



**Asthma.ca**<sup>™</sup>  
Asthma Canada



**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**2018-2020**

## Joint Message from the Asthma Canada Board Chair and CEO

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The past few years have been a tremendous time of growth and change for our organization. We have adopted a new name, new leadership, and a new outlook. The change from the Asthma Society of Canada to Asthma Canada is the result of a great deal of organizational review, recognizing that Asthma Canada represents the voice for ALL Canadians affected by asthma; including those living with asthma, as well as their caregivers, families, healthcare providers and support networks. As we transition from the Asthma Society of Canada to Asthma Canada, we have undertaken the development of a 3 year strategic plan which will help us embody our new values and realize our goals.

We have developed a strategy that recognizes what we are and looks ahead to what we would like to be – and what we can be. The document has been a product of many months of consultations with staff, Board members and members of the community we serve. What emerged from this engagement were five key priorities to focus on in the coming 3 years:

- 1.** We must be grounded in our community and be led by the needs of our community. We must engage and empower the asthma community through their involvement in our programs, services and advocacy efforts.
- 2.** The needs of our community are paramount. We must educate and inform people living with asthma and their families, enabling choices for better symptom management.

- 3.** Research saves and improves lives. We must support researchers working to find better treatments, understand the range of impacts of living with asthma and search for a cure.
- 4.** We are the voice of our community. We must speak up on behalf of our community through advocacy initiatives that push for asthma awareness and change.
- 5.** We must maximize our impact. We must strive for excellence in service delivery by continually streamlining our operational practices, maximize donor dollars, and apply best practices.

As we implement the strategic plan over the next three years, we hope that you will continue to connect and engage with Asthma Canada, working together with us to support us in our vision of a future without asthma and join us in fulfilling our goals.



**John Healy**  
Chair



**Vanessa Foran**  
President & CEO

## What is Asthma?

Doctors define asthma as a “chronic inflammatory disease of the airways” that can cause any or all of the following symptoms:

- **Shortness of breath**
- **Tightness in the chest**
- **Coughing**
- **Wheezing**

### Asthma symptoms can:

- Be mild, moderate or severe.
- Vary from person to person.
- Flare up from time to time and then not appear for long periods.
- Vary from one episode to the next.

Asthma is one of the most prevalent chronic conditions affecting Canadians. Asthma can first be diagnosed at any age, but often starts in childhood.

People with asthma are often referred to as “twitchy,” meaning they seem to overreact to stimuli such as aero-allergens and cold, dry air. Over time, the airways, or bronchial tubes, become inflamed and sensitive. This increased inflammation, if not treated, will often lead to an asthma attack, which involves changes in the bronchial tubes and airways, in the following ways:

- 1.** The muscles around the bronchial tubes tighten, causing the airways to narrow. This is known as bronchospasm or bronchoconstriction.
- 2.** Mucus is produced within the bronchial tubes further restricting air flow.



## Asthma in Canada: More Than Three Million Canadians Live With Asthma



12 Canadians are diagnosed with asthma every hour.



In most cases, asthma is not well-managed.

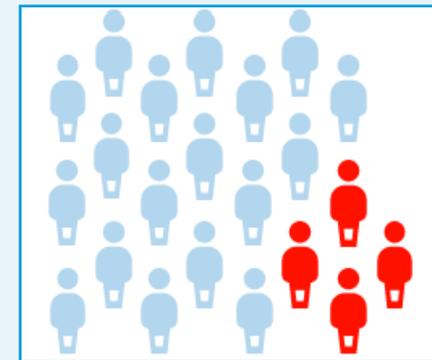


Inconsistent diagnoses and treatments impair health outcomes.



Financial challenges create significant barriers for better health outcomes.

### More Than 3 Million Canadians Have Asthma



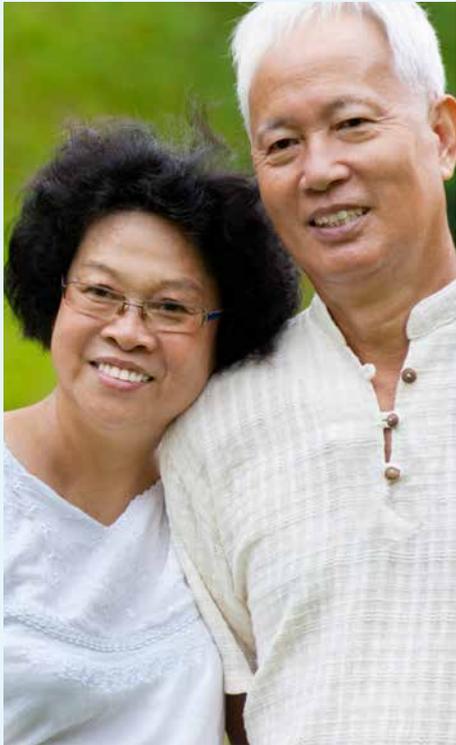
Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease. A person experiences an asthma attack when his or her airways become inflamed, leading to wheezing, shortness of breath, coughing, and tightness in the chest.



