

# Project 6 Snapshot: Support asthma self- management

Improving childhood asthma  
management in Melbourne's  
inner west (ICAM)

September 2022 – June 2023

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## Background

This project snapshot provides an overview of cohealth Health Promotion's results from the development and implementation of Project 6: Improve Asthma Self-Management as part of the Improving Childhood Asthma Management – inner west program.

### Improving Childhood Asthma Management – inner west (ICAM)

**ICAM** aimed to deliver rapid and targeted projects to improve key aspects of the local asthma care system that would improve the health and wellbeing of children with asthma in Melbourne's inner west (Brimbank, Hobsons's Bay and Maribyrnong local government areas (LGAs)). The program took a 'system thinking' approach, with 6 separate projects led by crucial partner organisations:

1. Improve the use and understanding of asthma action plans led by [Asthma Australia](#).
2. Develop high-quality, streamlined clinical practice guidelines for childhood asthma, led by the [Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne](#).
3. Develop and promote integrated care pathways led by [Safer Care Victoria](#).
4. Establish a community of practice led by [Safer Care Victoria](#) and supported by the [North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network](#).
5. Design and deliver an education package to inner west asthma care providers, led by the [National Asthma Council, Australia](#).
6. Improve asthma self-management, led by [cohealth](#).

### Project 6: Improve asthma self-management

Between September 2022-June 2023, the cohealth ICAM team (1.2 FTE) collaborated and directly engaged with over 359 individual community members, including children with asthma and their carers, across age and language groups within all three target inner west LGAs to improve childhood asthma self-management.

### What we did

Key activities undertaken for ICAM Project 6 included:

- **Activity 1. Community consultation and co-design** – including consultation with 64 community members and 25 stakeholders to identify and codesign interventions.
- **Activity 2. Community in reach** - including partnerships with organisations such as Water Well who delivered 16 childhood asthma information sessions to 192 participants.
- **Activity 3. Youth-led content** - generating 438,119 impressions and 689 clicks through to cohealth Community Asthma Program and Asthma Australia on a social media campaign designed around youth-led video content.
- **Activity 4. Printed resources** - including distributing high-quality printed asthma resources to over 230 local services, such as schools, libraries, playgroups, GPs, and hospitals, to ensure asthma self-management resources are available where needed.
- **Activity 5. Collaboration across the ICAM partnership** – including contributions to the ICAM Project Coordination Group, steering groups, and Community of Practice, which has strengthened intervention outputs and a greater understanding of the asthma care system from multiple perspectives.

## The result

ICAM Project 6 influenced changes, including:

- Increased knowledge and skills for asthma self-management through engagement with community members via information sessions, video workshops, social media campaign and storybook launches.
- Increased number and accessibility of asthma self-management resources to inner west communities through codesign of [new tailored resources](#) (youth-led videos, "Breathe Easy" brochure in four languages, "[Minh's Asthma Story](#)" book in bilingual English and Vietnamese), as well as providing community insights to partner organisations on the self-management information and services they provide.
- Reduced stigma and silence around asthma self-management through engagement with communities in community information sessions and a social media campaign targeting young people.
- Increased sector understanding of community needs and desires in relation to asthma self-management through supporting community collaboration with the ICAM partnership.
- Piloted novel interventions and developed evidence for established ways of working through working in partnership, codesigning with communities, valuing community voice and empowerment, and applying an equity lens.

## Key enablers

Establishing ICAM using a **systems approach** was instrumental in enabling the success of this project. The Department of Health ICAM project team linked each project across the asthma care system which enabled cohealth to strategically support other ICAM projects to target distinct audiences. In addition, a systems approach allowed for rapid dissemination and implementation of findings, further strengthening the link between children with asthma, communities, and the clinicians that care for them (see results in activity 5).

