



Annual Report

A future without asthma



2018

About Us

Asthma Canada is the only national registered charity solely devoted to improving the quality of life for people living with asthma and respiratory allergies. For more than 45 years, Asthma Canada has proudly served as the national voice for Canadians affected by asthma.

Our Mission

Asthma Canada's mission is to help Canadians with asthma lead healthy lives through education, advocacy and research.

Our Vision

Asthma Canada's vision is a future without asthma.

How we Fulfill our Mission



We engage and empower the asthma community through 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 and a cure for asthma.



We advocate for awareness and change so that all Canadians understand the seriousness of asthma and support positive 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 that we do.



Asthma In Canada

More than 3.8 million Canadians have asthma

Roughly four Canadian families lose a loved one to asthma each week

Asthma is the third most common chronic disease in Canada

317 Canadians are diagnosed with asthma every day

850,000 Canadian children under the age of 14 have asthma

Asthma is the leading cause of absenteeism from school

Severe Asthma affects between 150,000-250,000 Canadians

Roughly 1 in 10 Canadians with asthma have gone without medication because of cost

The cost of asthma to the Canadian economy is expected to climb to \$4.2 billion annually by 2030

There is no known cure for asthma

Joint Letter From CEO & Chair

This past year we celebrated 45 years serving the Canadian asthma community – an accomplishment only made possible through the generous support of our donors, supporters, and volunteers whose dedication allows us to continue advancing each area of our mission.

Glancing back over 2018, we have taken great strides to ensure that every Canadian impacted by asthma can access the support they need to live healthy and symptom-free lives. In an effort to make asthma experts and education more accessible, we replaced our annual conference held in Toronto, with our Speaker Series Webinars – available anywhere across the country.

We also continued to provide vital support services through our programs including our Asthma & Allergy HelpLine, Asthma Pals Mentorship program, and the many new educational resources available on our website.

This year, we expanded our Scientific and Medical Advisory Committee to include multi-disciplinary and cross-country representation. This expansion greatly increases our capacity to continue providing the very best, evidence-based education and support services.

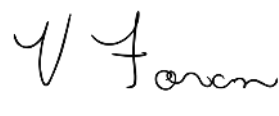
On the advocacy front, we established the asthma community as a key stakeholder in Canadian healthcare dialogue by advocating for change on important issues such as choice and access to medications. Through our letter writing campaign, we carried on the fight for national pharmacare, while also supporting choice and access to treatment options like biologics. Our advocacy efforts are helping ensure improved health outcomes for all Canadians with asthma.

Through our National Research Program, we awarded grants to both a lead investigator and to four graduate student researchers. These grants supported their innovative work to find better treatments and a cure for asthma.

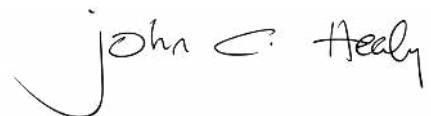
2018 also marked a transition within our research program – our partnership with Allergan NCE Inc. has drawn to a close. We sincerely thank the Allergan team for a rewarding partnership, and we are grateful for the opportunity to have worked together to provide training grants to emerging asthma researchers. In 2019, we will continue to foster the next generation of talented asthma researchers through a partnership with the Canadian Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology Foundation (CAAIF).

We also made significant progress extending our reach through partnerships on both the national and international level. In Canada, we are an active member of the Health Charities Coalition of Canada, which helps us to strengthen our ability to advocate collectively by working with other health charities on common issues. Internationally, our membership in the Global Allergy and Asthma Patient Platform (GAAPP) gives us the means to participate in global initiatives with asthma organizations worldwide to benefit all those affected by asthma in Canada and beyond.

As we reflect on 2018 and all that we have accomplished together, we are deeply thankful for each and every one of our loyal supporters. Your dedication is what empowers us to build on the success of the past 45 years and helps bring us closer to achieving our vision of a future without asthma.



Vanessa Foran
President & CEO



John C. Healy
Chair



Meet our Community

Asthma is never far from my mind. It has been a major part of my life since childhood, and as a parent to two children who also have asthma, it has an impact on every single member of my family.

Back in the 1970s, when I was growing up in small town Canada with moderate asthma, there wasn't the sympathy and understanding that there is now about the disease — most teachers were sympathetic but really didn't understand the condition and why having asthma meant that I couldn't keep up with the other children in gym class.

