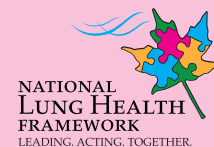


Featured programs for Self-Management of Chronic Conditions



What is the National Lung Health Framework?

The National Lung Health Framework is a comprehensive, strategic plan of action to improve respiratory health for all Canadians. Developed by and for stakeholders across sectors, disciplines and jurisdictions—with the vital support of the federal government—the Framework ensures the coordinated development and implementation of policies, programs and services across the country. It guides investment by highlighting successes and gaps, and identifies opportunities for maximizing results. The Framework operates under the guidance of a volunteer Steering Committee and with the support of the Lung Association and the Government of Canada.

Featured Programs

Unique and innovative respiratory health programs are happening across Canada, in all jurisdictions and dealing with a variety of respiratory diseases. This *Featured Programs* information sheet describes four programs that assist patients in managing their chronic respiratory conditions. These programs are in various locations in Canada and are targeted at different audiences. Previous *Featured Programs* information sheets, on other topics, are available from the [Framework](#) website.

RRC database

The programs featured in this *Featured Programs* sheet are included in the National Lung Health Framework's [Respiratory Resources Canada \(RRC\) database](#). RRC is a bilingual database of programs that show "who is doing what, where" in respiratory health in Canada. Programs in RRC promote strong partnerships, develop and apply best practices, and may be replicated in other situations.

- One in every five Canadians are known to be living with a serious, debilitating and/or fatal chronic respiratory disease such as COPD, asthma, lung cancer, tuberculosis or cystic fibrosis
- In 2008, 18% of COPD patients were readmitted to hospital once within the year, and 14% were readmitted twice
- Over 3 million Canadians live with asthma
- Although cystic fibrosis has traditionally been a childhood disease, over 60% of cystic fibrosis patients in 2009 had reached adulthood

The Challenge

Chronic respiratory conditions such as asthma, cystic fibrosis, and COPD affect not only the patient, but the patient's family and other caregivers as well. They also have a direct impact on the country's health care system as significant resources are dedicated to acute and long term treatment and management of these conditions over a patient's lifetime.

With the appropriate strategies and tools for living with and coping with their conditions, patients are empowered to take charge of their health. They gain the knowledge, skills, and self-confidence that lead to improved quality of life, improved ability to cope with daily activities, and a greater sense of autonomy. Patients with COPD and asthma can prevent the exacerbations that require immediate medical attention; children with cystic fibrosis or asthma can transition into healthy and productive adulthood.

When patients are in control of their conditions, they don't require emergency hospital care as frequently. With the cost of hospitalization for COPD in Canada conservatively estimated at \$1.5 billion a year, and the cost of hospital care expenditures for asthma over \$100 million in 1998, the economic benefits of patient self-management are clear.

The Response

The National Lung Health Framework improves lung health across the country by promoting collaborative and coordinated action among health care professionals, policy makers, researchers, clinicians, advocates and others.

The National Lung Health Framework encourages stakeholders to assist patients in managing their conditions. Stakeholders play a variety of roles.

- researchers test and evaluate ways to support patients
- educators develop training materials with patients' needs in mind, including age-appropriate materials for children and culturally-appropriate materials for specific groups
- health care professionals work with patients to develop a workable strategy for managing the condition
- patient groups provide input into tools to support their self-management

Patients who self-manage their conditions become partners in their own care. They work with physicians, certified educators, and other health care personnel. By working together, patients and their health care team improve the patient's comfort and quality of life. At the same time, they reduce the need for emergency hospitalizations and their associated costs.

FEATURED PROGRAMS

Increasingly, programs to help patients learn to manage their chronic conditions themselves are becoming more available. Programs are being designed for adults and for children, and with a focus on living with specific respiratory conditions.

This *Featured Programs* information sheet describes some of the programs now underway from across the country. Additional programs can be found in the [Respiratory Resources Canada](#) database.

