

**May 2015**

**Publication of the SASME and What it Means  
to AE-Cs**

**by Karen Rance, DNP, APRN, CPNP, AE-C**

In March 2015, our vision to attain reimbursement for asthma education took a huge step forward with the publication of the *Standards of Asthma Self-Management Education (SASME)* in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology*. As we all know, asthma education reimbursement continues to be a source of frustration in the U.S. Among the greatest barriers that have existed for such reimbursement is the lack of a standardized, published curriculum for the components of asthma self-management education. The applicable CPT code for self-management education and training is 98960 and it states that "If a practitioner has created a training curriculum for educating patients on management of their medical condition, he or she may employ a non-physician health care professional to provide education using a standardized curriculum for patients with that disease." Until the SASME's publication, asthma self-management education standardized curriculum reimbursement from payers had been beyond reach.

The SASME was written and designed to meet all of the criteria of CPT code 98960 and establishes the minimum standard for asthma

self-management education when teaching patients or caregivers how to effectively manage asthma in conjunction with the professional health care team. To provide some background, 8 years ago representatives from the Joint Council of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology; American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology; American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology; American Lung Association; American Thoracic Society; National Asthma Educator Certification Board; American College of Chest Physicians; and Association of Asthma Educators gathered with the purpose of writing this standardized curriculum as a guideline for payer reimbursement. After the document's completion, the NAECB was charged with seeking its publication and then driving the path forward to attain reimbursement for asthma education on the national stage. Currently the NAECB has partnered with the Allergy and Asthma Network and its deep legislative resources to seek legislative support on Capitol Hill, which would ultimately gain favor with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services (CMS) in Washington, DC. It has been established that to set a national agenda of asthma education reimbursement, CMS must recognize fulfillment of the 98960 code and then private insurers will follow suit.

AE-Cs are at the heart of this pursuit and your voice matters! We will be sending out alerts and updates in our newsletter as the legislative process gains momentum to give you an opportunity to be a part of this historic work. Stay tuned.

Thank you for your passions and partnership.

# **Arizona Asthma Coalition Clinical Conference**

**Saturday, October 3, 2015**

**SAVE THE DATE!!!!** The Arizona Asthma Coalition will hold its 9th Annual Conference on Saturday, October 3, 2015, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Banner Children's/ Cardon Children's Medical Center in Mesa. The theme of the conference is Asthma and Allergy: Wheezing and Sneezing in the Desert. The conference will explore the relationship of allergy and asthma, and include three tracks:

- Pharmacological Therapy Through the Lifespan - including very young and school-age children, pregnancy, adults and geriatrics
- Clinical Practice - best clinical practices and case studies; what looks like asthma and isn't
- School Nurses - Asthma 101, what to do in emergencies, and how to use devices

Learn about preventing early life asthma, the impact of air quality on asthma, and the latest research and treatments for asthma and allergies.

CME/CEU credits will be provided for physicians, NPs, PAs, nurses, nurse practitioners, and respiratory care practitioners. Watch for registration materials in July!

For further information contact Mark Brown, MD at [mabrown@arc.arizona.edu](mailto:mabrown@arc.arizona.edu).

**Allergy and Asthma Network is Offering Free  
Membership  
to All AE-Cs in the U.S.  
by John Manning, RN, MSN, PNP, AE-C  
Chair, NAECB**

Allergy and Asthma Network is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to end needless death and suffering due to asthma, allergies and related conditions through outreach, education, advocacy and research. I encourage you to explore their website (<http://www.allergyasthmanetwork.com>).

The Allergy and Asthma Network is now offering complimentary memberships to all currently certified asthma educators (AE-Cs) in the U.S. The AE-C should "enter" as a professional member and enter a discount code after establishing an account.

The promotional code is AAEC15 and it is valid until September 30, 2015, for registration purposes.

Here are the benefits which would be received:

- Complimentary membership in Allergy & Asthma Network to all members. This entitles them to medically-accurate, patient-friendly education resources free-of-charge including:
  - \* Allergy & Asthma Today quarterly magazine

\* Educational Posters on Allergy, Asthma, Anaphylaxis and Medications

\* Educational Special Editions on Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Indoor Air Quality and Environmental

Allergies

\* Continuing Education Programs

\* Invitation to participate in community-based programs and media opportunities to highlight

the role of AE-Cs

- Learning sessions delivered in 35 local markets throughout the U.S. to reinforce guideline-based asthma and allergy care
- Web-based Grand Rounds - Allergy & Asthma content developed and presented by leaders of AAN & ACAAI to reinforce key clinical messages
- National meeting participation
- Advocacy - shared voice on Capitol Hill to reinforce the voice of allergy & asthma patients and healthcare professionals

**Association of Asthma Educators (AAE)  
Annual Conference**

**July 31 - August 2, 2015**

**Anaheim, CA**

**SAVE THE DATE!!!!** The Association of Asthma Educators (AAE) Annual Conference will be held on July 31- August 2 at the Hyatt Regency in Anaheim, CA.