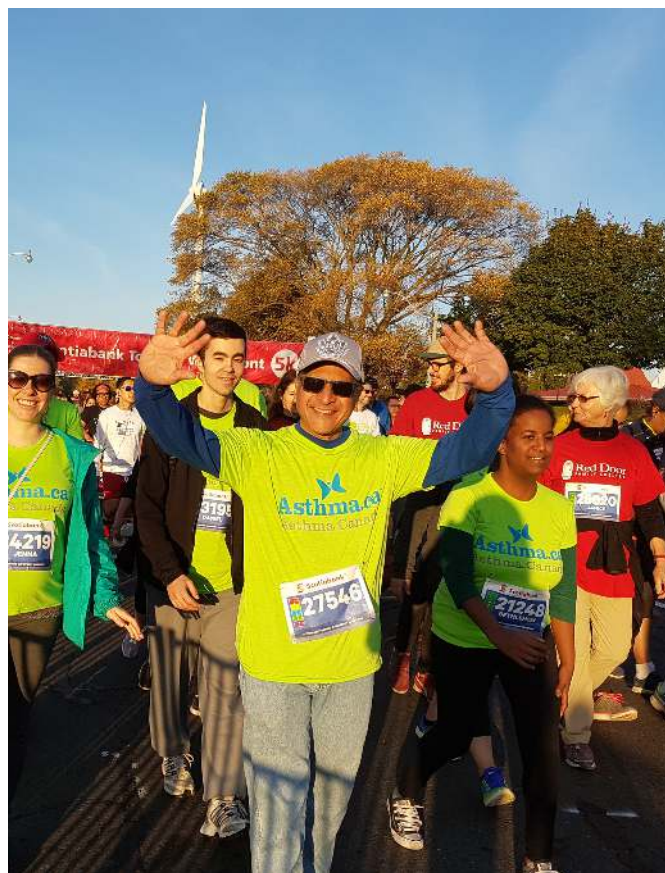
For a long time, living with asthma kept me from participating in sports and exercise, but as I grew older I became inspired not to let my asthma stop me from living my life and being active. I took up mall walking and have since become much healthier and have gained better control over my asthma— having to rely on my reliever inhaler far less.

Both my son and daughter live with asthma, and the three of us collectively have caused my wife Swati many sleepless nights. Asthma doesn't just impact those who live with the disease but also those who care for them.

All three of us have been hospitalized because of our asthma at different times, and it's distressing to think that we are only one trigger away from a dangerous asthma attack.

That's why I'm glad to be a part of the Asthma Canada Member Alliance (ACMA) and a volunteer. Thanks to Asthma Canada and the incredible asthma community to which we belong, my children and I can access education and support to get the help we need to control our asthma.

Since first becoming involved with Asthma Canada as an ACMA member, I have seen firsthand how their work can change lives. I am a proud supporter of their mission, which empowers families just like mine to stay healthy, and have taken my passion for the cause one step further by joining Asthma Canada's Board of Directors.



Vibhas supporting Asthma Canada in the 2017 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon

Until a cure for asthma is found, this disease will always have an impact on my family. And even now, I still have to avoid going outside on winter days because the cold air triggers my asthma symptoms.

But, as my family and I have come to realize, we don't have to face asthma alone. We have support from Asthma Canada and their efforts to provide asthma education, while advocating for change and supporting asthma research in Canada.

I wholeheartedly believe that Asthma Canada's vision of a future without asthma is possible, and that someday no family will have to face the burden of this disease.

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Education & Support Programs

Education is at the heart of our mission. Proper asthma education not only empowers patients to gain a better understanding of their disease but also gain control over their symptoms, leading to improved health outcomes.

We are committed to delivering the best evidence-based education and support services to ensure that every Canadian with asthma has the tools they need to live healthy and symptom-free lives.

Asthma & Allergy HelpLine

Our bilingual HelpLine service connects Canadians who have questions about their asthma and respiratory allergies to Certified Respiratory Educators who provide regional and personalized support.

In 2018, we expanded our HelpLine through improved integration with our social media networks, opening new channels of support for our community. Throughout the year we answered hundreds of inquiries from parents, caregivers, and people living with asthma from across the country.

