

# Impact of an Asthma Educator

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# Introduction

- When managed appropriately, asthma rarely requires hospitalization, yet 43% of its overall economic impact is from emergency services and hospitalization from failure to affect preventative treatments.
- Proper education in the impoverished and minority patients can greatly enhance those patients ability to manage their disease effectively.
- This data is the result of one educator two afternoons a week

# Results

- From 1 July 2002 thru 4 September 2003, 211 patients entered the program; 117 had regular follow-up care, with most patients seen at least twice.
- Patient's symptom free days increase an average of **33%** per patient per week.
- The daily  $\beta$ -agonist use for 90 patients decreased **20%**
- Missing work or school was reduced **88%**
- Emergency Department visits were reduced by **79%**
- Hospital admissions were reduced by **92%**
- This asthma education program resulted in an estimated total healthcare savings (from decreased ED visits and hospitalizations) of **\$212,956.62.\***

\*Based on cost-of-illness data according to the Environmental Protection Agency

## Health Care Utilization Data

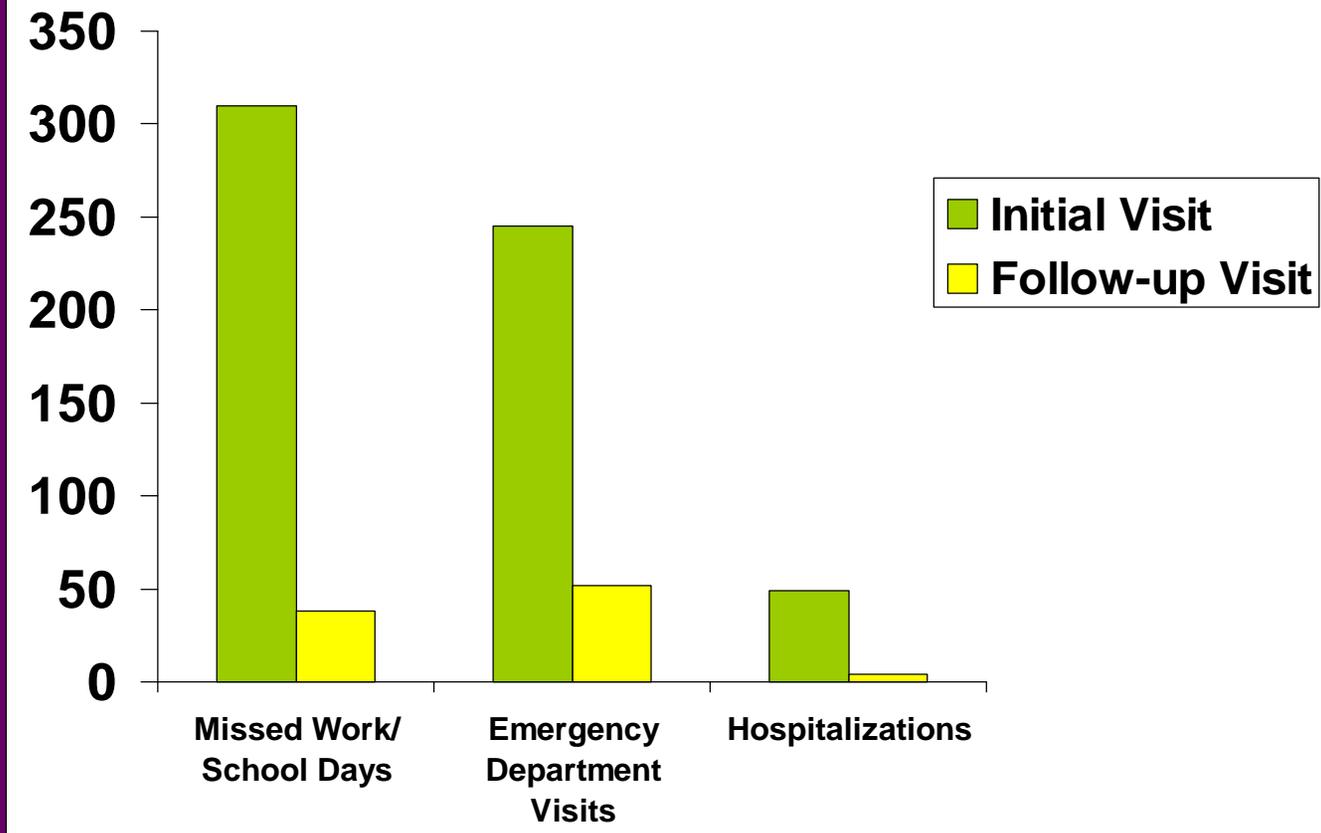


Figure 1 Shows the reduction in Missed work/school days, Emergency Department Visits, and Hospitalizations from the Initial visit to the 6 month follow-up visit.

# Conclusions

- In a medically underserved population, specific disease instruction is severely lacking.
- Targeted education on disease process, identification and avoidance of triggers, medication use and proper technique empowered patients to take responsibility for their own disease.
- The ability of a patient to understand and manage their disease can significantly decrease the patients need for Emergency and Hospital care as well as decreasing the patients symptoms frequency.

# Summary

- The key to asthma treatment for all populations is self-management through proper education.
- Asthma education targeted to impoverished and minority patients will improve the patients' overall outcome, including decreasing symptom frequency and Healthcare utilization.
- The use of an asthma education program designed specifically for minority and impoverished patients and based on the NAEPP Guidelines drastically decreases the patients' need for Emergency and Hospital services and saved an average of \$1820.14 per patient over a 14 month period.
- Asthma education allows patients to serve a more active role in their treatment plan, thereby increasing patients' ability to manage their disease.