### Asthma is the third-most common chronic disease in Canada

- Asthma attacks lead to approximately 70,000 emergency room visits annually.
- 600,000 children under the age of 12 have asthma.
- Every week, 4 Canadians die from an asthma attack.
- 150,000 - 250,000 Canadians live with Severe Asthma.

## At Asthma Canada We Put Canadians Living With Asthma First



### Client Focused

We put the needs of Canadians living with asthma first. We help our clients manage their asthma by providing up to date information and services to enhance their daily living.



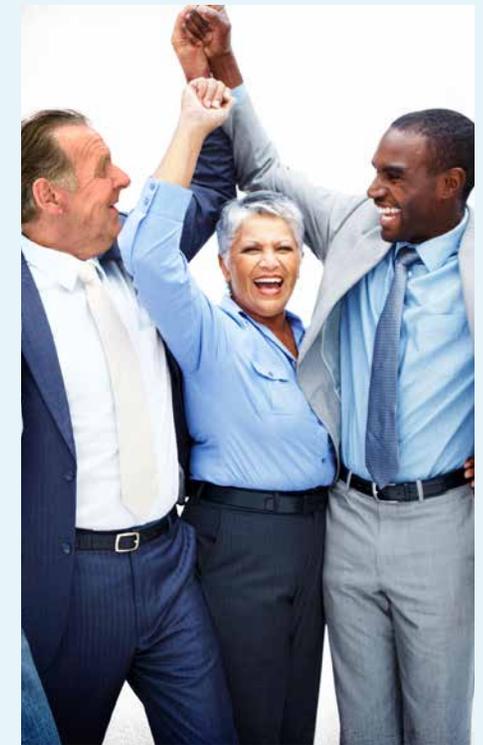
### We Listen

We respond to our clients with respect, dedication and concern by listening to their needs and helping them to convert hope into action.



### Caring & Compassionate

We assist every client with focused compassion from an experienced team of caring staff.



### Collaborative

We maximize our impact by building linkages and networks with like-minded individuals and organizations in addressing asthma and the needs of those affected by it.

## How We Fulfill Our Mission

We **engage and empower** the asthma community through their involvement in our programs, services and advocacy efforts.



We **educate and inform** people living with asthma and their families, enabling choices for better symptom management.



We **support researchers** working to find better treatments, understand the range of impacts of living with asthma and search for a cure.



We **advocate for awareness and change** so that all Canadians understand the seriousness of asthma and support changes in access to healthcare, medications and environmental practices.



We **strive for excellence in service delivery** by continually assessing our operational practices to streamline, maximize donor dollars and apply best practices in all we do.

## Our 2018 - 2020 Strategic Directions

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Our three-year strategic plan is built on four strategic directions that will guide our mission-driven work from 2018 to 2020. Our efforts will better connect us to our clients, to the medical and research communities focusing on asthma, to our generous donors, our enthusiastic volunteers and to decision-makers who bring about changes that impact the lives of Canadians living with Asthma.

### Our Strategic Directions for 2018 to 2020 are:



## Strategic Direction: Strengthen Our Connections with the Asthma Community

Today we reach thousands of Canadians through the delivery of a range of programs and services, but we need to do more. We can reach a greater number of people with asthma. We can inform and create awareness about asthma: its causes and its seriousness. By increasing our engagement with the asthma community we can bring asthma to the forefront of healthcare discussions and advocate for change with policy makers, healthcare providers and legislators.

### Asthma Canada Goals for 2018-20

- 1.** We will strengthen our reach and connections with the asthma community in Canada from coast to coast.
- 2.** We will create greater awareness of asthma and its seriousness.
- 3.** We will strengthen our brand recognition and build our standing as the credible source for information and resources for people affected by asthma, governments, media and the public in Canada.

### Our Strategies

- 1.** Extend our reach with the asthma community from coast to coast through improved communications and expanded program reach.
- 2.** Engage our stakeholders and volunteers and inspire them to help bring about change.
- 3.** Increase awareness among Canadians of asthma and its serious and life-threatening impacts.
- 4.** Advocate for change in environmental policies, access to medications and treatments and other issues that are important to our community.