Speaker Series Webinar

This year, we transformed our national conference into a webinar series, giving our community access to top asthma experts from across Canada speaking on a wide range of asthma related topics. In 2018, we hosted a total of five webinars on diverse subjects ranging from asthma phenotypes to asthma management in children. Overall, the webinar series adds an interactive way to make asthma education accessible to our national audience through our website and YouTube channel.

Resources & Campaigns

We are always working to expand our vast library of educational resources and inform our community about key asthma issues through awareness campaigns. In 2018, we updated and redesigned our Asthma Action Plan—a vital tool for everyone living with asthma. We continued to educate our community on biologic treatments, through a bilingual explainer video, which was widely viewed across our communications platforms.

We also added to the “Get Help” section of our website, which we consider our most valuable educational tool. We bolstered our educational resources with the addition of pages on pneumococcal disease and the importance of vaccination, as well as added a new media library, which is home to our webinar video resources.

To help raise awareness and educate our community, we ran informative campaigns throughout the year on topics including vaccination, rescue inhaler overuse, Severe Asthma, and the September Asthma Peak.

Asthma & Allergy Friendly™ Certification Program

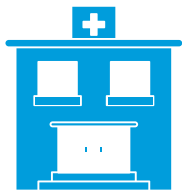
We continued our partnership with Allergy Standards Limited through the Asthma & Allergy Friendly™ Certification Program, which identifies, scientifically tests and certifies products that are better suited to creating a healthy home environment for people with asthma and respiratory allergies.

This partnership and program help ensure that our community can make informed decisions when looking for products to add to their home.

Everyday in Canada,
317 people are
diagnosed with
asthma



Your Impact by the Numbers



312

asthma clinics in our national resource distribution network



40,000

print resources distributed to clinics & patients annually



11,026

people accessed our Asthma Action Plan



13

ten provinces & three territories with Asthma & Allergy HelpLine support

Asthma Canada Member Alliance

The Asthma Canada Member Alliance (ACMA) continues to be the patient arm and voice of Asthma Canada, made up of thousands of individuals from across the full spectrum of the asthma community.

In 2018, we conducted a needs assessment survey of the ACMA membership base to gain insight into how we can better serve our community. The feedback we received from our members will be used to help shape the future of our programs and services.

This year, we also changed the ways in which we communicate with the ACMA community. We overhauled our e-newsletter and social media design and strategy, providing subscribers with asthma information and updates more frequently. We also successfully launched our new Instagram account, adding a new channel to connect with our larger community.

Our dedicated ACMA members continue to play a vital role in the Asthma Canada team. By raising asthma awareness, sharing their stories, creating a support network and fundraising to help Canadians with asthma, ACMA members are instrumental to our success.

Asthma Pals Mentorship Program

Following the successful program pilot in 2017, we added the Asthma Pals Mentorship Program to our list of core programs and services. The Asthma Pals program connects children aged 7-11 affected by asthma to other kids from across the country and peer-mentors to help them gain confidence in living with and managing the disease.



Our 2018 Asthma Pals session began in March and ran for eight weeks, covering topics such as stigma, bullying, exercising with asthma, and healthy living. It's wonderful to see the positive impact of peer mentorship and we will be continuing to offer this program in the future.

"I loved Asthma Pals and I'm sad it's over. Thank you for the wonderful experience."

-Charlotte, 2018 Asthma Pals Participant

Advocating For Change

Advocating for positive and lasting change on issues important to the Canadian asthma community is a cornerstone of our mission to help Canadians with asthma lead healthy lives.

Through our advocacy efforts, we continue to call for choice and equitable access to medication for all Canadians, as well as sustainable clean air and energy. The ultimate goal of our advocacy work is to keep asthma issues at the top of mind for government to help ensure that asthma is included in healthcare and environmental policy decisions.

Sustainable Clean Air & Energy

With climate change and pollution on the rise, advocating for clean air and energy is more important than ever.

As a member of the Clean Economy Alliance, Asthma Canada, along with 60 other member organizations signed onto a letter addressed to Ontario's Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, calling for an effective plan to deal with climate change in Ontario and fought against a roll-back to existing climate change initiatives.

We also participated in the development of the provincial Make it Better Campaign, which is focused on building a unified approach to children's health and climate change in Ontario.

Asthma Canada will continue to advocate for and work towards clean air and clean energy from coast to coast. We are determined to help build a better future where all Canadians can breathe easy.

