

The Asthma Foundations Australia Community Support Program (CSP) provides support and information to people with asthma and their carers.

The program aims to provide asthma information and raises awareness across Australia, wherever you live and whatever your needs.

This program has been funded by the Department of Health and Ageing.

Our focus is asthma. We also provide information and contacts for key agencies in the area of allergy and chronic lung conditions.

Asthma is a significant health issue

Asthma is one of the most common reasons that people are admitted to hospital. This is due to severe asthma attacks. On a daily basis asthma can cause:

- ✓ Coughing
- ✓ Breathlessness
- ✓ Disturbed sleep

In the coming months, we will be working with communities to inform people about how to recognise asthma, how to manage their asthma

and how to help others with asthma and linked conditions.

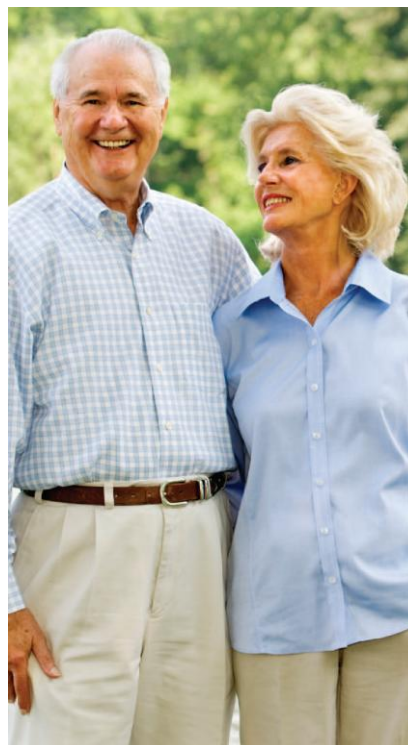
One focus of our work is supporting older Australians. (See page 2).

In the Community

Community Educators in all states and territories are raising awareness and providing support to people with asthma and their carers.

If you, or someone you care for, has asthma, you can make a free call (1800 645 130) to your local foundation to get further information about asthma. You can also access a free education session to find out more about your asthma and how to manage it.

We also provide talks in community settings about effective management of asthma and asthma first aid.



Asthma First Aid

Would you know how to help someone having an asthma attack?

There is a simple asthma first aid plan we can show you – contact your local foundation and ask about Asthma First Aid.



Working with older Australians

Asthma is often associated with younger people; however, it can affect anyone at any age.

In 2007, 385 people died from asthma.

Of those people who died, 63% were people over the age of 70 years. (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009)

Factors such as change in lifestyle, lack of fitness, cardiac problems and other health conditions associated with ageing can all contribute to breathlessness. Unfortunately, we sometimes forget that asthma may also contribute to this breathlessness!

Could it be asthma?

It is important that we are aware of the symptoms and various things that may trigger asthma.

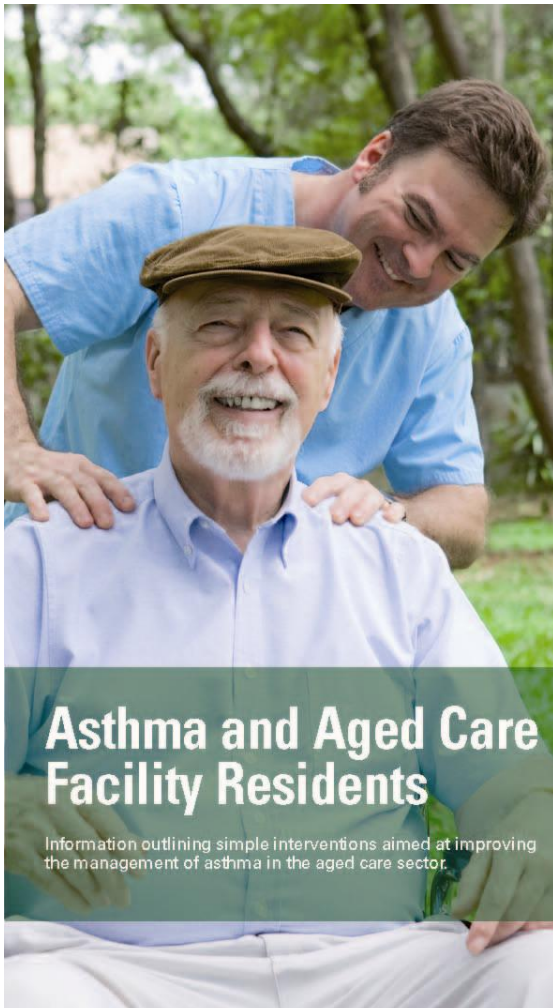
If you are not sure, make an appointment to see your GP.