The successes of ICAM Project 6 have reaffirmed that established ways of working are effective and appropriate. Effective community and stakeholder engagement requires sustained relationship building, with the flexibility to adapt to the needs and timelines of those communities. cohealth has significant expertise in community engagement, codesign and local service delivery, which can be leveraged in novel and rapid ways to address community needs. **The Department of Health benefits from long-term investment in Community Health as we develop and maintain relationships with community members and sector stakeholders, allowing those communities to be easily reached for consultation and codesign of health interventions as demonstrated in this project.**

## Find out more

Department of Health, 2023. Improving childhood asthma management in Melbourne's inner west. Available from: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/improving-childhood-asthma-management-in-melbournes-inner-west>

cohealth, 2023. Improving childhood asthma management. Available from: <https://www.cohealth.org.au/icam>

cohealth, 2023. Community asthma program. Available from: <https://www.cohealth.org.au/icam>

Safer Care Victoria, 2023. Improving Childhood Asthma Management inner west pilot project. Available from: <https://www.safercare.vic.gov.au/100000lives/projects/improving-childhood-asthma-management>

## Activity 1. Community consultation

***“I was unsure for a long time if my child had asthma and that was the confusing thing. Not knowing if it is asthma, what is asthma and what to do. I feel so much more confident managing my child's asthma since visiting the community asthma program” - Online survey respondent, 2022.***

### **Aim**

To identify opportunities to address barriers and enhance enablers of asthma self-management at the system and individual level.

### **What we did**

We completed a rapid consultation targeted a broad range of community groups and stakeholders within the short project timeframe. 64 community members were accessed online, face to face in the places they gathered including libraries, community centres and community events, and through organised focus groups. 25 stakeholders were accessed through the ICAM Project Coordination Group (PCG) and ICAM Steering Group, cohealth programs, and other service providers as identified through snowball method.

### **The result**

Findings from all consultation activities identified three broad themes in relation to childhood asthma self-management: enablers, barriers, and self-management suggestions, as per the table below.

Findings from the consultation informed all Project 6 activities and were shared with the ICAM Project Coordination Group partners to inform other ICAM activities. Participants from this consultation were invited to participation in other ICAM activities run by cohealth (outlined below) or ICAM partners. Two participants were also engaged as community consultants for Safer Care Victoria Project 3 and contributed their experiences to the ICAM Community of Practice.

See Table 1 for details on identified enablers, barriers, and community suggestions to improve self-management.

**Table 1. Findings from Activity 1. Community consultation**

Enablers	Barriers	Self-management suggestions
<p><b>Doctors</b> All participants have spoken to a doctor, mostly prior to hospital, some doctors have provided self-management information.</p> <p><b>Specialty asthma services</b> Participants reported that Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), Sunshine Hospital &amp; <a href="#">cohealth Community Asthma Program</a> provide high quality self-management education and support.</p> <p><b>Royal Children's Hospital videos &amp; factsheets</b> Many participants reported accessing these, and suggested improvements including video subtitles and accurate factsheet translations.</p> <p><b>Pharmacists</b> Carers reported accessing pharmacists and that pharmacists will show parents how to use a puffer if asked.</p>	<p><b>Knowledge</b> Lacking sufficient knowledge about asthma was a very strong theme: <i>"How to prevent it"</i> <i>"How to use the puffer"</i> <i>"Understanding what to do in flare ups"</i></p> <p><b>Doctors</b> Participants reported doctors do not provide adequate self-management education in most cases.</p> <p><b>Confidence / worry</b> Carers reported an emotional toll from managing childhood asthma: <i>"Whilst there is a lot of information it wasn't until I spoke with the community asthma program nurse that the information was explained in a clear and concise manner. I didn't feel alone"</i> – online survey respondent.</p> <p><b>Inaccurate self-management</b> Participants reported home remedy advice and avoidance of physical activity.</p> <p><b>Cost</b> Cost was not reported as highly relevant to those on health care card but was a barrier for some – for example they could only afford one spacer, cannot carry medication with them at all times.</p> <p><b>Ongoing support</b> Limited support post-CAP or hospital. Generally, not aware of <a href="#">1800 Asthma</a>.</p>	<p><b>Education sessions</b> Participants desired a dedicated time to learn about asthma.</p> <p><b>CAP referrals</b> Participants supported increased awareness of cohealth's Community Asthma Program.</p> <p><b>Pamphlets</b> Participants suggested making written information widely available in local settings, including council buildings, Maternal and Child Health nurses, libraries, and pharmacies.</p> <p><b>Doctors</b> Participants suggested increasing the capacity of doctors to provide self-management checks &amp; upskilling to consumers.</p> <p><b>Royal Children's Hospital video subtitles</b> Participants suggested increasing the accessibility of RCH asthma videos and factsheets through translation.</p> <p><b>Spacers</b> Participants suggested subsidised or free spacers would support their use.</p>

## Activity 2. Community inreach



**16** sessions delivered to **192** participants from migrant and refugee backgrounds



**7** bi-cultural workers upskilled



**2** partner agencies and **13** community service settings engaged

### Aim

The Community Inreach for Childhood Asthma Self-Management intervention aimed to increase asthma self-management knowledge, attitudes, and skills for parents/carers of children with asthma in the inner west.

