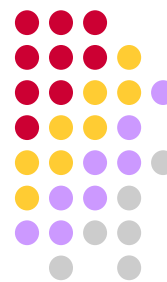


# Iowa Asthma Coalition Newsletter



## Calls to Quitline Iowa Increase Dramatically as a Result of the Tobacco Tax Increase

*Submitted by Jerilyn Quigley, Iowa Department of Public Health*

More Iowans are interested in quitting their tobacco use since the tobacco tax increase went into effect in March. As a result, Quitline Iowa, the state's smoking cessation hotline, has seen a significant increase in its call volume.

From March 15 (the day the \$1.00 cigarette tax increase was signed into law by Governor Culver) to May 31, Quitline Iowa received a total of 1,932 incoming callers. That number is up from 722 incoming callers during the same time period last year.

"We are extremely pleased that more Iowans are taking steps to end their addiction to tobacco,"

said Dr. Mary Aquilino, University of Iowa clinical associate professor in community and behavioral health and director of the Iowa Tobacco Research Center. "Quitting tobacco use is one of the best ways to improve one's health."



From July 1st to May 31st, Quitline Iowa received calls from a total of 4,363 callers. That's a 62% increase over the total number of callers during the entire fiscal year 2006 (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006).

Staffed by trained

counselors from the Iowa Tobacco Research Center (ITRC), Quitline Iowa offers callers state-of-the-art cessation services over the phone. Callers can also request free materials to be sent in the mail, or referrals to smoking cessation resources in their community, including support groups, clinics and consultants.

Iowans can access Quitline Iowa by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669). The service is available 8 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week in English and Spanish, with translation services available for other languages. A TDD line is also available for the hearing impaired at 1-866-822-2857. Help is also available for users of smokeless tobacco. According to Dr. Aquilino, "Research shows that

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### Quitline Iowa continued

a person who receives phone counseling during the quitting process is twice as likely to stay smoke free as someone who tries to quit on their own."

During a person's initial call to Quitline Iowa, a counselor helps a tobacco user determine the best method for them to quit, based on the caller's smoking history, past quit attempts, and level of readiness. The counselor can discuss options including nicotine replacement therapy or prescription medications, assist the tobacco user in developing an individualized quit plan, and provide follow-up calls for on-going support before, during and after the quitting process.

If a tobacco user is not ready to call, Quitline Iowa provides on-line resources through their Web site at [www.quitlineiowa.org](http://www.quitlineiowa.org). Visitors can use the smoking cost calculator to see the

impact their habit has on their wallet, request information to be received by mail, download materials to use on their own or e-mail questions to Quitline Iowa through the Ask-A-Counselor feature.

"Studies indicate that it may take several attempts to quit tobacco, so people should not be discouraged if they aren't successful the first time," said Esther Baker, Iowa Tobacco Research Center program coordinator. "The Quitline Iowa toll-free hotline and Web site provide individuals with the tools, resources and support they need to help them quit and remain tobacco free."

Quitline Iowa is a service provided by the Iowa Tobacco Research Center, part of the Department of Community and Behavioral Health in the UI College of Public Health, and is funded by the Iowa Department of Public Health, Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control.



### Asthma in Iowa: Child Asthma Surveillance Report

*Submitted by Joann Muldoon, Iowa Department of Public Health*

Staff of the Iowa Asthma Control Program, Iowa Department of Public Health recently completed a report, *Asthma in Iowa: Child Asthma Surveillance Report*.

Relying on six different health data sets, that report examines child asthma prevalence by gender, race, grade-level, smoking status, parents' socioeconomic status and other variables.

Key report findings are listed here:

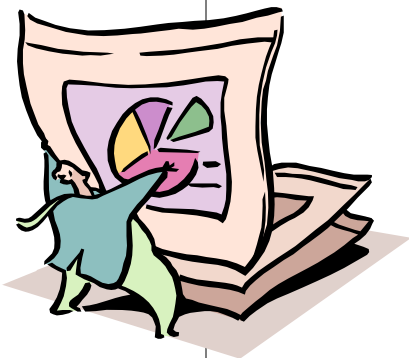
- Between 9 and 10 percent of Iowa children (Iowans 0 to 17 years of age) have ever had diagnosed asthma (lifetime asthma).