People in our community - Ivy, 72

Ivy has just moved to a residential care facility in regional Australia. She was living on the family farm with her son until her mobility declined and she moved into town.

Ivy has been well and active most of her life. However, she has noticed that she is finding it difficult to walk from her bedroom to the dining area in her new home. She gets very short of breath and has difficulty sleeping. Ivy needs some help getting dressed each morning and whilst she was getting dressed the staff member assisting her noticed that Ivy was finding it hard to breathe. They discussed this breathlessness and considered seeing her GP.

Ivy made an appointment to see her local doctor that day. A simple test (spirometry) was completed to assess Ivy's lung function. It was determined that Ivy has asthma and this was affecting her daily activities. Her GP provided her with preventer medication and an action plan. Ivy has regular reviews with her doctor and her lung function has returned to normal with daily asthma medication.



Asthma and Aged Care Facility Residents

Information outlining simple interventions aimed at improving the management of asthma in the aged care sector.

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We are currently providing education sessions, talking about asthma with staff in residential care across Australia.

If you are caring for someone in an Aged Care facility it is vital to understand the asthma medications, and how people take these, as well as recognising if someone's asthma is worsening.

Caring for someone with asthma means knowing Asthma First Aid and knowing to whom we report our concerns. We aim to improve asthma knowledge and teach asthma first aid, helping to reduce the impact of asthma on people's lives.

If you work in the Aged Care sector and would like to book an asthma education session, please call your local foundation.

Asthma Foundations local contact details:

ACT (02) 62864414

info@asthmaact.org.au

VIC (03) 93267088

advice@asthma.org.au

NSW (02) 99063233

ask@asthmansw.org.au

TAS (03)62285631

info@asthmatas.org.au

NT (08)89816066

asthmant@asthmant.org.au

WA (08) 92893600

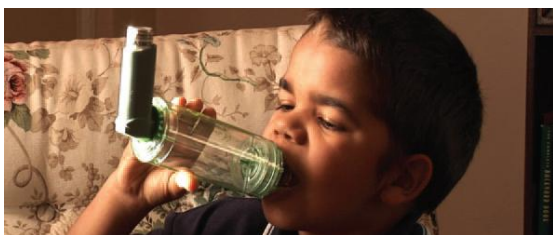
ask@asthmawa.org.au

SA (08) 82389300

info@asthmasa.org.au

QLD (07) 32527677

info@asthmaql.org.au



Our work in our nation's capital

Residential aged care – education sessions

As part of our service to the Canberra community the Asthma Foundation offers asthma education to staff in aged care facilities. These sessions provide staff with information about asthma, medications, devices, first aid and overall asthma management for their clients. Staff at the Uniting Aged Care's Mirinjani Village and the Adria Village attended sessions at the end of last year. The feedback from the participants indicated that their asthma understanding and knowledge had increased as well as there being an increase in confidence to manage an asthma emergency.



Multicultural Festival

We recently held an information stall as part of the National Multicultural Festival's Contact Canberra event on Sunday 7 February. This Festival celebrates the rich cultural diversity of the ACT through the participation by

members showcasing their respective cultural traditions and heritage in the central business district. On the final day of the festival, not-for-profit community groups are given the opportunity, to set up a stall and provide information to members of the public who come along for the food, entertainment and general information. Over 20,000 people attended this event and the asthma information stall was busy throughout the day.



If you or anyone you know is interested in:

- **Asthma information**
- **Family education sessions**
- **Community sessions**
- **Useful websites**
- **Support and Advocacy**
- **Help with your asthma**

Please get in touch with your local Asthma Foundation in your capital city on free call:

1800 645 130