



Arizona Asthma Coalition

# Breathing Easier

Visit our website at [www.azasthma.org](http://www.azasthma.org)

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 3

FEBRUARY 1, 2010

## AAC Meetings:

**Wednesday, February 24, 2010 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, 124 W. Thomas Road, Second Floor Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Special Guest Speaker: Dr. Patricia Mariella, Director, American Indian Policy Institute.**

**Wednesday, April 28, 2010 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Same location as above.**

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## A Message from the Chair Lilia Parra-Roide, MD

### Spring Time for Asthma

The Arizona Asthma Coalition receives many inquiries about allergies and asthma in the Spring. Asthma can get worse in the Spring for those who have allergies to pollen and mold. Though many people move to Phoenix to escape the wrath of hay fever type allergies that exacerbate asthma, this strategy can be effective temporarily and get worse with exposure over time. People with allergies can experience runny nose, watery and itchy eyes, sore throat, cough and even wheezing and asthma.

The primary culprits are pollen from trees, grasses and weeds that spread primarily through wind, as opposed to pollen from flower plants spread by bees. Since we have a dry, moderate climate in Arizona, pollen is spread year-round, but in the Spring, there can be an overlap of different pollen types.

There are strategies that people with allergies can implement to make it better:

- \*Stay indoors on dry windy days especially at night and in the early morning when pollen counts are higher.
- \*Avoid opening windows. Pollen will come in the house and car and settle on everything. Use air

conditioners with a filter and re-circulate air. Keep furniture dusted, carpets vacuumed, and floors mopped.

- \*Wear a dust mask for indoor and outdoor chores especially gardening.
- \*Pollen can cling to clothing and hairs, so change clothing worn outside and avoid hanging laundry outdoors; you may even shower to rinse pollen from skin and hair.
- \*Keep pets away from your furniture to avoid leaving pollen on the furniture.
- \*Keep your medications close at hand and use them as prescribed by your physician.
- \*Make sure your asthma action plan is up to date and easy to find.
- \*If you are not sure if you have allergies, your doctor can help you figure that out.

There is much more to learn, so I invite you to read and learn more about asthma and what your triggers are. Visit the Arizona Asthma Coalition website ([www.azasthma.org](http://www.azasthma.org)) from time to time and please consider supporting our organization.

## A Message from the Executive Director Camille Tumolo, MA

Non-profit organizations struggle to stay viable and sustainable in good times, so in these very challenging economic times, it is that much more difficult to sustain the work we do. What you may not know is that is the Arizona Asthma Coalition has an amazing Board of Directors, who are committed to seeing that we do not become another statistic, but rather that we find a way to continue to grow and thrive. The Board works hard, but we cannot continue our work without your support. That support is more than just membership dues or a donation, although that is surely needed. What we also need are people who are committed to the Coalition to step up and work with the Board and me to develop new ways to keep the AAC moving forward.

Below is a list of the five AAC Committees, which you can join. Through the work of the committees, each of you

can make a difference in the lives of people with asthma in Arizona and also help us build capacity and sustainability, so that we are around in years to come.

### Clinical Management Committee

The overriding goal of the Clinical Management Committee is to improve clinical management and care of asthma statewide through the use of data, education and advocacy.

### Conference Committee

Plans an annual asthma conference with the purpose of educating Physicians, Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Respiratory Therapists, Managed Care Employees and others involved in the care and management of asthma patients. - continued on p. 3



As a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization, your donations are tax deductible.

[www.azasthma.org](http://www.azasthma.org)

Watch for more information about the Fifth Annual Arizona Asthma Conference to be held in May, 2010.



## Legislative Update

### Barbara Burkholder

Dr. Allan Wachter has been elected as Vice Chairman of the AAC Board of Directors. As an allergist in private practice in Ahwatukee, Dr. Wachter served as Chair of the Maricopa County Asthma Coalition. He will serve as Vice Chair of the AAC during 2010 and then become Chairman in 2011. Dr. Lila Parra-Roide has agreed to continue as Chair for 2010.