A Shared Voice Ontario, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Nunavut

In selected Aboriginal communities in 4 provinces, this project first examined existing asthma education resources for children, then sought input from children, their families, and community leaders about improvements to the materials. Printed resources and instructor-led activities were evaluated for age-appropriateness, content, learning styles, and cultural context. The participants evaluated printed materials in person, and used videoconferencing to test the instructor-led sessions.

With input from the community, next actions were identified:

- Create booklet about environmental asthma triggers
- Modify the Roaring Adventures of Puff (RAP) program for cultural appropriateness

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Living Well with COPD (LWWCOPD)

Quebec, Canada, International

The Montreal Chest Institute of the McGill University Health Center (MUHC) developed and evaluated the first edition of the Living Well with COPD program in 1997, in English and French, and implemented it in Quebec. The program was updated in 2006 and reference guides were developed to support the health care professional. Through “Living Well with COPD”, patients with COPD (and their caregivers) are trained in a standardized program in individual or group sessions. Patients learn about their condition and how to use exercise and increase physical activities, diet, a COPD action plan, and medications to improve their daily life and avoid hospitalizations and emergency room visits.

The original program was thoroughly researched and evaluated, and received positive feedback. Based on what was learned in the original program, it continues to be adapted for other jurisdictions and other situations. These include:

- other Canadian provinces
- other countries (U.S., European countries, Asia)
- use in remote areas as well as urban areas
- hospital and home-based pulmonary rehabilitation
- COPD patients in primary care

Each adaptation is thoroughly tested before being implemented. The team at the Montreal Chest Institute ensures that each adaptation is appropriate for the new context and that quality is respected.

The web site www.livingwellwithcopd.com, launched in 2006, includes reference guides for health care professionals as well as patient education tools.

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Toronto Adult Cystic Fibrosis Centre

Toronto

The Toronto Adult Cystic Fibrosis Centre works with cystic fibrosis patients as they transition to an adult model of care. As an adult, the patient is a key member of the health care team that also includes health professionals such as respirologists, nurses and nurse practitioners, respiratory therapists, dietitians, and pharmacists. Patients develop skills in the labour-intensive and time-consuming CF treatments they need to stay healthy; they also experience the adolescent social and emotional development that increases their overall level of independence and confidence.

Most patients visit the Toronto centre about 3 times per year. The centre also supports patients at clinics in Sudbury and Thunder Bay, and uses telehealth, phone, and email when in-person consultation is inconvenient.

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iCAN Control Asthma Now Calgary



The Community Pediatric Asthma Service of Alberta Health Services provides asthma education to patients referred by emergency departments, urgent care centres, family doctors and pediatricians. Staff members are Certified Respiratory Educators (CREs) skilled at helping children understand and manage their asthma. They reach children, and their families, in clinics in hospitals, the community, and doctors' offices. Patients are referred to the service by their doctors, or by hospital staff after an emergency visit or inpatient stay.

The service aims to build capacity among primary care providers; and send a consistent message to patients. Success is defined as kids being able to control their asthma and participate in school, sports and any other activities. Evaluations of the service have reported a significant reduction in the number of emergency department visits, hospital admissions and physician visits.

Community Pediatric Asthma Service maintains a web site, (I CAN Control Asthma) that provides asthma information to children, teens, parents and other adults such as health care providers, teachers and coaches. This child-centred site uses short videos, games and activities to engage its pre-literacy and lower-literacy audiences. Some material is available in 13 languages.

The service operates in partnership with the Asthma Clinic at Alberta Children's Hospital, the COPD & Asthma Network of Alberta (CANA), and the Calgary COPD & Asthma Program (CCAP).

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How You Can Make a Difference

If you would like to help make a difference and improve the lung health of Canadians there are things you can do.

Promote what is happening in your field and in your community. Share information about successful activities with others across Canada through the Respiratory Resources Canada database. The information will be seen by people across the country working in respiratory health.

Make it happen. Have you wanted to start a much-needed initiative in your community and were not sure where to get started or how to make it happen? Make use of Respiratory Resources Canada. It is a searchable database where you can find out what is happening all across Canada. You can also use the database to connect with individuals who can provide you with helpful information and share their own successes.

Go to www.lunghealthframework.ca for more information on the database and what it can do for you.

