World Asthma Day, May 3, 2005

May is Asthma Awareness Month, and Tuesday, May 3, 2005, is World Asthma Day. The Minnesota Asthma Coalition (MAC) regional coalitions will be planning special events for the month. Keep an eye out for this year’s theme:

“So you have asthma, what’s your plan?”

The Metro Minnesota Asthma Coalition (MMAC) is working with Twin Cities Public Television, TPT2, to air an episode of Arthur called “Buster’s Breathless.” This episode addresses asthma, what can trigger an asthma episode, and how you can stay active and healthy if you have asthma. Tune in to TPT2 on May 3, 2005, at 4 p.m. For more information contact Chris Krueger at kruegercmm@comcast.net.

The Southwest Regional Asthma Coalition (SWRAC) will have “Family Night,” an evening of asthma educational activities for families. There will be a “pizza and pop” supper, inhaler demonstrations, games that will teach children about asthma, a parent/caregiver presentation made by an asthma specialist, door prizes, and family swim time. Come to the Willmar YMCA (1000 Lakeland Drive SE, Willmar, MN) on May 1, 2005, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. For more information contact Amy Roggenbuck at aaroggen@farmerstel.net.

Please continue to check the MAC website (www.mnasthma.org) or contact the MAC Coordinator, Erin Simmons, at 507-381-8257 for more event information in your area.

If you would like to know more about what the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency is doing for World Asthma Day and Asthma Awareness Month, visit the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency website at http://www.epa.gov/asthma/awm.html.

Second Annual Asthma Sharing Conference and Minnesota Asthma Coalition Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 12, 2004, St. Cloud Civic Center
Presented by: Minnesota Asthma Coalition (MAC), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), & American Lung Association of Minnesota (ALAMN)

This conference is a statewide forum to exchange ideas, share innovative programs and review current research in asthma management. The presentations and break out sessions will offer the latest information on asthma, comprehensive care, and regional activities. Topics include:

- Asthma activities in Minnesota
- Asthma, allergies and COPD
- Occupational asthma
- Asthma diagnosis, management and culture
- Multi-disciplinary approaches to asthma care

For registration and further information visit www.alamn.org/prof/AsthmaSharingConf.asp or contact Cheryl Sasse at Cheryl.sasse@alamn.org or 651-223-9565.
Healthy People 2010: Minnesota and the National Goals for Asthma

Healthy People 2010 Goals for Asthma
How does Minnesota measure against federal guidelines in terms of asthma? The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services coordinated an effort to create a set of national health goals to be reached by the year 2010 called “Healthy People 2010.” Listed below are two of the Healthy People 2010 asthma goals, along with Minnesota’s status on meeting these goals and the U.S. rates from 1998 as a baseline for comparison.

GOAL: Reduce hospitalizations for asthma
Asthma-related hospitalizations are an indicator of both the severity of the disease and the barriers to regular asthma care. Minnesota has already met, or is very close to meeting the Healthy People 2010 goals in the 0-4 and 5-64 age groups; however, the 2002 rate for the 65 and older group is still above the 2010 target.

Asthma-related hospitalizations (Rate per 10,000)

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 years and under</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 to 64 years</td>
<td>6.0*</td>
<td>7.7*</td>
<td>12.5*</td>
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<tr>
<td>65 years and older</td>
<td>13.8*</td>
<td>11*</td>
<td>17.7*</td>
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*Age-adjusted to the year 2000 U.S. population.

GOAL: Reduce asthma deaths
Asthma deaths should be preventable with timely and proper diagnosis, and appropriate care. In Minnesota, death rates in most of the age groups are close to that of the nation. However, Minnesota’s death rate for the 65 and older age group is significantly higher than both the Healthy People 2010 target and the U.S. baseline rate.

Asthma mortality (Rate per 1,000,000)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 years and under</td>
<td>0*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 to 14 years</td>
<td>2.4*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 to 34 years</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 64 years</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and older</td>
<td>104.3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>86.3</td>
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*Rate based on fewer than 20 deaths.

