



Thank you to all of the Coalition members for keeping asthma policy front and center in 2014. As we begin a new year for the Childhood Asthma Leadership Coalition, it is important to take a look back at our accomplishments in 2014 and evaluate our progress toward addressing the serious and pervasive problem of childhood asthma in the United States.

This document highlights the major accomplishments of our three workgroups; reviews our efforts to engage with Federal leaders on asthma and our outreach to leaders on Capitol Hill; and describes actions in 2014 to strategically grow the Coalition and increase its media presence. Looking to the year ahead, we look forward to working with you to identify opportunities that will enhance the Coalition's impact.

CALC 2014 Year in Review

MEDICAID WORKGROUP

2014 Highlights

Promoting community-based asthma services reimbursement in Medicaid:

- Sent letters to the Hill and Administration, and communications to State Medicaid Directors that pushed for changes to Medicaid law that give new flexibility to states to cover and pay for community-based asthma interventions when carried out by non-clinical professionals;
- Held two meetings for coalition members to share updates from states implementing the Medicaid preventive services rule change;
- Developed a widely dispersed one-pager that describes the rule change in detail;
- Developed and shared with CMS descriptions of best practices/case studies on innovative community-based asthma programs; document will inform CMS' efforts to encourage Medicaid programs to make use of this new rule.

Overcoming Medicaid Reimbursement Challenges in Schools:

- Sent a coalition sign-on letter to CMS pushing for Medicaid guidance to clarify that schools are not bound by the free care rule;
- Hosted a webinar – *Paying for Asthma Management at School: Reimbursement Barriers and New Opportunities* – exploring the patchwork of funding that school districts use to cover school nursing services and recent legal challenges that call into question the validity of the “free care rule”;
- Submitted a manuscript to the *Journal of School Health* for publication on Medicaid reimbursement in schools;
- Engaged in a media strategy to promote the rule change;

Educating Stakeholders on Opportunities for Using Social Impact Financing to Improve Asthma Outcomes

- Hosted a webinar – *Using Social Impact Financing to Improve Asthma Outcomes* – which presented three case studies exploring the importance of social financing mechanisms for childhood asthma;
- Published an issue brief: *Using Social Impact Financing to Improve Asthma Outcomes*

Inclusion of Asthma as Mandatory Preventive Service:

- Drafted two-pager on how the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) and the Community Guide can and should work together to ensure that appropriate community preventive services related to asthma are included within USPSTF recommendations
- Engaged with the USPSTF and Community Guide representatives to determine best course of action to push USPSTF to review and recommend preventive services related to asthma (which would impact coverage under the Medicaid expansion and private plans)

The Year Ahead

- Promotion of the free care rule change among stakeholders through presentations, educational documents, collaboration with Coalition members and media opportunities;
- Continued advocacy on community-based asthma services and Medicaid reimbursement -- working with CMS and states to disseminate additional information to State Medicaid Directors on the importance of amending



state plans so community-based asthma interventions can be provided by asthma educators, healthy homes specialists, or other trained/certified health workers

- Further engagement with U.S. Preventive Services Task Force to ensure the Task Force reviews and recommends preventive services related to asthma;
- Engaging Coalition members to support continued funding for CHIP beyond its FY 2015 expiration.

FEDERAL FUNDING WORKGROUP

2014 Highlights

- Worked to identify all of the key childhood asthma programs in the federal budget
- Created several informative resources, such as side-by-side budget charts and fact sheets, to provide key information about the negative effects of the sequester and the impact of the recent budget debates on federal spending for children with asthma
- Held workgroup meetings discussing President's FY15 budget
- Coordinated a sign-on letter to the Senate and House Appropriations Committees highlighting the importance of funding federal programs that affect children with asthma
- Created a fact sheet: Overview of Federal-Funding for Childhood Asthma Programs for FY2014 and FY2015 with detailed chart on funding levels for federal programs affecting childhood asthma

