Clinical Guideline for the Diagnosis, Evaluation, and Management of Adults and Children with Asthma

MVP Health Care®, as part of its continuing Quality Improvement Program, endorses recommendations for Asthma care that are a result of a collaborative effort led by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). Collaborators include NYSDOH, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, MVP Health Care and other health plans and professional organizations from across New York State.

Statistics – Morbidity & Mortality

- Approximately 8.0 percent of adults and 9.3 percent children in the United States have asthma.
- There were 1.8 million emergency room visits for asthma in 2010, 439,000 hospitalizations in 2010, and 3,630 deaths in 2013.
- On average, in 2012 children missed four days of school and adults missed four days of work because of asthma.

In 2011, less than half of people with asthma reported being taught how to avoid triggers. Almost half (48 percent) of adults who were taught how to avoid triggers did not follow most of this advice. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vital Signs. Asthma in the US. May 2011. Available: http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/asthma/

Key Guideline Messages

- Diagnosis of asthma and goal of therapy: control of asthma.
- Assessing and monitoring asthma severity and asthma control.
- Asthma education, including use of a written Asthma Action Plan and goals of therapy.
- Control of environmental factors and co-morbid conditions affecting asthma control.
- Medications and the ‘stepwise approach’ for managing asthma - principles of the ‘stepwise approach’ by age group.
- Managing asthma exacerbations.
- Recommended dosing for long-term control medications, inhaled corticosteroids and quick-relief medications.

Guideline Availability

The NYSDOH Clinical Guideline for the Diagnosis, Evaluation and Management of Adults and Children with Asthma (last updated July 2013) can be found on the NYSDOH website at: http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/asthma/.

The guideline is derived from the Third Expert Panel Report 3EPR3. The EPR3 Asthma guideline was developed by an expert panel commissioned by the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) Coordinating Committee (CC), National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). A copy of the October 2007 EPR3 recommendations can be found at: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/asthma/asthsumm.pdf. A change page describes changes made to the document since it was posted to the Web in August 2007.

In New York, MVP encourages practitioners to use the New York State Department of Health's (NYSDOH) Asthma Action Plan with their patients and families. The form is available on the NYSDOH website at: http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/4954/. Practitioners in Vermont are encouraged to use a similar form produced by the Vermont Department of Health. For copies of the Vermont Asthma Action Plan form, contact: Vermont Department of Health Asthma Program at 802-863-7514 or toll free at 866-331-5622. A sample of the Vermont action plan can be found at: http://www.healthvermont.gov/wellness/asthma.

In conjunction with these guidelines, MVP Health Care offers a Health Management program for our members with a diagnosis of Asthma. If you would like to refer one of your patients to this program, please call the Care Management Department at 866-942-7966. More information on this and MVP's other health programs may also be found on mvphealthcare.com.

This guideline is not intended to replace the role of clinical judgment by the physician in the management of this, or any other disease entity. It is an educational guideline to assist in the delivery of good medical care. All treatment decisions are ultimately up to the physician. Where medication recommendations are made, please refer to each health plan's formulary for coverage considerations.

MVP Health Care updates its clinical guidelines at least every two years. The review process is also initiated when new scientific evidence or national standards are published. Practitioners are alerted via the web site and by written notices from the plan via fax or newsletter. A hard copy of the clinical guideline can be requested by calling the MVP Quality Improvement Department at 800-777-4793 extension 1-2247.