Our purpose

Together, we seek a cure for asthma.
Together, we strive to improve the quality of life for people with asthma by providing accessible, affordable and evidence-based services.
Together, we achieve our vision by raising funds and spending funds ethically and efficiently.

Our values

**Pioneering** – Asthma Foundations have championed the asthma cause for over 50 years, urging the medical community to take asthma seriously. Today we remain pioneers in programs that assist people with asthma.

**Tenacious** – At present there is no known cure for asthma. Asthma Australia will be tenacious in our pursuit of a cure and in finding new ways to help people with asthma live well.

**Progressive** – Asthma Australia wants to be the world’s leading asthma organisation. Not resting on our laurels, we will deliver programs, systems, policies and practices so they are the world’s best practice.

**Transforming** – Every day Asthma Foundations transform the lives of people with asthma. With your support we have transformed the careers of many asthma researchers, some of whom are now global leaders.

**Liberating** – We aspire to liberate every person who has asthma so that their life can be enjoyed.

**Reflective** – We actively listen to the community and we respond accordingly. We value feedback. We plan – act – reflect to aid continuous improvement.

Recognise Health

Asthma Australia is a proud member of the Recognise Health initiative of the Lowitja Institute which promotes understanding of the important link between health and wellbeing and constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We call on all Australians to support recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution. We look forward to a time when all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can fully participate in all that Australia has to offer, enjoying respect for our country’s first cultures and leadership, and the dignity and benefits of long healthy lives. Australia’s First Peoples continue to die far earlier and experience a higher burden of disease and disability than other Australians. This is the result of long-term economic disadvantage and social exclusion, among other factors. Constitutional recognition would provide a strong foundation for working together towards better health and social wellbeing in the hearts, minds and lives of all Australians.

Asthma Australia is amongst 125 leading non-government health organisations across the Australian health system that have signed this statement in support of constitutional change.
Ten facts about asthma and our work

1. 2.3 million Australians have asthma. The Air Supply Survey found 28.6% of people with asthma surveyed required urgent health care for asthma. 3.5% of survey respondents were admitted to hospital overnight on one or more occasions.

2. The Air Supply Survey also told us that ownership of Asthma Action Plans is strikingly low (30% across all age groups), despite their active promotion as best practice in Australia for over 20 years. Action Plan ownership is a key part of every interaction we undertake with people with asthma.

3. The same study noted of those whose asthma was poorly controlled, 44% had an urgent GP visit for asthma in comparison with 13% for those whose asthma was well controlled. Getting control of your asthma is vital. We work with GPs and health professionals to improve the patient / health professional dynamic.

4. Our community programs assist people to control their asthma. Independent evaluation of Asthma Australia’s Community Support Program found 61.6% people with poorly controlled asthma who were referred to Asthma Foundation services showed an improvement in asthma control with a mean improvement of 5 in their Asthma Control Score Test. A stunning outcome.

5. Asthma Australia’s Asthma Child and Adolescent Program provided asthma training in 2,300 schools and other education settings nationally, meaning 38,000 staff were trained to manage an asthma flare-up thereby reducing the risk of poor health outcomes for students with asthma. In new business, 8,600 students in schools received asthma education and 40,000+ parents visited Asthma Australia’s website to learn more.

6. Asthma Australia launched the National Young People with Asthma Survey highlighting that 62% of respondents aged 15-25 years have poorly controlled asthma and 52% of young people are likely to have a mild to severe mental health issue. This has prompted a national conversation on asthma, young people and mental health going forward.

7. Over $2.6 million in new funding was secured for asthma programs and research including our the largest personal gift of $1 million over three years from the Ernest Heine family; $100,000 corporate donation from new principal asthma research partner Hudsons Coffee and a $670,000 bequest from the late Maxwell Graham and his family.

8. Asthma Australia, on behalf of all Asthma Foundations, supports ten asthma research projects and eight PhD students in eight universities and research institutions. Their work has gone on to attract a further $5.5 million in additional government funding.

