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Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease of the airways in the lungs.

Effective collaboration between healthcare and social care professionals is essential to improve the wellbeing of individuals living with asthma. Asthma management requires a coordinated, person-centred approach that addresses not only medical treatment but also environmental, emotional, and social factors influencing the disease.

Introduction

Healthcare professionals such as general practitioners (GPs), respiratory specialists, nurses, and pharmacists play complementary roles. GPs and respiratory specialists are responsible for diagnosing asthma, prescribing medication, and monitoring disease progression. Nurses provide education on self-management strategies, including proper inhaler technique and recognising early signs of exacerbations. Pharmacists reinforce medication adherence and offer guidance on managing side effects. Collaboration among these professionals ensures that individuals receive consistent, high-quality care and reduces the risk of emergency hospital admissions.

Social care professionals and community health workers also play a key role. They support patients in managing environmental triggers, such as poor housing conditions, exposure to tobacco smoke, or allergens, which are particularly significant in socioeconomically disadvantaged communities. Social care staff can provide guidance on accessing resources, connecting patients with support networks, and coordinating services that improve both physical and emotional wellbeing.

More than 250 million people worldwide are living with asthma (World Health Organization, 2025) and specifically in the UK over 8 million people 1 million of them being children have been diagnosed with asthma, currently 5.4 million people across the UK are receiving asthma treatment (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence)

This report focuses on Asthma, a chronic respiratory condition that causes a person's airways to become inflamed and narrowed making it quite difficult for individuals to breathe. Asthma can affect anyone, it does not have an age limit it can lead up to symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath. These symptoms vary depending on the severity of the asthma that the person has and how inflamed the airways are. There are also other factors that can impact the severity of the symptoms such as allergens, cold air, weather changes, mold and sometimes even "strong emotions" such as laughter or stress. Asthma is a global health issue that impacts society significantly affecting over 2 million people. This report will examine the causes, statistics, and the overall impact of asthma.

Definition with source -*MedlinePlus medical Encyclopedia (2023)* defines asthmas as: A chronic lung disease that causes inflammation and narrowing of the airways.

Asthma is a very common chronic illness worldwide affecting people of all ages and contributing to global morbidity and reduced quality of life. Having asthma can lead up to missed education, recurrent hospital visits and sometimes even employment opportunities; asthma can also place a considerable emotional strain on individuals and their family members.

In the UK, 8 million people have been diagnosed with asthma which is over 12% of the population and about 5.4 million are currently receiving treatment (NICE, 2023)

Globally, asthma affects around 260 million people worldwide it is a major noncommunicable disease and is the most common in children (World Health Organization 2019)

Asthma is a manageable and preventable condition but it mostly affects socioeconomically disadvantaged communities where factors such as air pollution, limited access to healthcare, poor housing increase the risk of symptoms and hospital admissions.

This report will explore asthma as a long term condition and the effects it has in communities. It will explore the cons that influence health and well being and will evaluate how health professionals can work together to improve asthma management and improve health results for individuals affected by asthma.

Asthma is a common chronic lung condition where airways become inflamed, swollen, and narrowed. Symptoms include wheezing, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath. During an asthma attack, bronchospasm occurs, and mucus builds up in the airways making it difficult for the individual to breathe, this can cause intermittent airflow obstruction and bronchial hyperresponsiveness. which can sometimes be triggered by allergens such as dust, pollen, cold air or infections. Mediators, including histamine and leukotrienes trigger the contraction and relaxation of airway smooth muscle. This can always be manageable when provided with inhalers and some other treatments. Globally around 260 million are affected

