org.

consortium schedule

11/2/200	Gathering Asthma Information Committee
11/10/2004	Board of Directors Meeting
11/11/2004	Association of Asthma Educators National Asthma Educator Certification Review Course
11/11/2004	Asthma Conference
11/13/2004	Owens-McDonald Church Family Fun Festival
11/13/2004	ACE - Asthma Control Education 2004 Class
11/16/2004	General Membership Meeting
11/17/2004	CASL Grant Leadership Team
11/17/2004	Barriers and Resources Committee Meeting
11/18/2004	Great American Smoke out
11/23/2004	Lead Testing and Educational Presentation
12/1/2004	CASL Grant Leadership Team
12/6/2004	Advocacy Committee
12/8/2004	CASL Grant Leadership Team
12/9/2004	Asthma Conference
1/5/2005	CASL Grant Leadership Team
1/12/2005	CASL Grant Leadership Team
1/13/2005	Asthma Conference
1/26/2005	CASL Grant Leadership Team
2/10/2005	Asthma Conference
3/10/2005	Asthma Conference
3/17/2005	Association of Asthma Educators National Asthma Educator Certification Review Course
4/14/2005	Asthma Conference

Please see the Consortium website for more information on these and other upcoming events.



The Consortium consists of all organizations and individuals working together to address asthma care in our community to accomplish what no one organization can do alone.

The Consortium would like to welcome the newest committee to the SLRAC team...**The Community Advisory Committee (CAC)**. The Consortium formed the CAC to help it connect to and empower residents living with asthma in the St. Louis metropolitan area. By launching the CAC, the Consortium hopes to improve the quality of life for asthma patients and their caretakers by advancing an agenda of asthma management, especially among those disproportionately impacted by the disease. In St. Louis and its surrounding municipalities, this means working closely with African-American stakeholders to better reach African-Americans so that they can attain the information and resources they need to deal effectively with asthma.

On September 7, 2004, September 21, 2004 and October 13, 2004, the CAC met with organization staff, board members and Controlling Asthma in St. Louis (CASL) officials to discuss the purpose and activities of this new committee. These meetings, facilitated by Vector Communications consultants, were designed to assist the CAC in developing a clear course of action and vision of success that would guide the Consortium's community engagement and outreach efforts.

At the first meeting, new committee members were welcomed; given an overview of the Consortium; informed about the opportunities associated with the CASL grant; and asked to discuss the rules, responsibilities and resources that would determine the group's future work. Participants were reminded that while they will eventually define their own goals and objectives, they are expected to:

- Make recommendations regarding outreach to high-risk / underserved communities in the city and county areas;
- Provide technical assistance relative to their organizational expertise; and
- Assist in public engagement, information, outreach and mobilization.

To carry out these responsibilities, they offered to leverage their individual and collective resources as well as use these resources to help the Consortium execute its mission of 'closing the gap that exists between people affected by asthma and the knowledge and services that will help them.'

The next meeting of the CAC will be held on November 9th from 4-6 pm at the Salus Center. If you would like to join us to find out more about the CAC please contact Lucy or Heather in the Consortium office. Our thanks to Rebeccah Bennett of Vector Communications for the CAC progress report and for facilitating the first three meetings.

Elections have taken place and the new Chairs and Vice Chairs have been appointed to the committees. They are as follows:

Best Practices

Chair	Sue Bollmeier	bollmeier@stlcop.edu
Vice Chair	Carmin Pruitt	cpruitt@lungmo.org

Gathering of Asthma Information

Chair	Rick Kurz	kurzrs@slu.edu
Vice Chair	Theresa Prosser	tprosser@stlcop.edu

Barriers and Resources

Chair	Viviane McKay	vmckay@stlouisco.com
Vice Chair	David Sterling	sterling@slu.edu

Asthma Advocacy

Chair	Brad Becker	beckerba@slu.edu
Vice Chair	Emily Pike	epike@stlouisco.com

Look for more committee updates in the next newsletter.

This month we would like to spotlight two of our community member organizations **Healthy Kids Express** and the **Association of Asthma Educators**. We would like to thank both groups for coming and speaking to the Best Practices committee. If your organization would like to be in the Member Spotlight and present to the Best Practices committee, please contact Lucy or Heather in the Consortium office.

Healthy Kids Express is a pediatric mobile health vehicle that provides a variety of health-care services to groups of children. The first of its kind in St. Louis, the program benefits the community by meeting the specific and critical needs of children at risk of not receiving timely medical care.

The purpose of Healthy Kids Express is to support the efforts of primary care providers by identifying the health-care needs of children, offering preventive education and linking them to appropriate medical services. Physical exams and immunizations also are available to children who do not have a primary care provider or children who are unable to see their provider.

Healthy Kids Express seeks out elementary and middle schools, and other community sites to visit. Specific services available to children on the Healthy Kids Express van include:

- Dental, hearing and vision screens
- Lead poisoning and iron deficiency testing
- Immunizations and episodic illness care
- Nutritional, fitness and other health education
- Medical and social services referrals
- Health insurance and Medicaid enrollment services

After being cared for on the Healthy Kids Express, some children will require additional care. In these cases, staff will refer patients to their primary care providers or link them to appropriate medical services. If a child does not have insurance, a social worker will contact the family to verify their eligibility for Medicaid coverage. For more information go to: www.stlouischildrens.org/articles/supporters.asp?ID=106. Or contact Kathleen Sudano, PNP, Nurse Manager at 314-286-2825.