### Our Action Priorities

- Conduct a needs assessment of all programs and services
- Enhance our website – user friendly, accessible, up-to-date
- Continue our successful 1-800 HelpLine
- Expand our communications outreach
- Update our publications and materials
- Diversify our range of community member webinars
- Continue to pilot the Asthma Pals Program
- The AAFCP
- Support Clean Air/Clean Energy
- Promote a greater understanding of the psycho-social impacts of Asthma
- Support access to treatment options and choices

## Strategic Direction: Expand the Focus on Asthma

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At Asthma Canada we focus 100 percent on people affected by asthma. Over the next several years we need to increase that focus by extending our reach to the Canadian research community, health care organizations, environmental associations and with governments to bring asthma to the forefront of every health impact discussion. With Asthma Canada leading the way, we foresee a future where a network of effort is united, coordinated and committed to reducing, preventing and ending asthma.

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### Asthma Canada Goals for 2018-20

- 1.** We will build strong relationships with the Canadian and international medical and research communities that focus on asthma.
- 2.** We will participate with a pan-Canadian network of healthcare provider organizations to expand the emphasis on asthma so that Canadians understand the seriousness of asthma, and people living with asthma have enhanced choices, treatment and care.
- 3.** We will collaborate with governments and governmental agencies to raise the profile of asthma, introduce policies to improve quality of life and focus research dollars on developing new treatments and ultimately finding a cure.

### Our Strategies

- 1.** Sustain and grow our National Research Program.
- 2.** Establish an Asthma Canada Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee.
- 3.** Participate in coalitions and associations with healthcare organizations.
- 4.** Work with governments to address barriers to healthier lives for Canadians living with asthma.

### Our Action Priorities

- Promote the National Research Program, award research grants and communicate successes to our community and stakeholders.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of the Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee.
- Recruit Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee members.
- Actively participate with coalitions and partnerships to advance asthma issues.
- Address asthma issues with policy makers at all levels.

## Strategic Direction: Raise Funds to Support our Mission

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At Asthma Canada we are completely dependent upon the generous donations we receive from individuals, families, organizations and corporations. Our small, but dedicated fund raising team carefully stewards every dollar raised to support asthma issues and continually assesses ways to maximize returns and minimize fundraising costs. To all of our donors and supporters, a very sincere thank you for helping us to continue the work that we do. Over the next three years we will implement new fundraising strategies that focus on achieving sustainable funding for the organization with planned growth over time.

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### Asthma Canada Goals for 2018-20

**1.** Achieve a sustainable fundraising position that supports our mission-related work: programs and services, research, education and advocacy.

### Our Strategies

- 1.** Develop and implement a strategic fund development plan.
- 2.** Diversify our donor base (expand our reach with individual giving and pursue funding with foundations, grants and corporations).
- 3.** Raise awareness of asthma issues and the profile of Asthma Canada to encourage donations.
- 4.** Work toward sustaining support for the National Research Program.

### Our Action Priorities

- Corporate partnerships
- Donor stewardship
- Foundations and grants proposals
- Direct mail program
- Third party event support
- Asthma and Allergy Friendly Certification Program

## Strategic Direction: Build Capacity and Optimize Operational Excellence

At Asthma Canada we work hard at being known as Canada's top evidence-based asthma charity - when you think of asthma information, research and supportive programs and services you think of Asthma Canada. Our dedicated Board of Directors oversees and guides our efforts, keeping the organization mission-focused, relevant and vital. Our enthusiastic staff team has only one goal: to help meet the needs of Canadians affected by asthma. Over the next three years we will review our organizational structure, governance, staffing and support systems to ensure that we are effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of our community.

### Asthma Canada Goals for 2018-20

**1.** Continue on our journey to build organizational excellence and sustainability.

### Our Strategies

- 1.** Maintain focus on our mission.
- 2.** Adhere to sector requirements, guidelines and best practices.
- 3.** Invest in staff development and support.
- 4.** Upgrade infrastructure and systems to create operational efficiencies.
- 5.** Review our governance tools and practices

### Our Action Priorities

- Implement an annual Board Work Plan
- Review and update organization's bylaws and policies
- Develop and implement a Board recruitment policy and process
- Develop Board and Board committee policy and procedure manual
- Update Human Resources policy manual
- Review and adopt sector best practices to promote efficiencies
- When possible, upgrade infrastructure and systems