Next Steps
MDH and all of our partners are working hard to meet these goals and the other 2010 goals for asthma. There are several public health projects and programs throughout the state involving health care providers, schools and communities in addition to our efforts to learn more about risk factors for asthma deaths in Minnesotan’s 65 and older. Check future issues of this newsletter, visit our website http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpdc/cdee/asthma/ and visit the Minnesota Asthma Coalition website at http://www.mnasthma.org/mnasthma/ for more information and updates.
Welcome the New Faces of Asthma in Minnesota

Erica Fishman, MPH, MSW
Asthma Program Coordinator
Erica Fishman is the new MDH Asthma Program Coordinator. Prior to joining this program, she worked in the non-profit, governmental and academic sectors on medicine and public health. Most recently, she was the Director of Community Outreach for the Maternal and Child Health Program at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. She has provided training and technical assistance in planning, evaluation, policy development, advocacy, coalition building and sustainability.
612-676-5213
erica.fishman@health.state.mn.us

Sally Sabathier
Office & Administrative Specialist
Sally Sabathier is the new Office & Administrative Specialist for the MDH Asthma Program. She has been with MDH for 15 years. She previously worked in the Office of Minority and Multicultural Health.
612-676-5226
sally.sabathier@health.state.mn.us

Lori Swanson
MAC Regional Coordinator
Lori Swanson is the new Regional Coordinator for the East Central Regional Asthma Coalition (ECRAC). She is also a Health Educator for Kanabec County Public Health. Previously, Lori has worked with youth on tobacco prevention, promoting abstinence, seatbelt safety, and various other youth risk prevention activities. Lori has a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Community Health Education.
320-679-6316
lori.swanson@co.kanabec.mn.us

Doreen Hanson, RN
MAC Regional Coordinator
Doreen Hanson is the new Regional Coordinator for the West Central Regional Asthma Coalition (WCRAC). As a RN, she has worked in many settings including a hospital, a nursing home and Douglas County Public Health. She has been with the health department for almost 13 years and has worked with several public health programs including emergency preparedness and immunizations.
320-763-6018
doreen.hanson@mail.co.douglas.mn.us

Air Quality Index

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (PCA) issued an “unhealthy for all” air pollution alert for the first time in many years from January 31 through February 2. The PCA provides information on the quality of outdoor air called the Air Quality Index (AQI). The AQI tells the public how polluted the outdoor air is and what steps you can take to protect yourself.

Since pollutants found in outdoor air can trigger asthma episodes, it’s important to know the AQI for your area. To check the AQI, go to the PCA website at http://aqi.pca.state.mn.us/hourly/. You can also sign up to receive email notices of air quality alerts at http://www.pca.state.mn.us/air/aqi-subscribe.html.

An elevated AQI in Minnesota is commonly the result of high levels of either ozone or particulate matter. The MDH website provides answers to questions about ozone and particulate matter:
Ozone http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/air/ozone.htm
Particulate Matter http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/air/pm.htm

Managing Asthma in Minnesota Schools

Since March 2004, we have had 21 trainings throughout the state with over 600 participants. We have evaluated these trainings based on three criteria: participant satisfaction, knowledge change, goals for applying new knowledge and skills to practice.

Preliminary evaluation findings show that participants have been satisfied with the trainings and that 92% of them would recommend this training to a colleague. There has been a consistent increase in asthma knowledge. Scores went from 69.5% on the pre-tests to 85.9% on the post-tests. Follow-ups of participant goals for application to practice have shown participants are using the knowledge and confidence they received at the trainings to take action to improve the lives of students with asthma. Some of the goals set by participants include:
- Informing and educating school personnel: teachers, coaches, administrators, etc.
- Applying the knowledge they gained to practice in their work with students
- Usage of Asthma Action Plans
- Conducting in-services to educate personnel about asthma
- Creating and revising procedures and forms

If you would like more information about this program or to see a map of all the school districts that have attended a training, visit our website http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/asthma/.

Association for Nonsmokers - Minnesota (ANSR)

ANSR is a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the human and economic costs of tobacco use in Minnesota. To find a listing of smoke-free restaurants, smoke-free apartments, tobacco-free parks or to get information on other smoke-free issues, check out the ANSR website at www.ansrmm.org or call Brittany McFadden at 651-646-3005.
BREATHEING SPACE, a quarterly respiratory disease newsletter, is produced by the Minnesota Department of Health Asthma Program. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide health professionals, school nurses, and community members with current research, information, and resources on respiratory disease.

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Asthma Program Telephone Number: 612-676-5226
Toll Free Number: 1-877-925-4189
Asthma Web Site: http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/asthma/index.html

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