New Mexico Asthma Control Program

Partnering with Communities to Reduce the Burden of Asthma

Results of the Asthma Surveillance Data Users Survey (Summer 2014)

The New Mexico Asthma Control Program (NMACP) collects and shares a variety of asthma surveillance data (ASD) with its partners and the public: through its website and other online resources, such as New Mexico’s Indicator-Based Information System (NM-IBIS); through a variety of written materials (reports such as The Burden of Asthma in New Mexico, brochures, factsheets); through presentations and interviews regarding asthma in New Mexico (NM); and through responses to individual requests for data.

Through the ASD Users Survey, the NMACP sought to answer the following questions:

- Who is using asthma surveillance data in New Mexico?
- How are surveillance findings being used?
- What kinds of surveillance data and other information do stakeholders need for their work?
- How should ASD be disseminated in order to maximize its usefulness to various audiences and stakeholder groups?

Over 200 New Mexicans participated in the online survey: nurses, administrators (including school superintendents), doctors, epidemiologists, health educators and health promotion specialists, physician assistants, respiratory therapists, community health workers, social workers, pharmacists, and many other occupations. They work or volunteer for organizations such as public schools, health departments, clinics, community health councils, and community health organizations, in all regions of the state.

Key Findings

Among survey respondents who had used ASD during the past year (n=74), a strong majority (83%) found it either “useful” or “very useful,” and none reported it as “not useful.” They most often used the ASD “to understand the scope of the health problem or community need” (64%), “to create or update educational materials” (34%), or to “set program priorities and plan activities” (32%). The two most popular sources for ASD were the NMACP website (46%) and the Burden of Asthma in NM report (31%).

Among survey respondents who had not used ASD recently, half (n=70) reported that they were not sure either how to access information about asthma in their area or how to use ASD.

Overall, survey respondents generally preferred finding ASD through the NMACP website, and the most popular format was a fact sheet, brochure or newsletter. Risk factors, emergency department (ED) visits, and hospital visits were the kind of data that the largest number of survey respondents considered “very useful,” but the ranking of data types and how useful they are differed among occupational groups.
Our results suggest that different occupational groups have different ideas about what kinds of asthma data are the most valuable. This can be seen by looking at the highest number of “very useful” votes submitted by each of the five most commonly reported occupational categories: nurse (n=62), manager (administrator/director/superintendent, n=38), epidemiologist (n=23), physician (n=16) and health educator/health promotion specialist (combined, n=16). What did the most respondents in these groups think was “very useful”?

- Administrator/ Director/ Superintendent: ED Visits
- Epidemiologist: Morbidity/Prevalence
- Health Educator/ Health Promotion Specialist: ED Visits, Risk Factors (tie)
- Nurse: Risk Factors
- Physician: ED Visits, Hospital Visits, and Prescription Use (three-way tie)

These different data priorities should be kept in mind when presenting ASD to different occupational audiences, designing ASD publications, and developing partnerships with groups with different occupational bases.

Survey respondents also provided suggestions for types of data and resources that would be most useful to them, and ways to improve currently available ASD resources. Respondents suggested a need for:

- Information better suited to the general public and information directed towards specific stakeholder groups (such as parents), available in English and Spanish
- More information about specific age groups, or specific areas and populations within NM, and about asthma medications, costs and usage
- More information about asthma and health behaviors (like smoking) and the links between asthma and air quality
- Information needed for grant writing, including new or upcoming program activities and evaluations
- Additional data (geocoded, including multiple chronic conditions, urgent care visits, asthma by occupational status) and better integration of data with patient care considerations
- More trainings and presentations

Since 2012, the NMACP has successfully shared its surveillance data with a range of stakeholders throughout New Mexico. However, 2014 survey results suggest that there are still a significant number of members of key stakeholder groups who are either unaware of NMACP data, uncertain how to either access or use it, or who find that the data currently provided by the program do not meet all of their needs.

As the NMACP continues its work to address the burden of asthma in New Mexico, the development of additional surveillance data resources and the expansion of program efforts involving outreach, training, and education in collaboration with program partners will enable the program to support more effective asthma control efforts throughout the state.

The NMACP would like to thank organizations who shared member or staff lists, or made it possible to send an invitation message and link to their members, including the NM Council on Asthma, the Association of Asthma Educators, Envision NM, the NM Chronic Disease Prevention Council, the NM Alliance of Health Councils, the NM Academy of Family Physicians, the NM Alliance for School-Based Health Care, the NM Nurse Practitioner Council, the NM Pediatric Council, the NM Pediatric Society, and the NM School Nurses Association. We also thank the individuals who reached out to their contacts to ensure a broad range of stakeholders would be represented.

For more information and analysis of the survey results, please visit the NMACP website to view a copy of the 2014 ASD Users Survey Brief Report (available as a pdf) or you may request a copy of the full report by e-mailing kathryn.lowerre@state.nm.us