

Management of asthma at the  
Family Medicine Department, Korle  
Bu Teaching Hospital

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# Background

- Asthma is one of the common conditions that present at the Family Medicine Department of the Korle Bu Teaching hospital.
- In order to ensure the provision of comprehensive care of asthma patients, a special clinic was started to cater for asthma patients.

# Aim

The Asthma Clinic of the Korle Bu Polyclinic was started on the 2nd August, 2013 with the aim of providing comprehensive care for asthma patients in order to achieve optimum control of symptoms and improve their quality of life.

# How asthma was managed before

- Prior to the commencement of the Asthma Clinic, however, patients who reported at the department 'on daily basis' with asthma symptoms were treated and scheduled for review with no assurance of seeing a particular doctor. Thus comprehensive care and effective follow-up and monitoring of patients was lacking.

- The clinic provides comprehensive management of children and adults who have asthma based on the guidelines of the Global Initiative for Asthma, GINA.
- Patient care at the clinic involves the following:

- diagnosis and assessment of level of control of the condition,
- prescription of reliever and controller medication,
- management of other conditions associated with asthma, mainly allergic rhinitis, allergic conjunctivitis and atopic eczema.
- follow up and monitoring of patients
- education of patients about the condition and the techniques of use of asthma medication,

# Demography of patients

- The patient has attended to 188 patients
- 60.6% are females and 39.4% males
- Patients include children and adults, ages 1 year and 9 months 80 years.
- Most patients live in Greater Accra and Kasoa.

- It has been found that prior to attending the clinic many of the patients were not managed comprehensively and were partly or poorly controlled.
- 53% of the patients who needed corticosteroids had never had it.
- More than 90% of patients who have associated allergic rhinitis never had treatment for it.



- Most patients had no doctor who attended to them regularly
- Most patients had never been educated about asthma.

- The clinic is run by 2 Family Physicians trained in management of asthma
- They are assisted by 2 nurses and 2 health care assistants who have also been trained

## At the clinic

- Diagnosis is confirmed- symptoms +/- lung function test
- Level of control is assessed using Asthma Control Test and PEFR
- Patients are educated about the condition, avoidance of risk factors, inhaler techniques

- Management goals are set with patients
- Patients are managed appropriately
- Follow up plan scheduled with patients

# Impact of the clinic

- Most patients experience significant improvement in level of control.
- Allergic rhinitis, conjunctivitis and eczema are diagnosed and treated.
- Patient doctor partnership

# Challenges

- Some patients fail to attend scheduled review when their symptoms seem to improve which worsens their control
- Cost of medicines
- Issues with National Health Insurance Scheme