### What we heard

Community consultation (activity 1) and a literature search indicated a need for asthma self-management education that is tailored to the language, cultural and accessibility (cost, place, time, mode of delivery) needs of communities.

The inner west is culturally diverse, with 41 per cent of people born overseas (ICAM mid-project report p.8). Cultural and linguistic barriers are common themes in health disparities research. The importance of tailoring self-management interventions for the communities at which they are targeted is well recognised. (ICAM mid-project report p.23).

Lacking sufficient knowledge about asthma was a very strong theme during Activity 1. Community consultation, with carers reporting they wanted to know *“How to prevent it”*, *“How to use the puffer”* and *“Understanding what to do in flare ups”*. Participants also identified asthma information sessions as a desirable mode of delivery of asthma information *“Dedicated time to learn about asthma”* and highlighted that asthma information should be culturally appropriate, cheap, or free and easily accessible.

### What we did

cohealth ICAM team partnered with the [cohealth Bicultural Worker Program](#) and [The Water Well Project](#), who had existing models for effectively engaging with communities and tailoring health education to community needs.

7 Bi-Cultural Workers were upskilled in asthma self-management information, referral pathways and were supported by a Health Promotion Officer to coordinate sessions with their communities and local settings including Libraries, Neighbourhood Houses and Childcare Centres.

The Water Well Project adapted their Asthma in Children information session, service, and resources to the cultural needs of communities in the inner west and delivered this session to 16 community groups across the 3 target LGAs.

## The result

As of June 2023, the result of community inreach to improve childhood asthma self-management was:

- 192 community members participated in 16 Asthma in Children information sessions.
- Participants were from communities less often reached by existing asthma self-management services, with all 192 participants reported as being from a migrant or refugee background (The Water Well Project, June 2023) and 4 sessions held in languages other than English utilising an interpreter (1 x Arabic, 1 x Tibetan, 2 x Vietnamese).
- 95% of participants reported increased childhood asthma knowledge, attitudes, and skills.
- Participants reported sessions were culturally appropriate and accessible. *“Very helpful and informative session”* (Community Participant, March 2023), *“The quality of the discussion was really good, participants felt, they have been listened to and that they received answers from experts in the field.”* (Community Representative, June 2023)
- One participant was supported after the session to access cohealth Community Asthma Program, with others preferring to take written information or photos and do more research in their own time. *“I will go to my family GP. I am comfortable with how, thank you”* (Community Participant, March 2023).
- 7 Bi-Cultural Workers were upskilled in asthma self-management information and referral, expertise which is now available to communities and the health sector.
- Links between inner west community groups and The Water Well Project were established, which can be leveraged for future asthma or other health information sessions.
- Asthma self-management resources have been distributed to 192 participants including cohealth Breathe Easy brochure, Asthma Australia guides, cohealth Community Asthma Program and 1800 Asthma.
- This project reinforced existing knowledge that Bicultural Workers are effective and appropriate conduits to less often reached communities, *“The bicultural worker's presence was very helpful as she can understand the language, helped the interpreter explaining some words that the ladies did not understand from the interpreter and helped with some medical jargons that the interpreter was not sure about it, also having someone from our culture made us feel in a culturally safe environment”* (Community representative, March 2023).

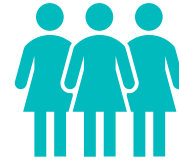
## Find out more

cohealth, 2023. Bi-cultural work program. Available from: <https://www.cohealth.org.au/get-involved/bi-cultural-work-program/>

The Water Well Project, 2023. Available from: <https://www.thewaterwellproject.org/>



## Activity 3. Youth-led content



**10** videos produced by **12** participants, seen by **209,032** young people

**1** asthma case study delivered to **220** students

**2** partner and **4** supporter agencies engaged

### Aim

The Youth-led Content intervention aimed to increase asthma self-management knowledge, attitudes, and skills of young people in the inner west.