9. In the last three years the National Asthma Research Program has received 102 funding submissions seeking over $7.5 million in support but has only been able to provide $1.35 million dollars to fourteen projects.

10. Our digital footprint showed record growth last year with 1,056,372 unique visits (25% increase in traffic) making it Australia’s most visited asthma website. People with asthma trust us.
About Asthma Australia Inc

Asthma Australia is the nation’s most trusted asthma organisation supporting people with asthma. Asthma Foundations (our organisation members) are committed to working collaboratively to improve the quality of life for people with asthma, reduce the burden of disease, and ensure that people and communities with limited access have priority of access to our services. Asthma Australia supports Foundations to achieve their outcomes by facilitating cooperation and promoting best practice.

Asthma Foundations have significant reach into the community and are the largest provider of health professional and community sector worker (early learning, primary and secondary school) asthma training in Australia. Guided by Asthma Australia’s training and education framework and quality assurance program, Asthma Foundations offer asthma first aid and asthma educator and management training to over 4,000 health professionals and 36,000 community workers annually.

Asthma remains a national health priority recognised by the Australian and State / Territory Governments. Asthma as a chronic disease requires considerable investment in the pursuit of a cure and to manage and treat the disease.

Asthma Australia also advocates liberating people from the burden of the disease and we champion a range of issues on behalf of people with asthma such as air quality; tobacco legislation; the cost of medications; health care reform and increased investment in asthma research.

For over 50 years Asthma Foundations have been contributing resources to global efforts to find a cure for asthma, in addition to supporting people with asthma with evidenced-based, consumer-focused, accessible and appropriate services. Last year nearly 325,000 Australians with asthma and their caregivers were assisted.

You can learn more about our organisation at asthmaustralia.org.au
Asthma Australia has continued to reform both its governance and service delivery whilst maintaining a very strong commitment to excellence in supporting Asthma Foundations to reduce the burden of disease for people with asthma.

Throughout the last twelve months the Board and representatives of each State and Territory Asthma Foundation (our members) have progressed discussions on a new model of governance that I hope will more clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities within national and state jurisdictions. Critically, these discussions have also expanded to include the National Asthma Council of Australia (NAC) given the important role our sister asthma organisation plays in empowering health professionals to support people with asthma.

Perhaps testimony to the team’s professionalism and the important role Asthma Australia plays was the announcement by then Minister for Health, the Hon. Peter Dutton, appointing Asthma Australia and the National Asthma Council to lead the design and development of the 2016-2020 National Asthma Strategy. I am pleased to report that this document is now in its penultimate draft following extensive consultation with people with asthma, health professional groups, and researchers and associated lung health organisations. The team look forward to working with the National Asthma Council and Asthma Foundations to implement the strategy, as the blueprint for our activities over the coming years.

The 2015 ‘Connecting Asthma Care Conference’, staged in Brisbane in May 2015, is a powerful reminder that proactive and positive collaboration between Asthma Foundations and Asthma Australia can result in a first class outcome. No doubt the 2015 Conference was the most successful yet, in no small part due to the combined efforts of Asthma Australia and host partner the Asthma Foundation of Queensland. Whilst the conference is reported on elsewhere in this report I observed outstanding leadership by the national team, not only in staging the event but also in shaping the debate on how best to support people with asthma now and into the future.

A key area of national priority area is asthma and linked conditions research. As we enter the third year of the National Asthma Research Program I am delighted to report a record year of research funding. New investment by donors and supporters coupled with the continuing support of Asthma
Foundations sees the program continuing to fund innovative and novel research projects that contribute to national and international efforts to find a cure and develop new ways of treating the disease.

It would be remiss if I did not welcome and thank Hudsons Coffee who joined as principle partner of Asthma Australia. Hudsons Coffee is the first major corporate partner to invest in and promote Asthma Australia and asthma research more broadly.

