

Sir

Dr Stephenson is "not completely impressed" with the draft of the forthcoming SIGN/BTS UK Asthma Guidelines. His view, at this stage in the development process, is not unreasonable.

The SIGN/BTS decision to circulate the draft is both courageous and unprecedented and reflects the transparent methodology behind this project.

A wide range of comments have been received from a wide range of individuals and organisations and these have now been incorporated where appropriate. It is right for commentators to highlight possible gaps in the evidence base, as Dr Stephenson has done. However, statements on management issues are not necessarily straightforward; "how does this therapy fit into the guidelines?" is no longer a reasonable question. Rather, the guidelines will develop to address management issues as the evidence underpinning them comes to peer review publication.

Yours sincerely

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