- 7 percent of Iowa children have diagnosed current asthma.
- Comparing other states' child current diagnosed asthma prevalence rates to Iowa's found the latter rate for Iowa children to be among the bottom third of all other state rates in each of three independent databases examined (Iowa Child and Family Household Health Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), and Nation Health Interview Survey).

#### Child current asthma prevalence case rates sociodemographic groups with highest rates

Child populations with the highest rates of current asthma prevalence were:

- Middle and high school-aged youth;
- Racial minorities;
- Children of families of low income;
- Children whose parents have less



- than a high school diploma; and
- Middle and high school youth who smoke.

**Many cases of child (and adult) asthma are never diagnosed.**

- A University of Iowa study found that more than 50 percent of children in Keokuk and Louisa counties who had chronic respiratory symptoms indicative of asthma had not been diagnosed with asthma. (Chrischilles, 2004)
- One Iowa database, the Iowa Youth Tobacco Survey, has collected data on undiagnosed asthma. This survey collects data for middle and high school students only. The Youth Tobacco Survey found that while 12 percent of middle school youth reported having asthma, 15 percent reported having at least one episode of wheezing in the past year and 17

percent reported wheezing after exercise in the past year. Similar rates of asthma-like symptoms were seen in Iowa high school students.

The full report can be found on the Iowa Asthma Control Program web site: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hpcdp/asthma.asp>.

*Sources:*

Chrischilles, E. et al., Asthma Prevalence and Morbidity among Rural Iowa Schoolchildren, Journal of Allergy and Immunology, 113:66-71, 2004.  
Iowa Department of Public Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, unpublished data from 2003-2006 surveys.  
Iowa Department of Public Health, 2004 Iowa Youth Tobacco Survey, Unpublished Data, 2005.  
Veale, James, Iowa Department of Education, 2005 Iowa YRBS: Youth Risk Behavior Survey: Iowa.

## New Iowa Asthma Coalition Coordinator

My name is Jill Agan and I am Iowa's new Asthma Coalition Coordinator. This position is certainly going to be a great and rewarding challenge for me.

I am a Respiratory Therapist (RT) with 16 years of experience working with patients, especially patients with asthma. I am thrilled to be a part of the pursuit to raise awareness and educate the citizens of Iowa.

I really enjoy educating youth and adults about their disease. I have been a volunteer RT for the Asthma Adventure Camp and I have recently participated in the Open Airways for Schools program which was a very rewarding experience.

I love working with patients and families and making a difference, through education, in the way people feel. It is my hope that I can give the citizens of Iowa the information that is needed for living a healthy lifestyle with asthma.

I am also a wife and mother. My husband, Kenny is a police officer for the City of Johnston where he will be the first School Resource Officer for Johnston Community Schools this fall. Together we have three children, Olivia, 7, will be a first grader, Ella, 5, will be a Kindergartener this fall, and Sam, 3, who is just a very busy little guy. These three keep us on our toes, yet we enjoy every minute of it even though some days are a little bit challenging.

One of the most exciting aspects of assuming this position is getting to work with a vast network of professionals working together towards a common goal.

I have a strong belief if we work together we can make a difference in the quality of life for many Iowans with asthma. I am also entering this



position knowing that I will succeed only with the help of all of you. So, I am asking for your help in making our communities healthier for everyone. By improving the community for Iowans that are affected by asthma, we may improve the overall health of the state.

So, please, feel free to send me your ideas and thoughts regarding how we can succeed in improving the quality of life of those persons and families who are affected by asthma.

By working together, I hope we will educate the communities by opening a line of communication between community members, health professionals and asthma coalition members that will ultimately provide a healthy environment for all of us.

I would like to share with you what the Iowa Asthma Coalition (IAC) is all about.

It is a partnership of different groups and people who care about the quality of life for people in Iowa with asthma. Our mission is to help people learn what the signs of an asthma episode are, provide people with asthma action plans and work with people and organizations to lower the amount of asthma triggers.

Everyone can make a difference in the lives of people who have problems because of asthma. The Iowa Department of Public Health and the IAC are putting strategies and activities together from the State's asthma plan: "Asthma in Iowa the Iowa Plan for Improving the Health of Iowans with Asthma".