The Year Ahead

- Continued collaboration with Coalition members on advocacy to protect federal funding for childhood asthma programs in the upcoming congressional budget debates;
- Educate policymakers about improved outcomes for children with asthma who are served by these programs and identify policy opportunities to extend funding.
- Continuing to provide information and working collaboratively to protect federal funding for childhood asthma-related programs in the on-going Congressional budget debates
- Developing new facts sheet to highlight asthma funding priorities and federal spending trends for childhood asthma programs across the federal agencies
- Engaging Coalition members and other childhood asthma stakeholders in a letter to support continued funding for key federal programs
- Collecting stories and developing advocacy materials using examples from federal asthma programs to show that investments in childhood asthma programs make a difference in the lives of children and result in improved outcomes for the children who are served by these programs

WORKGROUP ON ASTHMA RESEARCH

2014 Highlights

- Held an inaugural meeting of research workgroup in Sept 2014;
- Conducted a literature review of asthma research;
- Developed a background document on asthma research and table categorizing all currently-funded asthma research from key funders (e.g. PCORI, private foundations, NIH, etc.);
- Submitted comments to NHLBI as they consider forming a research consortium that would work on translating and disseminating evidence-based interventions into clinical practice;
- Held meeting with NIH to learn more about NHLBI's T4 Implementation Research agenda and the ways that our work can support these efforts;
- Organized meeting between Coalition members and Association for Community Affiliated Plans (ACAP) to discuss business case for MCOs investing in home asthma management;

The Year Ahead



- Developing strategies for dissemination of existing evidence-base to payers (perhaps by hosting a CEO/CMO roundtable of insurers);
- Bring stakeholders/funders together to discuss opportunities for greater investments in implementation research;
- Pressure NIH through report language to fund more implementation research;
- Developing one-pagers, letters or briefings on this issue as appropriate.

ENGAGING WITH FEDERAL LEADERS ON ASTHMA

2014 Highlights

- Held several individual meetings with HUD, EPA, NIH and CDC on ways the coalition can support their ongoing work;
- Participated in a regional meeting hosted by HUD to explore how HUD and Medicaid dollars intersect to provide home-based intervention;
- Developed a document comparing the National Asthma Control Program's new FY 2014 funding components with previous requirements; used by CDC to assist states in preparing to submit applications under the new funding announcement;
- Shared our community-based asthma program case studies document (that was prepared initially for CMS) with CDC, HUD and EPA; used by agencies to educate partners and other stakeholders about new Medicaid reimbursement rules;
- Hosted a briefing with representatives from HUD, EPA, CDC and NIH and generated numerous ideas for how the Coalition can work to support the *Coordinated Federal Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Asthma Disparities* and other agency priorities.

The Year Ahead

- Collaborating with state and federal policymakers to promote the implementation of the Medicaid new reimbursement option for community-based prevention services;
- Collaborating with state and federal policymakers to promote the recent free care rule change;
- Engaging the USPSTF and the Community Preventative Task Force to encourage their consideration of the evidence regarding asthma-related preventative services;
- Working with coalition partners to highlight pay for success models that address childhood asthma;
- Advocating in support of healthy housing conditions, including initiatives on smoke-free housing, and better maintenance of subsidized government housing;
- Collaborating with NIH, PCORI and CMMI to develop opportunities for asthma translational research;
- Sharing information and materials with EPA's asthmacommunitynetwork.org website.

HILL OUTREACH

2014 Highlights

- Held a series of bipartisan visits with leading congressional staff on childhood asthma policy
- Sponsored a Senate sign-on letter to HHS on Medicaid funding in schools and the free care rule
- Sponsored a coalition sign-on letter to the Senate and House appropriations committees on continue and improved federal funding for asthma
- Sponsored 2 congressional briefings with the Congressional Allergy and Asthma Caucus: Tackling Childhood Asthma Through Prevention and Reducing Asthma Triggers Keeps Kids Healthy
- Co-sponsored a briefing with American Lung Association on healthy air, titled: National Climate Assessment and Air Pollution: The Impact on Asthma and Allergies
- Specific meetings included staff in the following offices:
 - Senator Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY)