### What we heard

The community consultation and a literature search indicated a need to engage young people in the development of youth-friendly asthma self-management information.

Asthma is the 4th greatest cause of burden of disease for young people ([AIHW 2021](#)). The health and wellbeing impacts of asthma are heightened by the social, psychological and developmental challenges posed by adolescence ([Blanchard et al 2015](#)). This age group also represents a dangerous period for young people as asthma management transitions from typically parent-managed to self-managed over a number of years (approx. age 12-18) ([NAC 2022](#)).

Young participants in the community consultation (activity 1) expressed a need for additional support to manage their asthma including: independent understanding of self-management practices and risks; understanding and support of asthma self-management by peers and carers in everyday settings such as school, sports and social environments; increased understanding of effective puffer (and spacer) technique; and increased knowledge of existing asthma self-management resources (ICAM Project 6 Consultation Summary Report, 2023, available by request).

### What we did

cohealth ICAM team partnered with [CHASE](#) and [Khorus media](#), with support from Asthma Australia, Brimbank Youth Services, Maribyrnong Youth Services & Western Public Health Unit, to codesign asthma-self management video content with young people with lived experience of asthma. The innovative "Asthma Storyworks" participatory codesign program involved 2 x workshops and a 6-week internship led by Khorus media. The videos produced were shared in a social media campaign on cohealth and CHASE socials.

cohealth ICAM team also partnered with [CHASE](#) to embed asthma knowledge, attitudes, and skills within the CHASE curriculum, which was delivered to students in May-June 2023.

## The result

This Youth-led Content intervention resulted in the following:

- 12 workshop participants (4 x 12-18 year olds and 8 x CHASE youth mentors aged 18-25 years old) and 3 video participants were engaged and empowered in asthma self-management.
- Participants surveyed reported they learnt a great deal about asthma self-management, video production skills, and felt more confident to share asthma messages after participation in the program.
- Young people were empowered by the participatory processes, and valued involvement in their own health and sharing those messages with others. *"I really loved it. I never thought that I would be able to learn to make videos about my own asthma condition. It really gave me some confidence in being able to talk about it and know that the information I gave is truly that {accurate information}."* (Youth participant, May 2023). I learned *"A lot about asthma that I should probably have known."* (Youth participant, May 2023).
- 10 youth-friendly videos are now available to the asthma care system. Clinicians working with children with asthma reported *"They are great snippets of gold! Will be great to share with our teenage clients."* (Community Asthma Program nurse educator, June 2023). *"I have shared them with some of my older clients already"* (Community Asthma Program nurse educator, June 2023).
- Over 209,032 individuals were reached with 438,119 impressions of the youth-led video content using social media platforms.
- There were at least 689 clicked through to cohealth Community Asthma Program and Asthma Australia websites.
- The CHASE curriculum now explores asthma as a case study and was delivered in 3 schools to 220 students in May-June 2023, with an expectation of repeating this in future years.
- Links between partner and working group organisations established with increased potential for future leverage on asthma or other health projects.



Image: Photographs from the "Asthma Storyworks" workshop held in April 2023.

