

■ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Environment and Human Health, Inc. has four recommendations for the State of Connecticut as a result of this asthma study. They are:

1. The state should establish a system for tracking the prevalence of asthma in Connecticut.
2. The legislature should provide funding for this tracking system so that it may be put in place and not become an unfunded mandate.
3. The state should investigate what factors are contributing to the differences in the prevalence rates of asthma among the different socioeconomic groups in Connecticut.
4. The state should target resources to those areas in the state that are shown to be the most heavily impacted.

RECOMMENDED MODEL FOR A TRACKING SYSTEM

1. Data should be collected using methods similar to those used in this study. The reasoning behind this is that, for most reportable diseases in Connecticut, it is laboratories that provide the data. Since asthma is not diagnosed by laboratory tests, a different system of tracking needs to be developed. Because school nurses can readily provide asthma prevalence data for school-age children, it makes sense to use them as the bases for the asthma tracking. Collectively, school nurses can provide statewide student asthma data.
2. Although a school-based system will not include data regarding the prevalence of asthma among the adult population, it will highlight changes in the prevalence of asthma among school age children. Data regarding trends in the prevalence of asthma among school age children will give the state an indication of the overall asthma trends and will also provide the state with sufficient information to make decisions regarding budget and resource allocation.
3. School-based asthma data collected by school nurses should be submitted to the: (a) local board of education, (b) local health department, (c) State Department of Education, and (d) State Department of Public Health. These reports should be submitted annually , preferably by the end of April.