Choice & Access to Medications

Every Canadian living with asthma deserves access to the treatments and medications needed to manage their asthma. We continue to advocate for a national pharmacare strategy that eliminates gaps in care and is centered on best health outcomes.

In 2018, we took action through our letter writing campaign, strategic meetings with government, and by supporting access to new treatment options.

Letter Writing Campaign

We continued our letter writing campaign on national pharmacare, streamlining our submission platform and publishing community letters. This campaign gives members of the asthma community the opportunity to get involved by sending letters to their government representatives on the impacts of limited access to prescription medications.

Strategic Collaboration and Consultation

A major part of advocating successfully is working together with like-minded organizations and meeting with government representatives to initiate change.

On the national stage, Asthma Canada and ACMA members participated in consultations with the Advisory Council on National Pharmacare led by Dr. Eric Hoskins, Ontario's former Health Minister to ensure that the voices and concerns of the asthma community are heard in the development and design of a national pharmacare program.

This year, we also participated in consultations with the Ontario government, meeting with health officials on the impacts of OHIP+ and the new Ontario Lung Act. Working alongside other key stakeholders, we successfully played a role in getting valved-holding chambers covered for those aged 12 and under.

CADTH Submissions

As a chronic disease with no cure, having varied and innovative treatment options available is vital to ensuring that all Canadians are able to control their asthma. This year, we made submissions to both CADTH (Canada's national drug review body) and British Columbia's Pharmacare Review in support of the biologic treatment benralizumab (Fasenra).

Asthma Canada responded to a CADTH Request for Advice regarding all currently available biologic medications used to treat severe eosinophilic asthma. We made a number of recommendations regarding criteria for eosinophil levels, reversibility, and on preventing wastage, ensuring patient and physician choice, age indications, ensuring equal access throughout Canada and ensuring that those with asthma who smoke are not disqualified from accessing required treatments.

We also made another submission to British Columbia's Pharmacare Review for Aermony RespiClick and Arbesda Respimat. By making submissions to CADTH and provincial drug review bodies, we work to ensure that patient input is taken into consideration when new treatments are being reviewed, helping improve access and advocating for increased treatment coverage.



We believe in equitable and timely access to prescription medications for all Canadians, based on the best possible health outcomes rather than the ability to pay. That is why we advocate for national pharmacare.



Asthma Canada remains committed to funding innovative asthma research in Canada and supporting talented asthma researchers working to discover better treatments and unlock a cure for the disease.

We believe that collaboration is key to finding a cure. In 2018, we continued our partnership with AllerGen NCE Inc. to award training grants to emerging researchers. We also supported a research pitch presented by the Child Cohort Study to Genome Canada, resulting in \$9 million dollars being allocated to asthma research.

National Research Program

This year, we continued to invest in asthma research through our National Research Program, which provides grants to support the work of both Lead Investigators and Graduate Student Researchers conducting research in the respiratory field.

Our Research Program is supported by two research funds. The Goran-Enhörning Research fund is focused on early onset asthma research and the Bastable-Potts Research Fund supports investigations into late-onset asthma. Each year, with the help of our donors and partners, we take a step closer to our vision of a future without asthma.

Leadership Award

Our annual Leadership Award gives us the opportunity to recognize the outstanding research contributions of an experienced lead investigator working in the respiratory field.

We were pleased to present our 2018 award to Dr. Catherine Lemiere for her groundbreaking research into occupational, work-related asthma and the assessment of airway inflammation in both asthma and Severe Asthma.



Dr. Lemiere is a Professor of Medicine at the Université de Montréal and Staff Chest Physician at Sacre-Coeur Hospital in Montreal. Her many contributions to asthma research throughout her career make her a true leader in health research and an inspiration for upcoming researchers in the field. We honour her many significant achievements over the course of her distinguished and ongoing career.

“It is an honour to receive this prestigious award from Asthma Canada. I am very proud to be part of an elite group of past recipients of this award; Drs. Brauer, Sears, Nair and Aaron.”

-Dr. Catherine Lemiere

Graduate Student Research Awards

As part of our National Research Program we are proud to support the work of Masters and PhD level graduate student researchers striving to expand our understanding of asthma and ultimately, improve the lives of patients.

In 2018, we awarded \$20,000 grants to three PhD level student researchers and one \$10,000 grant to a Masters level student researcher. These awards allow us to invest in the training and development of talented new investigators and their innovative research projects. We are extremely proud of our role in fostering the next generation of leading asthma researchers in Canada.