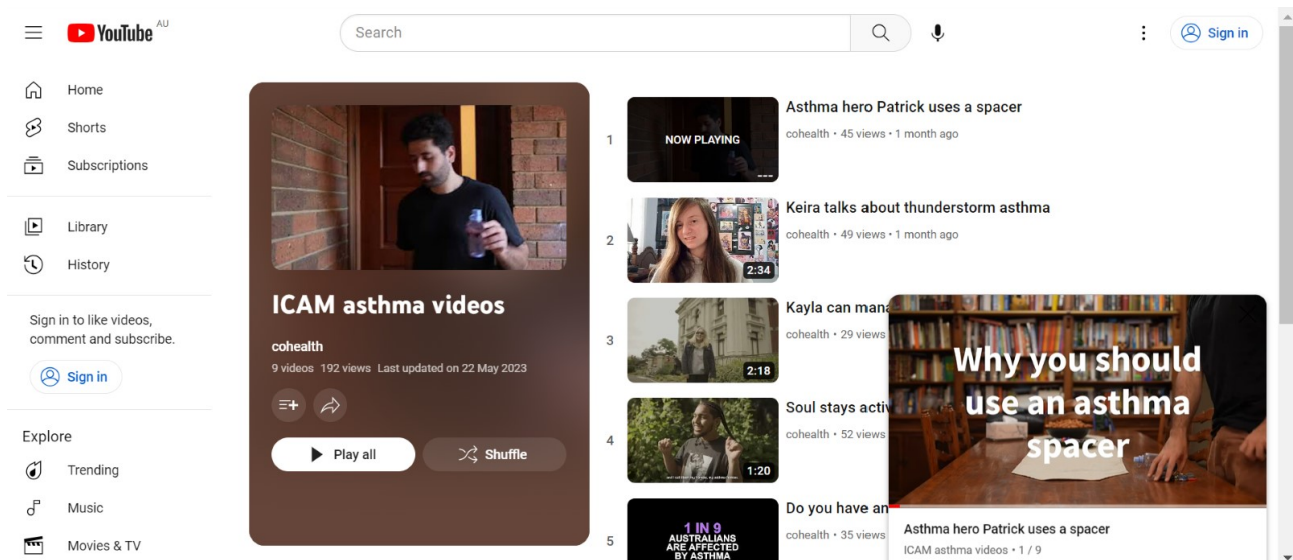


Image: ICAM Asthma Videos playlist, available from cohealth's youtube channel at: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL\\_fE1v6x8JvQUvovBUlbpNvV5BFkICEQR](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_fE1v6x8JvQUvovBUlbpNvV5BFkICEQR)

## Find out more

CHASE, 2020. Community Health Advancement and Student Engagement. Available from: <https://www.chaseprogram.org.au/>

cohealth, 2023. Young people support peers with the creation of asthma resources. Available from: <https://www.cohealth.org.au/news/young-people-support-peers-with-the-creation-of-asthma-resources/>

cohealth, 2023. ICAM Asthma Videos playlist, Youtube. Available from: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL\\_fE1v6x8JvQUvovBUlbpNvV5BFkICEQR](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_fE1v6x8JvQUvovBUlbpNvV5BFkICEQR)

Khorus, n.d. cohealth social video, inspiring asthma control in Melbourne's West. Available from: <https://khorus.au/portfolio/cohealth>

Prevention Vic, 2023. The power of social media to engage communities in health promotion. Available from: <https://prevention.health.vic.gov.au/blog/posts/the-power-of-social-media-to-engage-communities-in-health-promotion>

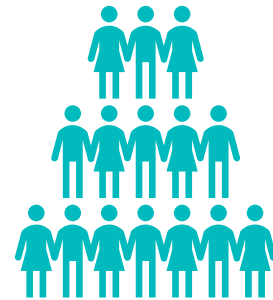
## Activity 4. Printed resources



1 bilingual storybook  
"Minh's Asthma Story"



1 asthma services brochure  
in 4 languages



Distributed to over **230**  
services and settings

### Aim

The Printed Resources intervention aimed to increase knowledge of asthma self-management and support services by children with asthma and their parents/carers in the inner west.

### What we heard

Activity 1. Community consultation indicated a need to engage children with asthma and their parents/carers with accessible asthma information and to promote local asthma care services.

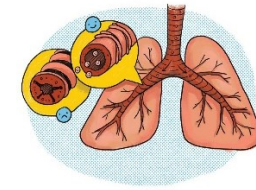
Melbourne's inner west is linguistically and culturally diverse, with Vietnamese the most commonly spoken language at home, followed by Arabic and Cantonese. The inner west also experiences higher rates of asthma triggers such as air pollution and has region-specific asthma services such as the cohealth Community Asthma Program and mainstream asthma services that are under-utilised by these inner west communities. For those reasons, resources that reflect the lived experience of the inner west were selected for development within the ICAM program.

### What we did

cohealth ICAM team engaged with community members and stakeholders to codesign printed resources. The new resources "Minh's Asthma Story" book and "Breathe Easy" brochure were distributed to 230 communities and services in the inner west, via a mail out to all general practices and schools in the inner west, shared with participants in community information sessions (Activity 2. Community Inreach), promoted by cohealth and ICAM networks, and available on cohealth ICAM webpage for free download or via online order form.