by the chronic disease asthma. Data shows that the death rate was consistently declining for asthma between 2001 and 2015, despite this asthma seems to account for 420,000 deaths per year (NIH,2024), often due to risk factors such as limited access to medical care and under prescriptions. In the “UK” millions are affected by asthma mostly children are affected with the chronic disease. Asthma can affect most people's physical health, personal relationships and emotional well being (My Life With Asthma, 2017). Having asthma can also disrupt social activities,sleep, work and school life.. Around one in eleven children in the uk die due to asthma this puts a strain on the NHS forcing them to implement more prescriptions, GP visits, and hospital care, asthma costs the uk millions of pounds annually for prescription drugs, disability claims and hospital care (The University of Edinburgh, 2016). Children with asthma can have a negative experience as asthma affects with academic experience and reduces their attendance, they would have limited ability to participate properly in lessons this results in underachievement the children would have to constantly catch up on work to be academically where they are supposed to be this could cause them to be stressed and feel fatigue which will just harm the children's physical health as this could trigger an asthma attack this could also affect their experience on friendships and they may feel left out or “different” to the other school children who do not have asthma, an experience like this could impact their mental health and academic progression as they would often be behind and having to catch up on school work. Adults also go through emotional and sometimes financial difficulties when they are affected with asthma they can sometimes have a reduced work productivity not being able to perform at their best potential because of the asthma symptoms that include wheezing and shortness of breath or sometimes having to take breaks at work to use an inhaler, as well as asking for days off due to being sick and having asthma attacks can impact the adult financially and it can also impact the medication that the adult would need to buy to ease the asthma and its symptoms. What normally causes adults to have asthma at their age is tobacco smoke,occupational exposure, and sometimes adults with rhinitis or atopy(NIH 2024).The chronic lung condition has different types such as severe asthma,allergic asthma,occupational asthma etc this can all be caused by a variety of factors such as hereditary,dust mites, pet dander etc. when patients often need to be diagnosed or tested a spirometry is often used its a test that estimates the narrowing of your bronchial tubes by checking how much air you can exhale after a deep breath and how quickly you can breathe out or sometimes a peak flow is also used, a peak flow meter is a device that usually measures how hard you can breathe out if its lower than peak flow reading then it signifies that your lungs may not be working properly or that your asthma is getting severe. Lung function tests are done before and after taking a medication to open up your airways its called a bronchodilator sometimes other tests can be used such as allergy testing, methacholine challenge, imaging tests, nitric oxide test, sputum eosinophil and provocative testing. There are many ways to prevent asthma because asthma manifests with diverse phenotypes influenced by genetics and environmental factors. Prematurity is a well known risk factor, exposure to maternal smoking during pregnancy causes a diminished pulmonary function in newborn babies and that increases their chance of having childhood asthma. The ways to try and reduce the risk of asthma is by avoiding triggers such as staying away from smoke, mold, pollen etc, in addition getting the annual flu shots and pneumonia vaccines is helpful to prevent respiratory infections. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is also very useful when it comes to asthma exercising regularly and consulting your doctor or nurse to get information on safe ways to exercise, avoiding aspirin, ibuprofen and beta-blockers as they can trigger symptoms in some cases. Health and social care professionals play an important role in treating and supporting patients with asthma in most

cases these professionals are the first point of contact professionals such as general practitioners who diagnose and prescribe or pharmacist who provide the prescribed medication and inhalers they also teach inhaler technique training there are also community health workers who offer support to patients and connect them with individuals with local resources, asthma action plans are extremely important as they inform patients on noticing early signs of asthma attacks and it gives them knowledge on how to avoid triggers. Though there seems to be a number of available treatments for asthma there are also inequalities within the asthma care that can be concerning, low income families are exposed to more poor housing conditions and are most likely to be exposed to damp or mould and this can increase the risk of asthma in a child or an adult, There can also be a limit in the healthcare services that lower income households receive because of the language barriers at times and sometimes even lack of fundamental education prevents the families from timely diagnosis being diagnosed with asthma unfortunately also comes with certain consequences when you are diagnosed with asthma you are more prone to certain complications and risks this could be asthma attacks, hospitalisation long term lung damage and sometimes even risk of death if unmanaged. In addition to its physical effects, living with a chronic respiratory condition may lead to anxiety because of the unpredictable asthma attacks, some people may experience panic during asthma attacks and exacerbations. Children and adults with asthma may often feel singled out or may feel like the odd ones out because having asthma would cause the inability to join in on certain things and this affects their self-esteem this could also cause them to have social withdrawals and sudden urge to isolate themselves.

Asthma has a significant impact across various communities not only affecting the individual but also affecting employment, health services, education and the social environment. There is a current demand on certain health care systems due to the need for medication, emergency interventions and sometimes regular monitoring. High rates of asthma expand the pressure on hospital services and can often also negatively impact primary care, this usually happens in lower class areas where access to successful health care is often limited; this adds to inequality within the health sector and higher health costs (Spandidos publications, 2025). Within universities and schools there is support that should always be provided; this often leads to staff training and a safe physical environment which often may require additional resources. Families that have to take the responsibility of taking care of individuals with asthma may experience emotional burn out, stress and lifestyle limitations. Situations such as over rising due to poor housing can negatively impact the asthma symptoms this places pressure and increases reliance on social care.

Explain the factors influencing the health and wellbeing of people affected by the disease/condition and people around them. The health and well being of people who are diagnosed with asthma are usually influenced by biological factors such as age, genetics and the severity of the condition. Air pollution, tobacco smoke, damp housing can trigger asthma symptoms and escalate the overall health.

Effective collaboration between healthcare and social care professionals is important to improve the health of individuals living with asthma. Asthma management requires an organised person-centred approach that addresses not only medical treatment but also environmental, emotional, and social factors influencing the disease. Healthcare professionals such as general practitioners (GPs), respiratory specialists, nurses, and pharmacists play important and efficient roles. GPs and respiratory specialists are responsible for diagnosing asthma, prescribing medication, and monitoring disease progression. Nurses provide education on self-management strategies, including proper inhaler technique and recognising early signs of exacerbations.

Discuss the social impact of heart disease: reduced quality of life, daily limitations, loss of independence
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