Developing and funding resources and programs to support Asthma Foundations is another core priority with our return on investment to members growing again. Empowering excellence in local service delivery is an important facet of national activity, whether this is evaluating the effectiveness and impact of services such as the Asthma Management Program or securing funding for local resources and/or services such as Asthma Update or the soon to be released website.

Sponsorship continues to grow and exceed our five-year forecast with a concerted focus on corporate partners, private ancillary funds and major donors. Throughout the year the Asthma Australia team secured our organisations largest ever gift, $1 million, over three years by the Ernest Heine family. This funding will be provided to Asthma Foundations to implement a world leading best practice tele-health service to support people with poorly controlled asthma.

Again, it is important to note that Asthma Australia has worked quietly in the background to secure funding for Asthma Foundations to enhance their 1800 ASTHMA service. This once again demonstrates the power of a co-operative approach in the fundraising, one that will lead to improved outcomes for Foundations and people with asthma alike.

Asthma Australia continues to model best practice with a new Policy Manual adopted by the Board; an updated risk management approach approved; a new Digital Services Strategy commenced; and approval granted by the Australian Skills Quality Authority for two new qualifications for health professionals and asthma first aiders granted. The later strategy is the culmination of four years of work by current and past CEOs and provides a framework for unification of our training and education programs nationally.

Under the leadership of our outstanding CEO, Mark Brooke the Asthma Australia team has again achieved great things and I gratefully applaud and congratulate them.

I am confident that the unwavering commitment of the national team and Board to deliver excellence will continue.

Terry Evans
Chairperson

Giving back to the asthma community

Mr Adam Summerville CEO Emirates Leisure Retail, Mr Terry Evans, Chairperson Asthma Australia, Mr Andrew Day, Chairperson Emirates Leisure Retail and Mr Mark Brooke CEO Asthma Australia.
2014 / 2015 Highlights Snapshot

Programs

- The Ernest Heine Family donate $1 million over three years to the 1800 Asthma Help Line and enhance this program so that it is a world’s best practice model for chronic disease management in tele-health
- The Community Support Program demonstrates via independent evaluation a positive impact on asthma control for people using the service
- Asthma On-line, Asthma Australia’s e-learning portal was launched as part of our digital strategy achieving its target of 30% of education staff engaged through this new service
- The inaugural Young People with Asthma Survey was launched in collaboration with the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre highlighting issues of poor asthma control and concerns regarding young people with asthma and their mental health
- A new children’s website, Asthma Kids, was launched to provide a more user-friendly and age appropriate experience for children with asthma
- The Lung Story – a new resource for people with poor literacy was launched as resource to support Asthma Foundations’ work with hard to reach communities

Advocacy

- In partnership with the National Asthma Council of Australia, Asthma Australia successfully lobbied the Australian Government to fund the development of the 2016-2020 National Asthma Strategy
- After four years of work and considerable financial investment, Asthma Australia secured core competencies for asthma health professionals through the Australia Skills Quality Authority and will soon deliver a Certificate IV in Asthma Education in the Community and a Graduate Certificate for Asthma Management.

Research

- A total of 13 research projects are now supported in five States and Territories with $1.15M in funding committed or 65% of our five-year target. Independent funding continues to grow to support Asthma Foundation contributions
- A new Early Career Fellowship in Asthma Research was announced funded by principle partner Hudsons Coffee
- Mr Maxwell Graham leaves a bequest of $700,000 for asthma research

Raising awareness of the asthma cause

- The Connecting Asthma Care Conference was the most successful in our organisation’s history achieving our goal of sparking a debate on the management of asthma in Australia
- Our media hits increased 30 fold as a result of the conference, release of the Young People with Asthma Survey and a more proactive approach
- Asthma Australia’s website remains the most trusted and visited in Australia with 1.05M unique visits, a 24% increase on the previous year
- Asthma Australia’s social media presence continues to grow with over 4.5M impressions via Facebook and Twitter
- In a first, our patient resources were released in May 2015 as downloadable e-books with immediate impact

Supporting best practice

- A best practice framework for Asthma Foundations has been researched and is now being implemented
- A complete revamp and review of policy was completed with a new Policy and Procedure Manual adopted
- Independent program evaluation to measure impact continues with a quality assurance program put in place for key activities including ACAP, CSP and 1800 Asthma
It is with great pleasure that I present the CEO’s 2015 Annual Report.