## The result

### “Minh’s Asthma Story”



"Breathe your chest to get your lungs," says Dr. Khan. "Your lungs have lots of air going in and out so you can breathe and play."  
"Asthma makes those small airways get stuck and need a lot of medicine. That means it's hard to breathe and you can't play."  
"When my air gets stuck, it's hard to breathe and I need a lot of medicine. It's hard to breathe and I can't play."  
"Asthma makes those small airways get stuck and need a lot of medicine. That means it's hard to breathe and you can't play."  
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"Asthma makes those small airways get stuck and need a lot of medicine. That means it's hard to breathe and you can't play."  
"When my air gets stuck, it's hard to breathe and I need a lot of medicine. It's hard to breathe and I can't play."

Image: Cover and excerpt from page 17 of “Minh’s Asthma Story”.

“Minh’s Asthma Story” is a Vietnamese and English bilingual storybook that follows Minh’s family as they journey from first asthma symptoms, to diagnosis, to asthma self-management. Codesigned with the Vietnamese-speaking parents’ group in Brimbank, authored by Judith Kula, with Illustrations and design by Wendy Tang, the story is aimed at children aged 5 – 9 and their carers. “Minh’s Asthma Story” was distributed to inner west Local Government and Primary School libraries, General Practices, playgroups, and other services in April – June 2023, including book launches at St Albans and West Footscray libraries. Colouring sheets are also available of some illustrations.

### “Breathe Easy”

**Asthma in children**  
Asthma is a common condition in children. Common symptoms of asthma include:  
• Breathing problems – feeling out of breath, tightness in the chest or trouble speaking  
• Wheezing – Breathing that sounds like whistles  
• Coughing – This might happen at night or early hours of the morning when the weather is cool or during exercise  
If a child you care for is having these symptoms, you should take them to a doctor to see if it might be asthma. With the right treatment, nearly all children with asthma will be able to join in sport and lead active lives.

This brochure has also been translated into other languages. Go to [cohealth.org.au/ICAM](http://cohealth.org.au/ICAM) to download or order free copies. You can get more information to help understand childhood asthma from these services:  
• Asthma Australia: Information about asthma management, tips and how to live well.  
• Royal Children's Hospital: Videos and fact sheets about asthma management.  
• National Asthma Council Australia: Information and videos about how to manage asthma symptoms, including using asthma medications.  
• Free telephone service: 1800 ASTHMA or call 131 450  
This is an initiative of the Improving Childhood Asthma Management (ICAM) – Inner West program funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Victorian Government, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, National Asthma Council Australia, Deakin Children's Institute and the Victorian Community Foundation.

**cohealth** care for all

**get help for childhood asthma**  
There are many services in Melbourne's Inner West that can help you to understand and manage childhood asthma.  
• **cohealth's Community Asthma Program**  
The Community Asthma Program (CAP) provides free asthma education and support for children (1-17yrs) with asthma or wheeze. An asthma nurse educator works one-on-one with families to manage asthma.  
• **1800 ASTHMA**  
You can speak to an asthma educator on the phone for free to help better understand and manage asthma.  
• **Free call 1800 ASTHMA 1800 278 462** or book a call back by scanning this QR code.

**Doctor**  
Doctors can help manage and understand asthma symptoms, and let you know if a child has asthma. A doctor can create an Asthma Action Plan for any child with asthma. This will tell you how to prevent and manage asthma episodes. Children with asthma should see their doctor every six months for an asthma review to check how the asthma is being managed. It is also important that children with asthma see their doctor if they have had asthma symptoms or a flare-up.  
Find out more about Asthma Action Plans by scanning this QR code.

**Pharmacist**  
Ask a pharmacist how medications work and how to use them correctly. Pharmacists can check children's puffer techniques to make sure they are getting full doses of their medication. Find a doctor or pharmacist near you by scanning this QR code.

**Asthma First Aid**  
If your child is having an asthma episode, follow the advice in your child's Asthma Action Plan or follow the 4x4x4 asthma first aid steps.  
1. Sit the person upright.  
2. Give 1 puff of reliever puffer into the spacer.  
3. Take 4 breaths from the spacer.  
Repeat these steps 4 times.  
4. Wait 4 minutes.  
If breathing does not return to normal  
5. Call triple zero (000)  
6. Repeat steps 2-4 until ambulance arrives.