The AAE is the premier inter-professional organization striving for excellence to raise the competency of diverse individuals who educate patients and families living with asthma. Professionals from many diverse areas of asthma care are welcome, including: nurses (RN, LPN, LVN), nurse practitioners (NP), nurse clinicians (NC), respiratory therapists (RRT, CRT), pulmonary function technologists (CPFT, RPFT), pharmacists (RPh, PharmD), physicians (MD, DO), physician assistants (PA-C), community health workers (CHW), social workers (CSW, LSW), public health professionals/health educators (MPH, CHES), case managers, physical therapists (PT) and occupational therapists (OT).

**Highlights:**

- Three days full of sessions covering a wide range of topics, appealing to anyone with a passion for asthma education
- 16+ educational hours offered with approval from AARC, CCMC, CA Board of Nursing, AANP, (etc.)
- Poster presentations
- Vendor exhibits with ample time to talk to all the attendees
- Door-prizes, networking, "Meet and Greet" with new friends
- Great food, great sights and fun in Disneyland's backyard
- July 30 Pre-conference: "Asthma Pharmacology: A Comprehensive Review for Prescribers" - offering 6 educational hours (separate registration required)
- July 30: Community Service Project from 6:00-8:00 PM.

- President's 5K Fun Run/Walk Event for everyone!

This meeting will bring professionals together to showcase new techniques, products, medications, and strategies to improve the quality of care and the quality of life for those diagnosed with asthma.

To register for this conference, please visit: <http://www.asthmaeducators.org/event-1833712>

## **Asthma in the News**

### **Pharmacists can correct asthma controller medication underuse**

Asthma controller medications are underused in neighborhoods with high rates of asthma-related emergency room use and hospitalization, but a study published in Pediatrics shows that pharmacists are in a prime position to correct it.

<http://bit.ly/1ItW3f7>

### **Environmental concerns led to jump in cost of asthma inhalers**

In 2008, the U.S. FDA banned asthma inhalers containing chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), and immediately following, the mean cost of asthma inhalers rose - a 100 percent increase at its peak.

<http://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-05-environmental-asthma-inhalers.html>

### **Allergen components strongly linked to asthma, hay fever**

Patterns of immunoglobulin E responses to specific allergen components were associated with increases in distinct clinical symptoms such as asthma and hay fever, according to study results.

<http://bit.ly/1cNAOrF>

### **Study shows spirometry is underutilized by physicians for asthma**

Of the 134,208 asthma patients enrolled in this study, 48 percent had spirometry during the study period, and 80 percent of patients cared for by specialists received spirometry. Nevertheless, even without spirometry, almost 80 percent of patients received a prescription of asthma drugs.

<http://bit.ly/1QJbxwV>

## **Drug target for asthma discovered**

The over-active immune cells responsible for asthma depend on the gene BCL11B to develop into mature cells, and the identification of this gene's role could help in the search for asthma therapies. <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-05-drug-asthma.html>

## **AAFA's 2015 Asthma Capitals™**

The 2015 Asthma Capitals™ report ranks the top 100 most challenging places to live with asthma in the United States, based on prevalence, risk and medical factors. See the full report at: <http://www.asthmacapitals.com/>

## **Risk of idiopathic nephrotic syndrome among children with asthma: a nationwide, population-based cohort study**

Researchers found that children with asthma had an increased incidence rate of idiopathic nephrotic syndrome, and increased incidence rate correlated with asthma-related medical visits. <http://www.nature.com/pr/journal/vaop/naam/abs/pr201580a.html>

**Asthma treatment leading to hospitalization 60% more common in women than men**

Scientists analyzed patient data from 2,000 people admitted to the emergency department (ED) with acute asthma and found gender played a critical role in whether a person had to stay in the hospital following treatment, even after they controlled for factors like weight, income, lack of health insurance, smoking prevalence, and medication use.

<http://bit.ly/1bABvCZ>

**Do you have an asthma program led by certified asthma educator(s) that you would like to highlight in our monthly newsletter? Please send your story to: [info@naecb.org](mailto:info@naecb.org)**

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## Helpful Links

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Visit the [NAECB Certificant Corner](#) for past newsletters, forms for replacement pins and certificates, and to update your contact information.

Promoting Excellence in Asthma Education

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