Meet Our Researchers



Hadeesha Piyadasa - PhD recipient of the Goran-Enhörning Graduate Student Research Award for his research into Innate Defence Regulator (IDR) Peptides to help control steroid unresponsive forms of asthma.



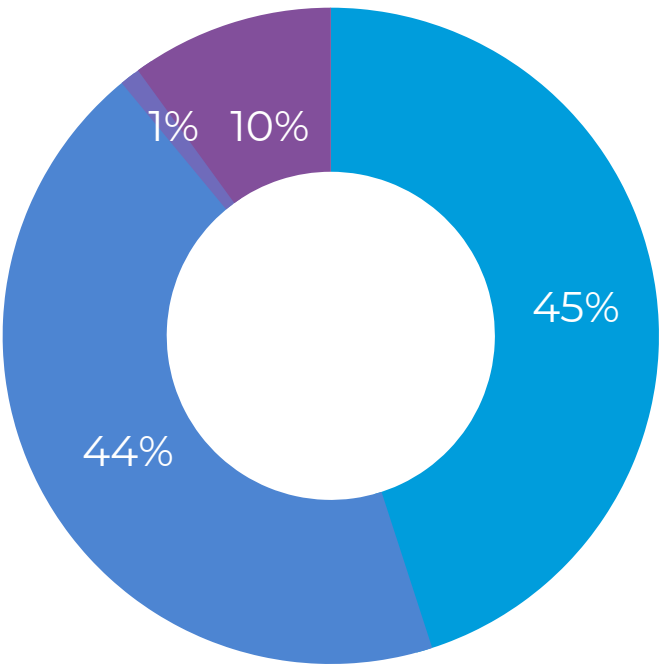
Jaclyn Parks - MSc recipient of the Goran-Enhörning Graduate Student Research Award supporting her study into indoor environmental exposures in early life as a predictor of childhood asthma.



Xiaoshu Cao - PhD recipient of the Bastable-Potts Graduate Student Research Award to support her research investigating the causal link between asthma and obstructive sleep apnea.

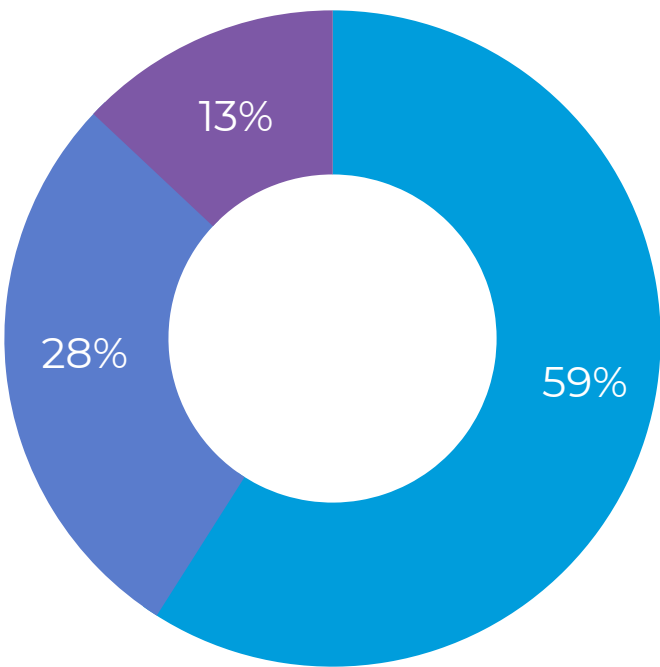


Ryan Huff - PhD recipient of the Bastable-Potts Graduate Student Research Award for his work on the relationship between air pollution and inhaled corticosteroids in a human clinical study.



Sources of Revenue

<div></div>	Corporate Giving	\$345,191
<div></div>	Individual Giving and Bequests	\$344,129
<div></div>	Asthma & Allergy Friendly Certification Program	\$74,509
<div></div>	Foundations	\$10,114



How the Money was Used

<div></div>	Mission Delivery (Education, Advocacy & Research)	\$381,233
<div></div>	Fundraising	\$180,946
<div></div>	Operations	\$83,446



Above: Asthma Canada staff participating in the 2018 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon

Thank you for 45 years of
helping Canadians with
asthma breathe easy!



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