Association of Asthma Educators

National Asthma Educator Certification Review Course Schedule 2004-2005:

- November 11-12, 2004 - Boston, Massachusetts in conjunction with ACAAI Annual Meeting
- March 17-18, 2005 San Antonio, Texas in conjunction with AAAAI Annual Meeting
- AAE 2005 National Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada, July 23-25, 2005
- AAE National Asthma Educator Certification Review Course, Las Vegas, Nevada, July 25-26, 2005



AAE Mission Statement

The Association of Asthma Educators is the premier interdisciplinary professional organization raising the competency of individuals who educate patients and families affected by asthma.

Vision Statement

The shared vision of the Association of Asthma Educators is to be:

- The leading resource for asthma educators.
- The premier provider of evidence based asthma education.
- An advocate for educators and individuals and families affected by asthma.
- Effective in reducing disparity in asthma care and outcomes.

Values Statement

The Association of Asthma Educators promotes these values:

- Integrity and ethics in governing and educating.
- Diversity in membership, leadership and education.
- Collaboration and partnering to serve the members.
- Communications among board of directors, members and staff.

The Association of Asthma Educators can be accessed on the web at www.asthmaeducators.org or call 1-888-988-7747. Or you can contact: Nina Zimmermann, MSN, RN, AE-C Executive Board Member Association Asthma Educators at nzimmerm@im.wustl.edu 314-454-8793.

Parents Miss Some Effective Asthma Steps

By Randy Dotinga, HealthDay Reporter

TUESDAY, Aug. 17 (HealthDayNews) — Many parents of asthmatic children may have the best of intentions but the worst of solutions when they try to protect their kids from allergens, new research suggests. For example, instead of quitting smoking or shutting windows to keep out pollen, parents often turn to expensive air filters or fancy vacuums, notes the report in the August issue of the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology.

"Parents are very enthusiastic about doing something, but a lot of times they were using techniques that didn't make sense considering their children's asthma triggers," said study author Dr. Michael Cabana, a pediatrician at the University of Michigan.

Cabana and his colleagues interviewed 896 parents of asthmatic children and found that only about half of the 1,788 steps that were taken are generally considered effective in preventing attacks.

About 10 percent of children have asthma, which appears to be caused by immune systems that overreact to invaders.

The good news from the study is that about 80 percent of the parents knew at least one substance that "triggered" their child's asthma, and four-fifths of those took steps to help their kid, Cabana said.

But the Michigan researchers also found that one-quarter of the parents surveyed reported that at least one family member smoked but nothing had been done to mitigate the child's exposure to tobacco smoke. And in many cases, they turned to devices such as air filters, which aren't as effective as other steps they could have taken, Cabana said.

"You might have parents who describe their triggers as being an outdoor allergen, and they're replacing mattresses and putting on special mattress covers or pillow encasings," he said. "They aren't helpful for outdoor allergens, but they are helpful for dust mites."

In a small number of cases, the parents took actions that could actually be harmful, such as running a humidifier in a household where a child is allergic to dust mites. According to the authors, a dehumidifier is a better choice.

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Effective Asthma Steps

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Dr. Katharine Woessner, an allergist at Scripps Clinic in San Diego, agreed that humidifiers can spell trouble. Parents “think if they add more moisture to the air that will be helpful. But the more humidity there is in the environment, the higher level of dust mites and more potential of mold spore contamination,” she said.

On the other hand, parents are often reluctant to give up pets — despite what some people may insist, there is no hypoallergenic cat or dog, she said — and don’t realize that overwatered houseplants and carpets can be breeding grounds for allergens.

“For kids, what’s going on in the environment has a huge impact on their asthma,” she said, especially since children appear to be spending more time indoors watching TV and playing video games.

Dr. Robert Zeiger, head of allergy research with the Kaiser Permanente health plan in San Diego, said doctors need to do a better job of educating parents about how to protect their children from asthma triggers.

For example, it’s important for parents to realize that viral infections — not environmental triggers such as dust or pollen — contribute the most to the asthma problems of children under age 5, he said.

“Between the ages of 5 and 20, probably up to 90 percent of children who have asthma on a persistent basis have it related in large measure due to allergies,” he added.

So, what should you do if your child has asthma?

To Cabana, the answer is simple: Conduct a little research.

“Before making major changes to the house, before ripping up the carpet or making a major investment in a new air system, it’s important to consult your physician,” he said.

Our Mission

The Consortium’s mission is to close the gap that exists between people affected by asthma and the knowledge and services that will help them.

Our Vision

To bring together the wealth of talent and resources in the St. Louis metropolitan area to improve the health and quality of life of people living with asthma.

Want to have a say in your Consortium?

Join the committee of your choice by email at lreinhart@asthma-stlouis.org or go the website for more information at www.asthma-stlouis.org. **Send your thoughts, news, updates to Heather in the Consortium office at Salus Center, 3545 Lafayette, Suite 300, St. Louis, MO 63104, or email Heather at heather@asthma-stlouis.org.**