AAC promotes 1) access to health care for people with asthma and 2) improved air quality so that people will not be exposed to airborne particulates

and ozone, both of which exacerbate asthma. Therefore we keep watch on the Legislature. It convened its Fifth Special Session on December 15th in an effort to address the continuing \$1.6 billion deficit in the 2009-10 budget.

Health and Human Services Budgets: The main bill under consideration, Senate Bill 1001, cuts \$194 million, including \$45.9 million reductions to Health and Human Services Budgets. The impact of these cuts is to reduce a wide variety of state health services at a time

of high unemployment and increased demand due to the economic crisis.

AHCCCS: \$7.6 million lump sum reduction in General Fund and \$608,000 cut in third party collections. The total state and federal funds lost for hospitals will be \$26.1 million.

Department of Health Services: \$12.4 million lump sum reduction in General Fund, plus \$168,000 sweep from EMS operations, lab funds, licensing and

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## Air Pollution May Lessen Asthma Inhaler Benefits

NEW YORK (Reuters Health)

Air pollution, which tends to inflame the airways in people with asthma, might also reduce the effectiveness of the rescue inhalers they count on for quick relief of their asthma symptoms, study findings hint.

### Health

Dr. Fernando Holguin, at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and colleagues studied 85 asthmatic children, ages 7 to 12, to determine whether outdoor air pollution had any impact on how well their rescue inhalers worked.

The children all lived in Mexico City, where traffic-related air pollution is usually very high. Fifty-three of the children had mild intermittent asthma, 20 had mild persistent asthma, and 12 had moderate persistent asthma.

As they report in the journal *Chest*, Holguin and his team found that higher levels of certain air pollutants, specifically nitrogen dioxide and ozone, made the rescue inhalers less effective - not because the devices didn't function properly, but because the children did not seem to respond as well to the medication.

For example, an increase of 10 parts-per-billion in nitrogen dioxide levels in the air seemed to decrease rescue inhaler efficacy by about 15 percent.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, current nitrogen dioxide levels in the U.S. average from 10 to 20 parts per billion.

However, inhaled steroids provided some protection against the effects of pollution, Holguin told Reuters Health in an email message.

Among the 25 children in the study who regularly used in-

haled corticosteroids to help control persistent asthma, the rescue inhalers provided more effective quick relief.

These findings are consistent with other studies and "may explain why asthmatics are more symptomatic in relation to air pollution," Holguin said. Nonetheless, his group notes the need for further, larger-scale investigations to confirm their findings.

SOURCE: *Chest*, December 2009.



## 2010 Arizona Asthma Conference at UMC

The 2010 Arizona Asthma Conference will be held at the University Medical Center in Tucson, Arizona on Saturday, April 24, 2010 and hosted by the new Diamond Children's Hospital.

We are very fortunate to have an amazing group of nationally and internationally known asthma experts presenting at the conference. General session speakers include Fernando Martinez, MD, Mark Brown, MD and Wayne Morgan, MD.

Breakout sessions will provide practical information and applications to use in your practice and in the schools.

Breakout session facilitators include Lynn Gerald, PhD, Roni Grad, MD, Michael Danes, MD, Jamie Smith, MS, MPH, Amber Chapa and Julie Finke.

CMEs and CEUs will be offered. You can register online at [www.azasthma.org](http://www.azasthma.org).

The registration brochure is available on the AAC website and will be sent by mail as well. If you have any questions, please contact Camille Tumolo at [cami150@cox.net](mailto:cami150@cox.net).



*Your AAC membership dues and donations are now tax deductible. Support the AAC and become a member. Go to our website at [www.azasthma.org](http://www.azasthma.org) and join today.*

## Maricopa County Asthma Coalition - Cecile Fowler

The Maricopa County Asthma Coalition received notification of two grant awards during December. One is from the BHHS Legacy Foundation, a grant for \$15,000 to provide asthma screening, follow-up and education in the west Valley. The other is \$18,000 to conduct a comprehensive, school-based asthma prevention program in the East Valley. It was awarded by Catholic Healthcare West's Community

gram through Mercy Gilbert and Chandler Regional Hospitals.