Any organization, group or person that is interested in asthma may join our coalition. By joining the IAC, you will have access to health care experts that know about asthma, become aware of resources of statewide agencies, and meet other caring people that have the same goals.

The IAC and I appreciate any assistance you give by sharing your knowledge and experiences, by helping other people learn more about asthma, and by helping people with asthma learn how to control their asthma.

The IAC will carry out our mission and answer the needs of people in Iowa with asthma through education that will support a standard of care for asthma control in schools and child care settings.

We will also make sure that all people with asthma have an asthma action plan and we will share information that will raise public awareness of the problems people with asthma live with and cut down asthma triggers.

The IAC will offer the support that is needed to help people with asthma, make Iowa communities healthier, and assist in shaping policy.

I am asking you to become involved and become a member of the Iowa Asthma Coalition. As a member you will receive access to current asthma information, an opportunity to participate in the implementation of the Iowa Asthma Plan, and an invitation to attend coalition meetings.

The IAC meets quarterly to discuss, facilitate and network communication among persons and organizations. This would be the time to share experiences, problems and successes. We would love for you to become involved and be a part of this future success!

There are many ways to become involved. Please let me know if you are interested in joining the Iowa Asthma Coalition, you can also be placed on the mailing list or if you need information about asthma.

If I can be of any assistance, please let me know I would be glad to help. I can be reached at the American Lung Association of Iowa at (515) 309-9507 ext. 224 or via E-mail at [jagan@lungia.org](mailto:jagan@lungia.org). I'm looking forward to working together with you in making a difference in lives of Iowans who have asthma.



*"I have a strong belief if we work together we can make a difference in the quality of life for many Iowans with asthma."*

## Healthy Linn Care Network offering Chronic Disease Health Management Program

*Submitted by Tara Stadheim of Healthy Linn Care Network*

At the last group I spoke with, I asked the audience to raise their hands if they had a chronic health condition or knew of someone who did. Within a few moments nearly every person in the room had raised their hand.

Then I asked how many had themselves or knew of someone with more than one chronic health condition. A good majority of hands were still up in the air.

It proved a point I wanted to enforce for the crowd, as well as you today as the reader of this article. Almost everyone is affected by chronic health conditions, regardless of if they are living with their own chronic health condition or someone they know is doing just so.

As many of us know, by being linked to the healthcare field in one way or another, the rise in chronic health conditions is exponential. Nearly 80% of the population over the age of 60 has one chronic health condition, half have two or more.

It seems so often that we encounter these individuals and hear them speak of their trials and frustrations due to their health. Some of them seem to be trapped in their illnesses or feel isolated from the rest of society.

While we are aware of the number of individuals who have these conditions, it is easy for us to not think twice about how it affects just one individual dealing with a chronic health problem. However, when that

one individual has a chronic condition they often feel as though they are the only ones living with it, leaving them feeling alone in the world. This is where the Healthy Linn Care Network of Cedar Rapids, along with the Heritage Area Agency on Aging has stepped up to the plate.

In a collaborative effort, these two agencies are bringing an evidence-based chronic disease self-management program developed by Stanford University to those who live in their local communities.

Funded by a three year grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging, in partnership with the IDPH and IDEA this program is making headway empowering individuals to take control of their health and encouraging healthy lifestyles.

The targeted population includes adults 60 and older who are living with any chronic health condition and their caregivers. Some of the most



common conditions being asthma and other associated lung ailments.

The program is setup as a workshop, meeting once a week for six weeks. Each week different topics are presented by trained leaders and discussed as a group. Each group consists of ten to fifteen individuals who either have chronic health conditions or are caregivers for individuals who do.

Topics covered in the workshops range from nutrition and physical activity to advance directives and living wills. All participants are encouraged to create their own action plan each week, choosing a goal they want to do for themselves before the next session. The following week they report to the group on how well they did with their action plan, and if they faced barriers, they problem solve solutions as a group.

These action plans have encouraged amazing changes in participants. One participant came to the first session using a wheelchair to support herself while she walked, her asthma not allowing her to walk on her own. Her very first action plan was to walk to the end of the block, the closer end, once a day.

