

Editor: Dr Mark Levy

Editorial Board:

Dr Chris Griffiths

Dr John Haughney

Dr Robert McKinley

Dr Paul Stephenson

Statistical Adviser:

Professor Peter Kelly

International Editorial

Advisers:

Professor Onno van Schayck

Professor James Reid

Asthma in General Practice is published on behalf of the General Practitioners In Asthma Group (GPIAG) by:

Strategic Medical Publishing
Action International House
Crabtree Office Village
Eversley Way, Egham
Surrey TW20 8RY

The GPIAG is independent of any commercial company. However, it does receive an educational grant from Allen & Hanburys Ltd to finance the group Secretariat, Annual Scientific Meeting, Research Unit and this journal.

ISSN 0968-039X

Journals Manager:

Jane Mortlock

Research Editor:

Christine Drewienkiewicz

The views expressed in this journal are not necessarily those of the General Practitioners In Asthma Group, the publisher or Allen & Hanburys Ltd.

Editorial decisions are independent of commercial restraints.

© GPIAG Committee. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission of the GPIAG Committee.

Correspondence concerning the journal should be addressed to the Editor.

This journal is sent to members of the GPIAG, UK primary care faculties and NHS postgraduate centres. It is available for subscription from the publishers Strategic Medical Publishing Ltd.

For further information about the General Practitioners In Asthma Group, write to:

GPIAG Secretariat, The Medical Marketing Interface
Bath Brewery, Toll Bridge Road, Bath BA1 7DE.

General Practice and Primary Care Group

A new scientific group is set up by the European Respiratory Society

CP van Schayck and ML Levy

Irish, English and Dutch GPs and researchers working in the field of asthma and COPD in primary care, participated in a joint symposium at the 1998 WONCA Conference, in Dublin. During this meeting, we took the initiative to set up a European scientific group of primary care within the European Respiratory Society (ERS). This was supported by the Executive Committee of the ERS and subsequently unanimously approved by the Clinical Assembly business meeting in Madrid in October. This was accepted at the post-congress Executive Committee Meeting. Our scientific group is called the General Practice and Primary Care Group (GPPCG) and we are very proud to be the first officers of this group (Chairman and Secretary).

This initiative has been strongly supported by a recent plan for cooperation between the European Society of General Practice/Family Medicine (ESGP/FM) and the ERS.

WHY THIS GROUP?

The need for cooperation and consultation on respiratory primary care research within European countries is growing. Research activities and education on asthma and COPD in general practice have grown enormously in the last few decades.

THE AIMS OF THE GPPCG

The GPPCG aims to address the needs of health professionals who work within the primary care sector caring for people with respiratory disease, with a special focus on asthma and COPD.

We will also endeavour to improve the management of respiratory disease across the primary/secondary care interface. This will include sharing research information and the practical application of evidence-based medicine through lessons learned in primary and secondary care. The main difference between primary and secondary care is that primary care physicians see patients at a very early stage of their disease. In most European countries primary care physicians are the first, as well as the ongoing, point of contact with the patients. Therefore, the focus of the GPPCG will be the early diagnosis and treatment of asthma and COPD and how to avoid the development of these diseases (primary and secondary prevention).

MAIN FIELDS OF RESEARCH INTEREST

There are several fields of interest to the GPPCG. The following list describes some areas of particular importance.

- Acute management of respiratory diseases in the pre-hospital setting.
- Coping with respiratory diseases in their early stages of development. Early intervention and prevention policies in these conditions.
- Addressing epidemiological issues related to

record-keeping in primary care. Development of useful primary care data sets over long periods of time (longitudinal morbidity registration in large primary care networks).

- Addressing training needs for managing respiratory disease in primary care (diagnosis, treatment, follow-up, referral to secondary care).
- Different models of providing care (disease management, managed care).
- Promoting international research by generating new multinational research that applies evidence-based medicine to different primary healthcare situations in Europe.

OUR PLANS

We will be involved in the selection process for papers for the forthcoming ERS conference in Florence (August 2000) and we hope to organise a symposium within this meeting. However, we will definitely be involved in the planning phase for symposia for the following years.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

First join the ERS! Membership of the GPPCG is open to ERS members – anyone interested in one of the fields mentioned above. We will have our yearly meetings and symposia during the ERS conference. We particularly invite primary care researchers, nurses and other healthcare providers working in the field of asthma, COPD and other respiratory diseases in primary care to join. By becoming a member of the European Respiratory Society one can choose to participate in this (or another) scientific group. Therefore, we would encourage everybody (certainly members of the General Practitioners In Asthma Group) to become a member of the ERS and so to join this scientific group. If you would like to have more information please do not hesitate to contact one of us for details. Alternatively, contact the ERS office directly.

For more information on the GPPCG, please contact any of the addresses below:

Onno van Schayck, Chairman GPPCG
Professor of Preventive Medicine
Maastricht University, Department of General Practice, PO Box 616, 6200 MD, Maastricht, The Netherlands

Email: onno.vanschayck@hag.unimaas.nl

Mark Levy, Secretary GPPCG
Editor, *Asthma in General Practice*
The Kenton Bridge Medical Centre, 155–175
Kenton Road, Kenton, Middlesex HA3 0YX, UK
Email: marklevy@gpiag-asthma.org

ERS Lausanne Office
1 Bd de Grancy, CH-1006, Lausanne
Email: nathalie.bridel@ersnet.org