Asthma Australia’s Chairperson Mr Terry Evans has touched on the ongoing deliberations of Asthma Foundations and the National Asthma Council of Australia about future model of corporate governance. In a modern Australia two charity truisms are well known: competition for funding is fierce and donors demand outstanding and demonstrable value for money from the charity they support.

This report outlines several outstanding examples of how a strong well-resourced national team can deliver benefits to Asthma Foundations and people with asthma more broadly. I have focused on a number of strategies that demonstrate our value. However the scope of our work is much broader and much of the work that happens behind the scenes goes largely unnoticed.

I encourage you to read further to learn more about how Asthma Australia supports all Australians with asthma.

Maintaining asthma as a national health priority

Australia has not had a National Asthma Strategy since 2009. Consistent with our national advocacy program, Asthma Australia working in close association with the National Asthma Council (NAC), called for a national approach to asthma management in primary and tertiary health care settings. I am delighted that the former Health Minister, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, agreed to fund the development of a new National Asthma Strategy. With the ongoing and enthusiastic support of current Health Minister, the Hon. Sussan Ley MP, and the Parliamentary Friends of Asthma, Asthma Australia and the NAC have undertaken considerable consultation to shape a new and bold strategy which is grounded in evidence and contains much needed reform at many levels. The Strategy is in its penultimate draft following recent release for public comment.

Over the coming year we hope that Health Ministers Advisory Council will consider and adopt the Strategy for implementation across Australia – the 2.3 million Australians living with asthma deserve nothing less. The challenge for Asthma Australia, the NAC and Asthma Foundations is to align our services with the strategy to ensure a strong synergy between the framework and what is happening on the ground.

Increasing investment in core activities

As I have already remarked, competition for funding, either government or philanthropic, is fierce and remains an ongoing challenge.

Asthma Australia managed government and corporate funding negotiations at national level to secure investment for agreed Asthma Foundation priorities and projects. Pleasing progress has been made in broadening our revenue base, retaining existing funding partners and attracting new partners / investment.

For the first time in over a decade membership levies for Asthma Foundations reduced by 40%, and funds flowing back to Foundations, outside of our traditional commonwealth grants, have increased. Nonetheless the continuing strength of our balance sheet is pleasing, as our 2015 financial report will attest.
Asthma Australia's digital strategy

In this digital age people with asthma, donors and supporters are no longer wedded to service delivery limited or defined by state or territory borders. For example 4,600 teachers from every State and Territory completed online asthma first aid training reducing the cost of implementation a hundred fold whilst preserving the stated program objectives – something not possible just two years ago. 1.25 million people visited our website, an increase of 25% on the prior year.

With the cooperation of Asthma Foundations, Asthma Australia has continued to press forward with a comprehensive digital strategy that now includes: a commitment to a single united Asthma Australia / Asthma Foundations website (to go live in December 2015); consumer asthma resources available on line as e-books (launched May 2014); investment in new technologies for health professionals to improve how they work alongside their asthma patients (a new asthma patient teaching tool now in development); and significant investment in our Asthma On-Line training portal for health professionals, first aiders and other community sector workers.

In 2014/2015 Asthma Australia through its digital strategy engaged with over 4.5 million people.

2015 Connecting Asthma Care Conference

The 2015 Conference has been described as the most successful in our organisation’s history largely due to the incredible collaboration between Asthma Australia and the Asthma Foundation of Queensland, the conference host. Whilst all performance indicators were exceeded including financial return; delegate registrations; sponsorship and exhibitor targets; perhaps the most tangible sign of organisational maturity was the attendance and participation of the National Asthma Council of Australia and the Asthma Foundation of New Zealand who joined Asthma Australia as presenting partners for the first time.

