

## For Immediate Release

# The Asthma Quality Improvement Initiative Paves a Promising Road to Help Colorado Kids Breathe Easier

The Asthma Initiative is one of 17 projects nationwide to earn the American Board of Pediatrics Approval

### Release Summary

Colorado's Asthma Quality Improvement Initiative fosters collaboration across the healthcare continuum.

In two years, more than 4,500 patients have been enrolled in the registry, and over 65 local physicians now have the infrastructure and resources to provide asthma patients with guideline-based care.

Initiative earns prestigious American Board of Pediatrics approval, and group is set to expand the program to address other chronic conditions in 2010.

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Asthma is the leading cause of pediatric hospitalization and school absences due to its chronic nature, and an estimated \$14 billion annual costs to employers and health plans nationwide. Despite readily available national asthma care guidelines, compliance among physicians is low partly due to a lack of familiarity with the guidelines, limited time with patients, and a lack of consensus on which guidelines are most beneficial to patients. In April 2007, **Physician Health Partners** (PHP), and Colorado Pediatric Partners (CPP) partnered with The Children's Hospital in Denver (TCH), and Colorado Allergy and Asthma Centers (CAAC) to address this challenge by developing the Asthma Quality Improvement Initiative to foster collaboration across the healthcare continuum. In two years, this initiative has already enrolled more than 4,500 patients in the web-based, HIPPA-compliant Patient Care Registry,

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and equipped more than 65 CPP physicians in the greater Denver metro area with the infrastructure and resources to provide asthma patients with guideline-compliant care.

This month, the American Board of Pediatrics (ABP) approved The Asthma Quality Improvement Initiative, giving participating CPP physicians credit towards their Part 4 (Performance in Practice) Maintenance of Certification (MOC). Through this recognition, CPP becomes one of 11 organizations around the country, and the only Independent Physician Association (IPA) in Colorado, whose quality improvement work is recognized as part of the ABP MOC requirements. The Asthma Quality Improvement Initiative is one of 17 projects in the country recognized by the ABP.

Initial analysis has already demonstrated a series of encouraging milestones, including:

- Reduction in missed days of work for parents, and missed days of school for kids.
- Improvements in caregiver confidence in managing asthma.
- Decreased ER visits and hospitalizations for high risk patients.

## Anatomy of the Asthma Initiative

A collaborative effort by all four groups, The Asthma Quality Improvement Initiative incorporates a structured clinical educational program, a structured process improvement and practice redesign curriculum, and a registry-based tracking system to monitor patient care.

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## Clinical Educational Program

One-on-one clinical education workshops to discuss guidelines, conduct device training, and develop communication standards and referral processes with participating specialists.

## Practice Redesign and Improvement

A quality improvement coach trains the physicians on the Chronic Care Model, and works with the practice to determine how the initiative will be implemented in their office, including incorporating the registry, and creating better workflow steps to eliminate inefficiencies.

## Patient Care Registry

Adopt decision support tools, including a web-based asthma registry, to improve guideline compliance, and track key clinical measures by patient provider, practice, and across the CPP IPA.

“The Asthma initiative provides a focused and consistent approach to each child with asthma,” said Dan Feiten, MD at Greenwood

Pediatrics. “The asthma initiative has improved my ability to take better care of my patients by allowing for more focused intervention for patients with severe symptoms. Easy access to clinical guidelines and protocols for these patients is critical, and the asthma initiative makes that possible.”

## Goals with Kids in Mind

The program aims to improve physician knowledge and compliance with national asthma guidelines across more than 65 CPP physicians at 18 pediatric practices, and to improve the overall care delivered to approximately 6,000 pediatric patients with asthma served by this group of physicians. The measures below were selected to determine the appropriate level of intervention and care for kids to improve their quality of life: keeping them sleeping, learning, and playing; and their parents working and confident that their child’s asthma is under control:

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Severity assessment – percentage of asthma patients with symptom assessment in the past 12 months.

Controller medications – percentage of patients with persistent asthma with appropriate pharmacological therapy.

Influenza – percentage of patients with asthma who received an influenza vaccination during the current or previous flu season.

Action plan – percentage of asthma patients with a documented action plan in past 12 months.

Looking ahead, CPP, PHP, and TCH will continue to support the program in an effort to improve the care provided to patients with asthma. The initiative will expand in 2010 to address other chronic conditions, and will focus on establishing evidence-based guidelines that promote greater coordination of care between hospitals, specialists, and primary care providers. Another equally important

goal is to create self-management tools to involve the patient in the coordination of their care. For more information, please visit [www.phpmcs.com](http://www.phpmcs.com), or call 303.605.1554.

Founded in 1996, **Physician Health Partners** (PHP) is a management services organization that believes physicians and other providers have the capability and responsibility to drive high quality, cost-effective healthcare for patients.

Our innovative services create solutions for the healthcare market by delivering performance tools and expertise to improve healthcare quality, reduce overall system costs, and increase the clients' business success. Our current customers include adult IPAs, pediatric IPAs, and self-funded government contracts.

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## About CPP

Colorado Pediatric Partners, LLC (CPP) is a pediatric multi-specialty Independent Physician Association (IPA) comprised of pediatricians and pediatric specialist physicians. These physicians are located throughout the greater Denver metro area. This IPA has been in existence since 2001.

## About The Children's Hospital

The Children's Hospital (Denver) has been ranked for more than a decade as one of the best children's hospitals nationally in U.S. News & World Report, and as the consistent choice eight years in a row by area physicians for the care of their loved ones. Founded in 1908, The Children's Hospital is a private, not-for-profit pediatric healthcare network dedicated 100 percent to caring for kids. With 1,130 pediatric specialists, and more than 2,300 full-time employees, Children's is home to a number of nationally and internationally recognized medical programs.

## About Colorado Allergy and Asthma Centers, PC

Colorado Allergy and Asthma Clinic merged with Allergy Respiratory Institute (ARI) to create Colorado Allergy and Asthma Centers, PC (CAAC). CAAC currently serves over 30,000 allergy and asthma patients, and has nine physicians, ten physician assistants, and ten locations statewide. All physicians are board certified allergists. CAAC is dedicated to the delivery of personalized, quality care by putting the patient first, and they accomplish this by managing health, treating disease, and fostering education through research and community involvement.



# Contact Information

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