Approximately 1,000 Head Start students have been screened so far this year in Maricopa County. Preliminary results indicate about 14% of the children with asthma, as reported by the parent, and an additional 4% that scored high enough to trigger a referral for

medical evaluation. Of those whose parents reported that they had asthma, about 32% do not appear to have it well-controlled, based on parent responses to the questionnaire.

The next meeting of the Maricopa County Asthma Coalition will be held on February 3 at 6:00 at Phoenix Children's Hospital. Contact Cecile Fowler at [cfowler@phoenixchildrens.com](mailto:cfowler@phoenixchildrens.com).

## A Message from the Executive Director

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### Marketing Committee

- \*Create a uniform appearance or "Brand" for the Arizona Asthma Coalition.
- \*Maintain a Marketing Plan, which takes into consideration the needs of all other committees
- \*Address the need to attract additional potential constituents, donors and sustaining members.
- \*Create and maintain brochures that promote the Coalition to different audiences.
- \*Create and publish a newsletter.
- \*Maintain efficient communica-

tions with all Coalition committees to ensure that marketing needs are being met in a uniform manner.

### Policy and Advocacy Committee

- \*Review and recommend amendments to the bylaws
- \*Develop public policy resolutions and recommendations for approval by the Executive Committee and Coalition membership
- \*Review proposed and existing state and local health laws, ordinances and policies, propose needed legislation and make recommendations for action to the Board of Directors and the membership.

- \*Form an ad hoc nominating committee each year to nominate a slate of candidates for the election of a Vice Chair. School Health Committee
- \*Create projects and programs that enhance asthma education and awareness in the public, private and charter schools in Arizona.
- \*Make recommendations to the Policy and Advocacy Committee regarding policies that impact children with asthma in the schools.
- \*Distribute materials for School Nurses
- \*Partner with ADEQ and ADHS school projects when appropriate.





## Mission, Vision and Goals

The **mission** of the Arizona Asthma Coalition is to advocate for better services and improved quality of life for Arizonans living with asthma through education, partnerships and coalition building.

The **vision** of the Coalition is to eliminate deaths from asthma.

The **goals** of the Coalition are:

To improve clinical management and care through the use of data, education and advocacy

To improve public policy for asthma prevention and care in Arizona

To improve awareness of the Coalition and that asthma is a manageable chronic disease

### Arizona Asthma Coalition

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## Legislative Update - continued

substance abuse treatment.. The lump sum reductions will likely target non-Title XIX behavioral health funds.

**Department of Economic Security:** \$25,944,500 lump sum reduction.

**Department of Environmental Quality:** Since the state budget crisis began, the DEQ budget has been cut more than 60%. As a result of these cuts and reductions in personnel, the Department is struggling to provide timely air quality permits for new and expanding businesses, and to enforce the Clean Air Act. A recent article in the Arizona Capital Times stated that if the state does not comply with the Federal requirements under the act, the EPA could come in and take over these functions in Arizona.

## UA Center Receives Nearly \$1 Million from NIH

**The Arizona Center for the Biology of Complex Diseases has received a grant from the National Institutes of Health to identify predictors of asthma.**

**By University Communications January 8, 2010**

The Arizona Center for the Biology of Complex Diseases at the University of Arizona has received a \$958,544 National Institutes of Health Challenge grant to identify epigenetic predictors of asthma in neonates, newborn infants less than four weeks old.

This unique multi-disciplinary effort is spearheaded by Dr. Donata Vercelli, who is renowned for her work in allergies and asthma genetics and is director of the center, also known as [ABCD](#).

ABCD was incubated by [Arizona Research Laboratories](#), or ARL, in the fall of 2007 and formally launched with seed funding in spring of 2008 to study the intricate interactions of environmental, developmental and genetic factors that contribute to complex human diseases such as cancer, asthma, diabetes and Alzheimer's. For the full article go to:

<http://uanews.org/node/28794>.