The conference is featured elsewhere in this report. However the national office is indebted to our major partners and supporters. Profit from the Conference was used to subsidise the cost of attendance for 40+ Asthma Foundation staff and reduce membership levies overall.
Defining best practice and aiming higher

In 2012, Asthma Australia and Asthma Foundations completed the inaugural national staff engagement survey with a view to benchmarking our human resource strategies. It was therefore pleasing that over the last 6 months the Asthma Australia Board has asked CEOs to develop the Asthma Foundation Best Practice Framework. This work stems from the continuing roles and responsibilities discussions and a root to branch analysis that identified six critical success factors for Asthma Foundations’ success. The stated aim is to drive organisational performance so that each member Asthma Foundation is financially sustainable and delivers increased impact in the community.

Work has already commenced on:

- Continuing best practice service delivery, informed by independent evaluation, for the Asthma Management Program in a cycle of plan – act – review which is demonstrating the impact these services are making in reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma;
- A single nationally consistent best practice website and digital strategy (excluding social media at this stage) was investigated and is now being commissioned;
- A best practice model in service delivery for the 1800 Asthma Help Line was investigated and will see standard operating procedures applied nationally for the first time in 2016;
- A standard national chart of accounts and best practice financial ratios to measure the financial health and sustainability of Asthma Foundations was agreed.

Whatever the next 12 months holds it is clear that a role for a dynamic, innovative, patient-centred team that represents Asthma Foundations at the national level is important.

Thank you

Asthma Australia is well supported by a group of hard working independent Board Members who serve people with asthma on the Board and Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee, health professionals who contribute the National Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee and world leading researchers who volunteer their time and expertise as part of the Asthma Australia National Research Council. We are truly indebted to you for your support, goodwill and expertise and thank you for your time.

My team would like to acknowledge Mr Terry Evans, our independent Chairperson, who freely gives his time and considerable expertise to support the movement. Terry’s wisdom and corporate governance experience is invaluable and his leadership much appreciated.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the national team who quietly achieve so much often in difficult circumstances. Each has a professionally challenging role in navigating the various operating requirements of eight Asthma Foundations whilst balancing engagement with external stakeholders, something they do very professionally and consistent with our values.

My thanks to our program team Ms Paula Murray and Mr Tony Healy, Program Managers for the Asthma Management Program; Ms Lisa Kristan - National Partnership and Corporate Engagement Manager; Ms Angela Gregory – Financial Controller; Ms Allison Willis, Program Manager Health Professional Education and Training; Mr Chris Hoare – National Online Manager; Ms Jo Weismann – National Brand Manager; Ms Alicia Goodwin, Project Officer (E resources); Mr Brett Taylor (Project Officer – NPS Partnership) and most importantly Ms Priscilla Fisher, my hard working and trusted Executive Assistant.

Mark Brooke
Chief Executive Officer
# 2013 - 2018 Corporate Plan

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<td>Programs and Partnerships</td>
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<td>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes for people with asthma. People with poorly controlled asthma manage the disease to maintain optimal health.</td>
<td>We strive to find a cure by 2030. Reduced loss of life to poorly-controlled asthma.</td>
<td>Asthma and lung health remains a national health priority. Increased investment and funding for asthma and linked conditions research and services.</td>
<td>We are an employer of choice. We partner with and or employ leaders in their field.</td>
<td>Our organisation service reach continues to grow. Asthma Foundations are self sufficient and bequests support research and services.</td>
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<td>Measures of success</td>
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<td>Consistent with our 2020 Asthma Program National Plan we see increased impact. Service equity to hard-to-reach communities. Service reach. A ‘joined up’ approach between ourselves, primary and tertiary health care is promoted.</td>
<td>We measure impact through consistent short and longitudinal evaluation. Consistent data reported transparently and frequently. Return on investment for donors and funding bodies.</td>
<td>People with asthma and patients report improved quality of life and control. Our programs are accessible particularly to those most at risk. Primary and Tertiary Health Services seek us out and we are joined with them in service delivery.</td>
<td>Staff retention and engagement. Staff motivation and involvement.</td>
<td>Donor growth and retention including a major gifts campaign. Growth in our research corpus through the national investment strategy. Reduce waste and improved efficiency through cross-border cooperation. Improved uptake of technology for programs, workforce development, knowledge and innovation.</td>
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<td>Asthma Australia will achieve vision by</td>
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Contributing to the global effort to find a cure for asthma