- *Representative Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH)*
- *Senator Ed Markey (D-MA)*
- *Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY)*
- *Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA)*
- *Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN)*
- *Representative Roybal-Allard (D-CA)*
- *Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY)*
- *Representative Bill Cassidy (R-LA)*
- Through a series of congressional visits, introduced the Coalition to key offices on Capitol Hill, with a focus on a bipartisan group of Senators and Representatives who have expressed an interest in childhood asthma-related policies
- Facilitated conversations between Coalition members on issue specific information
- Informed congressional staff about the then-pending Medicaid regulations and the opportunity to improve reimbursement for asthma-related services in the states
- Worked closely with Coalition members and the Congressional Children's Health Care Caucus on a briefing that highlighted the importance of new Medicaid rules for children with asthma
- Hosted a briefing with the House Allergy and Asthma Caucus on the topic "Tackling Childhood Asthma Through Prevention," to provide information to staff on how asthma prevention efforts are cost-effective and help improve quality of care and health outcomes for children with asthma

The Year Ahead

- Monitoring legislative action for opportunities to improve health care access and outcomes for children with asthma
- Engaging national coalition members and state partners on timely childhood asthma-policy developments through "action alerts" and providing assistance to facilitate outreach to policymakers
- Building relationships with leading congressional caucuses including the Allergy and Asthma Caucus
- Working with key congressional staff to develop educational staff briefings focused on timely policy issues related to childhood asthma
- Engaging the coalition in advocacy to protect Medicaid from block grant and per-capita cap proposals that would arbitrarily cut programs essential to children with asthma
- Supporting the continuation of CHIP beyond 2015 when funding is currently set to expire
- Continuing to engage congressional staff on ACA implementation issues related to childhood asthma with a focus on educating staff on the opportunities presented by the Medicaid preventive health services rule and the clarification of the free care rule
- Engaging state Medicaid policymakers to encourage state adoption of new Medicaid reimbursement opportunities available under the preventive health services rule and the free care rule
- Strengthening relationships with leading congressional caucuses, in particular the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, on asthma disparity issues and engaging leaders on Capitol Hill to monitor the work of the *Coordinated Federal Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Asthma Disparities*

COALITION COMMUNICATIONS

2014 Highlights. During the past year, developed a logo, designed and launched a Coalition website (www.childhoodasthma.org) and listserv, built and disseminated a communications toolkit for Coalition partners, and placed op-eds in major regional newspapers.

- Completed the coalition's first media plan
- Pitched reporters on coalition priorities, including HUD's smokefree policy and the CMS free care rule
- Secured media coverage of coalition activities or issues in Stateline.org, Inside CMS, and Reuters Health
- Updated and re-released the Asthma Awareness Month toolkit



- Drafted commentaries for local and regional newspapers
- Provided social media collaboration opportunities for coalition members

The Year Ahead

- Updating and re-releasing the Asthma Awareness Month toolkit
- Supporting coalition activities through media outreach
- Social media collaboration opportunities for coalition members
- Developing template communications materials and toolkits for Coalition member organizations
- Surveying Coalition member organizations on capacity for and interest in shared communications activities;
- Composing commentary pieces for submission to local and regional newspapers
- Seeking social media collaboration opportunities for Coalition members
- Updating the Coalition's *Asthma Awareness Month* toolkit and re-releasing it

COALITION GROWTH

2014 Highlights. We have grown the Coalition to almost 20 leading organizations dedicated to issue areas important to addressing the childhood asthma epidemic, including: public health, health care, housing, schools, and environmental health organizations.

The Year Ahead

- **New Membership.** We propose strategically inviting new members to the Coalition who will bring perspective in areas where we lack expertise and representation (e.g. community health workers, health centers, implementation research etc.)
- **Connecting with State-Based Asthma Coalitions.** While the scope of our Coalition membership is national, we recognize that much of the important policy work for asthma is accomplished at the state, county or local level. We are aware of several active and effective state and regional asthma coalitions that will be worth connecting with to see where priorities overlap and where CALC efforts can be helpful.

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