Image: Front and back of “Breathe Easy” English version 1.

The “Breathe Easy” brochure includes information and services in Melbourne’s inner west that can help families to understand and manage childhood asthma. Designed by ICAM stakeholders with consultation from the cohealth Community Advisory Group, Breathe Easy is available in Arabic, English, Simplified Chinese, and Vietnamese. “Breathe Easy” was distributed to inner west Local Government and Primary School libraries, General Practices, playgroups, and other services in April – June 2023, as well as to participants in Activity 2. Community inreach information sessions.

### Find out more

cohealth, 2023. Improving Childhood Asthma Management (ICAM). Available from: <https://www.cohealth.org.au/about-us/what-we-do/prevention-and-health-promotion/icam/>  
cohealth 2023. Bilingual storybook aims to tackle children’s asthma <https://www.cohealth.org.au/media-release/bilingual-storybook-aims-to-tackle-childrens-asthma/>

## Activity 5. Collaboration across the ICAM partnership

### Aim

Coordination with ICAM and other relevant partners to ensure integration and alignment of strategies.

### What we heard

ICAM was designed as six interlinked projects that can shift the asthma care system towards the shared goal of improving diagnosis and management of childhood asthma in Melbourne's inner west. This systems approach recognised cohealth's Project 6 had potential to act as a conduit of community sentiment to the broader ICAM program of work.

### What we did

cohealth ICAM team engaged with the 7 ICAM partners and different ICAM projects including:

- ICAM Project Coordination Group meetings.
- ICAM Community of Practice.
- Steering groups

During these engagements, cohealth ICAM team shared community and stakeholder insights, contributed to discussions to understand multiple perspectives of the asthma care system and investigate the underlying problems. Interventions and outputs from all Projects, including Project 6 (Activity 4) youth-led videos, storybook and brochure, were reviewed by the ICAM partnership, enabling integration of ICAM findings from the broader partnership into each output, ensuring alignment and reducing duplication.

cohealth ICAM team contributed community engagement and codesign capability to the ICAM partnership by sharing cohealth's codesign framework and supporting understanding of informed consent, accessibility, and cultural appropriateness requirements in community engagement. cohealth ICAM team coordinated Project 3 community engagement activities (recruitment and support of community consultants with lived experience of asthma) and community workshops to investigate experiences with the asthma care system.

cohealth ICAM team regularly engaged with relevant stakeholders outside of ICAM program e.g. cohealth Community Asthma Program & Western Public Health Unit thunderstorm asthma team, to share insights beyond the 6 projects and bring broader sector insights back to the ICAM partnership.

### The result

cohealth ICAM team contributed to changing existing resources as a result of the community insights shared, including:

- Royal Children's Hospital asthma video and factsheet translation funded as an additional ICAM output.

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- Investigation by Asthma Australia into strengthening accessibility of 1800 ASTHMA interpreter service; Online resource ordering system with automatic reminders; Simple English versions of pictorial resources currently available in other languages.
- Quality improvement activities developed by Safer Care Victoria in relation to regular General Practitioner checking of client puffer technique.
- The Water Well Project developed a specific Asthma in Children information session and made changes to videos and referral options.
- CHASE developed new asthma case study in workshop curriculum including Asthma empathy activity; Asthma stigma activity; Asthma first aid activity.

3 community consultants were supported to share their stories about engaging with the asthma care system at the ICAM Community of Practice, contributing to greater understanding by GP, Pharmacy, and community nurse participants of the lived experience of the asthma care system. 48 community members were also coordinated for 3 x community workshops, led by Safer Care Victoria Project 3, with findings incorporated into Project 3 activities.

These results exemplified the benefits of a systems approach which was a principal way of working across the ICAM partnerships. The community is a pivotal stakeholder in a systems approach. Therefore, system change is dependent on community relationship, effective community consultation (activity 1) and community engagement. Another benefit of the systems approach was the cohealth ICAM team enjoyed the collaborative and system nature of this work which was reflected by staff expression of high job satisfaction and staff retention.

### Find out more

Department of Health, 2023. Improving childhood asthma management in Melbourne's inner west. Available from: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/improving-childhood-asthma-management-in-melbournes-inner-west>