For every dollar Asthma Australia has invested in asthma research projects they have attracted a further $23.00 in additional funding from government.

For over 50 years, Asthma Foundations aided by donor and corporate support have funded much needed asthma research, with each Foundation working locally with researchers to support people with asthma and their carers.

Australian researchers are internationally recognised for their excellence in the field – of which donors, our supporters and we can feel immensely proud. When someone elects to make a donation or bequest to asthma research, they are not only supporting important asthma research here in Australia but also to our global understanding of asthma, what causes it, how it can be prevented and how it should be treated.

Asthma Foundations have agreed to combine their resources and implement the National Asthma Research Trust Fund under the leadership of Asthma Australia. This has resulted in a combined funding opportunity contributing annually a minimum of $750,000 to clinical, basic science or population health research projects, strategic research priorities, as well as PhD Scholarships to promote emerging researchers in the field.

In this regard we invite researchers, clinicians and people with asthma, the business community, the general public, and our existing partners to work with us to build our National Research Program and our strategic goal of dispersing $1.5million per annum by 2018. At present $1.1M in research funding has been committed to 15 projects, scholarships and other grants.

Looking forward Asthma Australia has commissioned an independent review of the National Asthma Research Framework with the aim of developing a Research Framework to attract new investment and promote collaboration with other funding bodies and researchers alike.

The National Asthma Research Program currently supports seven clinical, basic science and population health research projects with a total of $930,000.00. These projects are:

- Dr Maria Sukkar  
  University of Technology Sydney  
  Investigation of the HMGB1-RAGE axis in airway wall remodelling in asthma

- Prof Stephen Stick  
  University of Western Australia  
  The asthmatic epithelium from childhood to adulthood

- Dr Rebekah Moles  
  University of Sydney  
  Evaluating the impact of staff education on asthma knowledge and first-aid skills performance in childcare centres and primary schools

- A/Prof Helen Reddel  
  Woolcock Institute of Medical Research  
  An investigation on the experiences and perceptions of people living with severe asthma

- Dr Caroline Lodge  
  University of Melbourne  
  The relationship between breast milk oligosaccharides and micro biome with asthma and lung function in children up to 18 years

- Dr Lorraine Smith  
  University of Sydney  
  Development and testing of a personalised goal setting self management app for adolescents with asthma

- Mr Simon Forsyth  
  University of Queensland  
  Understanding asthma related mortality in ex-prisoners
The National Asthma Research Program also believes strongly in supporting up and coming and new asthma and linked condition researchers. Many leading global researchers got their start with an Asthma Foundation scholarship or grant and we are proud to continue this tradition.

Recognising the importance of early career funding, Asthma Australia’s national team secured the support of Hudsons Coffee – principal partner of Asthma Australia. In an Australian first this outstanding corporate citizen will fund a dedicated early career fellowship in asthma research. The support of Hudsons Coffee is very generous and their extensive network of hospital, airport and community stores is helping spread the word about asthma to millions of customers each year.

An announcement on the inaugural Fellowship recipient will be made in November 2015.

The National Research Program is also proud to support several PhD Scholarships and travel grants valued at over $225,000.

