



GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR SCHOOLS: **Funding and Sustaining an Emergency Stock Asthma Medication Program**

Asthma remains one of the most common chronic diseases among children, significantly impacting school attendance and student performance. Implementing a stock asthma medication program is a significant step toward safeguarding the health of students with asthma. However, schools often face several barriers, including limited funding, regulatory hurdles, and logistical challenges.

In 2023, the American Lung Association convened experts in asthma management in schools to discuss barriers to implement stock asthma medication programs. Below are a few key strategies identified by the group to fund and sustain an emergency stock asthma medication program.

Step 1: Understanding Legal Requirements

- ❑ Determine if your state law allows or requires schools to stock asthma medications such as albuterol.
- ❑ Review local regulations and policies, including school policies that might affect program implementation.

Step 2: Planning and Funding

- ❑ Estimate the costs associated with stocking asthma medications and delivery devices. On average, this may be around \$85 per school. This means that the school purchases one inhaler and a box of disposable valved holding chambers for each student to use.
- ❑ Identify potential funding sources (e.g., school district budgets, state appropriations, grants from health foundations or asthma coalitions, private donations or partnerships with healthcare organizations, nonprofit hospital community benefit requirements).
- ❑ Develop a proposal outlining the need, costs, and benefits of the program to secure funding.

Step 3: Stakeholder Engagement

- ❑ Identify and engage stakeholders who can support funding and implementation (i.e., school health officials, local healthcare providers, hospitals, State Departments of Health and Education, asthma coalitions, non-profits, parents and parent-teacher associations).
- ❑ Use tools such as stakeholder lists, cost worksheets, and template letters to facilitate engagement.

Step 4: Implementation

- ❑ Appoint responsible personnel, typically school nurses, to manage the program.
- ❑ Procure and maintain an adequate supply of stock asthma medications and delivery devices.



- Ensure secure, appropriate storage and easy access to the medication within the school.

Step 5: Training and Protocols

- Develop and disseminate training materials for school staff on recognizing asthma symptoms, properly administering asthma medication, and responding to asthma emergencies.
- Establish protocols for medication administration, documentation, and notification of parents and healthcare providers.

Step 6: Data Collection and Reporting

- Implement a system for tracking program usage and outcomes.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of the program and any areas for improvement.
- Report outcomes to stakeholders to ensure ongoing support and funding.

Step 7: Dissemination and Advocacy

- Promote the program through various channels (i.e., school nurse conferences, newsletters, school superintendent or administrator conferences/meetings, email updates to school staff and stakeholders, local presentations and meetings with health departments and educational boards)
- Advocate for policies and funding at the state or national level to support widespread adoption of stock asthma medication programs.

EVALUTATION METRICS

1. NUMBER OF TIMES STOCK MEDICATION IS USED
2. REDUCTION IN 911 CALLS OR ER VISITS FOR ASTHMA
3. DECREASE IN ASTHMA-RELATED ABSENCES
4. STAFF CONFIDENCE IN MANAGING ASTHMA EMERGENCIES (VIA SURVEYS)
5. PARENT SATISFACTION WITH THE PROGRAM

Examples of Successful Implementation

States like Arizona, Illinois, and Missouri have effectively allocated funding and resources to support asthma medication programs in schools.



The Stock Inhaler for Schools Program in Arizona was developed after the passage of HB 2208, which permits schools to procure and administer albuterol sulfate to students in respiratory distress. The program is currently supported by a grant from Mercy C.A.R.E.S., which funds the program for the 2023-2025 school years, making it free for participating schools. The program includes providing schools with albuterol inhalers, disposable spacers, and online training for school personnel. This initiative has



successfully enrolled around 650 schools across the state, emphasizing low-cost implementation and ease of access.¹



The state of Illinois has a robust program called RESCUE Illinois Schools, which was established following the enactment of the asthma medication law, Public Act 100-0726. This program allows schools to stock "undesigned" asthma medications, meaning they can be used for any student experiencing respiratory distress, not just those with a prescription. The program is funded through a \$2.4 million appropriation in the state budget, and a standing order from the Illinois Department of Public Health streamlines the process for schools to obtain and administer these medications. This program has been implemented in over 80% of Illinois public schools, significantly reducing the number of students who need to be sent home or to the hospital due to asthma attacks.²



Missouri sustains its emergency stock asthma medication program through state-level partnerships, training and resources. The Missouri Asthma Prevention and Control Program (MAPCP), in collaboration with the Department of Health and Senior Services, provides extensive training for school nurses on administering asthma rescue medications. The program, part of the Childhood Asthma Linkages in Missouri (CALM) project, has shown significant improvements in asthma control among students, leading to cost savings and better health outcomes. This program is supported by ongoing state public health efforts and resources from various partnerships.³

Resources

- Visit the [Asthma Medication in Schools](#) page on Lung.org to find information about your state law and access resources.
- Participate in the American Lung Association's [Stock Asthma Medication: Implementation Guidance for Schools](#) course.
- Download the American Lung Association's [Stock Asthma Medication Toolkit](#) or the [AAAAI Stock Inhaler Toolkit for Schools](#).

For more information on management asthma in schools, please visit [Lung.org/asthma-in-schools](https://lung.org/asthma-in-schools).

This document serves as a starting point for implementing a Stock Asthma Medication Program in schools. It is intended to provide general guidance and should not be considered as legal or medical advice. Always consult with healthcare professionals and legal advisors to tailor the program to your school's specific needs and ensure compliance with local and state regulations.

¹ Arizona Asthma Coalition. Available at: <https://azasthma.org/school-stock-inhaler>.

² Illinois Department of Public Health. Illinois Schools Authorized to Keep Medication on Hand to Treat Students' Respiratory Distress. March 2024. Available at: <https://dph.illinois.gov/resource-center/news/2024/march/2024-03-20---illinois-schools-authorized-to-keep-medication-on-h.html>

³ CDC National Asthma Control Program. Asthma Cooperative Agreement Partner Profile – Missouri. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/national-asthma-control-program/php/partners/missouri.html>.