By the end of the workshop her action plan was to walk to both ends of the block twice a day. Not once did she

fail to fulfill her action plan, she no longer needed the wheelchair for support, and she stated that she felt she was able to breathe much better by simply increasing her walking.

This is just one example of over 50 different participants who have participated in the workshops, almost all with similar stories of personal accomplishments positively impacting their health.

The program is currently offered in the Linn County area, with expectations for it to spread to all seven counties served by the Heritage Area Agency, including: Johnson, Benton, Iowa, Jones, Washington, and Cedar.

Two other area agencies on aging are offering this same program, through the same grant, they are Hawkeye Valley AAA based out of Waterloo and Aging Resources AAA based out of Des Moines.

In all three locations there are opportunities for individuals to be trained as leaders for the chronic disease self-management program, as well as a very open door to those who would like to implement this program at their own site!

*For more information regarding this program, please contact Tara Stadheim of Healthy Linn Care Network at (319) 369-8329 or [tara@healthylinn.org](mailto:tara@healthylinn.org).*

Workshop attendees learn new and effective ways to live happier, healthier lives...and realize they're not alone.



## "Blow the Whistle on Asthma Walk" Supports Programs for Kids

*Submitted by Micki Sandquist,  
Director, ALA of Iowa*

The American Lung Association sponsors "Blow the Whistle on Asthma" walks nationwide to raise money in support of over 17.3 million Americans who suffer from asthma. In Iowa, over 200,000 children and adults have been diagnosed with asthma. The asthma walk is a team event created specifically to fund asthma research and local asthma programs.

Iowa's asthma walk takes place at Jordan Creek Town Center in West Des Moines on Saturday, September 8th.

One of the programs supported by the funds raised by this walk is Asthma Adventure Camp, a summer camp for children with asthma that's staffed 24 hours a day by physicians, registered nurses, and registered respiratory therapists. The camp, held at the YMCA camp near Boone, provides children who have asthma with a safe environment in which to experience both camping and asthma education activities.

To participate in the event and for more information visit [www.asthmawalk.org](http://www.asthmawalk.org) or call 515.309.9507.



## Step up to the AE-C® Challenge!

*Submitted by Jill Agan, IAC  
Coordinator*

Do you know what it means if you are an AE-C®? Well, if you are an educator of asthma this certification would not only benefit you, but also the patients and their families that are affected by asthma.

Asthma Education Certification (AE-C) is a designation that the National Asthma Education Certification Board (NAECB) awards to individuals who pass an exam that is used to assess qualified health professionals' knowledge in asthma education. The certification is a voluntary process and it is not required by law however employers may view certification as a basis for employment, job promotions, salary increases or other special considerations.

To get started, visit the NAECB testing site at [www.naecb.org](http://www.naecb.org). The exam is delivered by a computer in an assessment center. There are no application deadlines and those who meet the eligibility requirements may submit an application and a fee at any time. The exam is administered by

appointment Monday through Friday on a first come first serve basis. There is a 3-½ hour time limit for the examination. The initial fee to take this test is \$295 and you must recertify every seven years.

There is a self-assessment examination that you could take to help provide you with additional testing help. The cost is \$65. It is comprised of 75 questions which are modeled by the style and kind of questions that you may see on the actual exam.

The national pass rate for the exam is 69% and there are only 1,882 certificants. I was surprised that there were so few certificants and believe it or not there are only 10 in Iowa.

This has truly encouraged me to take this test and be an asthma expert. So, in turn I challenge you to be a part in becoming an asthma expert by receiving this designation for yourself and the people in Iowa with asthma. Let's go for it and get certified! For more information, please go to [www.naecb.org](http://www.naecb.org).



## Calendar of Events

- IDPH's Barn Raising Event.....August 2-3
- IAC Conference Call.....August 21
- Blow the Whistle on Asthma Walk.....September 8
- Healthy Lung Month.....October 1-31
- National Child Health Day.....October 1
- Respiratory Care Week.....October 21-27
- Lung Health Day.....October 24

### For more facts about asthma:

Iowa Department of Public Health  
[www.idph.state.ia.us/hpcdp/asthma.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hpcdp/asthma.asp)

American Lung Association of Iowa  
[www.lungia.org](http://www.lungia.org)



### Iowa Asthma Coalition

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