Mr Matthew Morten  
University Newcastle – Hunter Medical Research Institute  
Investigating how better asthma management during pregnancy affects the antiviral host responses and reduces the risk for atopy and the degree of airways inflammation in offspring

Ms Meaghan Fitzpatrick  
University of Melbourne  
Investigating early life viral induced asthma

Ms Melissa Mei Yin Cheung  
University of Sydney  
The development, testing and evaluation of a patient support and education program to improve asthma control and medication adherence

Asthma Australia congratulates all grant recipients and scholarship holders and thanks the Asthma Foundations across Australia for their support.
The Community Support Program (CSP) works to directly support people with asthma and their carers. The program is in the second year of implementation, with a wide range of support options for people with asthma and their carers to access through Asthma Foundations.

Whilst still offering group educations sessions, CSP has worked closely with primary and tertiary health sites to establish strong referral pathways. Individual follow up and support has shown positive outcomes in assisting people to improve their asthma control. Consistent with the Board mandate to measure impact of our services, the independent evaluation being conducted through The George Institute has assisted in embedding the use of data and evaluation to continuously improve the program.

This year has seen a strong focus on the use of data to inform practice, including monitoring impact of education and support on people’s asthma control. People can access support services directly through attending education sessions, or through referral by their GP or health care professional. Individual support includes provision of education, goal setting and assessing Asthma Control. Individuals are followed up in 6 weekly intervals, generally by phone. With twelve months of data now collected, results look promising. Live Well education sessions continue to be delivered across the country, assisting people with recognising asthma, improving asthma symptom control, how to access support and keys to self-management. In this year 154 sessions were conducted, with 2095 people attending.

On average, people commencing individual support have an average of 14 points (which indicates poorly controlled asthma)

Our data shows that at the first follow up (6 weeks) 61.6% of participants improved their Asthma Control Score by 3 or more points.

The average improvement is 4.9 points, which means we are supporting people to move from poor control to well controlled asthma. Whilst numbers of participants are smaller, improvement in control is sustained at 12 weeks (average improvement 7.3)

Supporting people with asthma and low health literacy

2015 saw the launch of Asthma Australia’s The Lung Story, a low literacy, visual education tool that uses conversations to facilitate learning, asthma knowledge and skills. This tool is predominantly used with people with English as a second language, or where the use of an informal education tool is appropriate, for example in the prison setting.

Early evaluation indicates that 100% of attendees state that the Lung Story helped them learn, and 98% stating that they “now know more about asthma”.

Assisting Health Professionals to better partner with their patients

In addition to directly supporting the community, this program works with all levels of the health care sector through provision of education, resources and support. Helping Others Live Well asthma sessions have been delivered to over 2000 professional staff around the country.

Feedback collected at the sessions shows that participants are far more confident in managing asthma in their role as a result of the session, and will make changes to their practice; most commonly, educate people on what asthma is, teach Asthma First Aid steps and encourage people to start using a spacer.

Building referral pathways and a cycle of care

Asthma Foundations around the country are working with primary, tertiary and other health organisations to improve access to asthma care and education. Referral pathways between Foundations and health settings have been steadily established, with over 550 people being referred in this past year for further support. Working to integrate support services for people through their health care professional will be a significant focus in the year ahead.

In summary the Board are pleased that the second year of this funded period has seen strong service delivery across the country, with exciting early data showing the direct impact of supporting people to improve their asthma control, and embedding the use of data to improve the program practice.
The Asthma Child and Adolescent Program (ACAP) is supported by the Commonwealth Department of Health with two years of the three year program completed. ACAP is continuously evolving and now includes a range of targeted services for parents, children and young people in additional to traditional asthma first aid and risk management training and education for teachers and carers.

In 2014 Asthma Australia explored new ways of engaging with students in schools, parents of school aged children and young people aged 12-25 years old and applying this learning. In 2015 Asthma Foundations have now implemented a suite of strategies to reach these new target audiences.

Our work with staff in education settings has expanded somewhat also, enabling us to provide training in more types of Early Childhood Education and Care settings and in Tertiary settings (particularly trainees in teaching, child care, medicine, pharmacy and nursing).

Our collective capacity to engage with these audiences online has been significantly enhanced in this year.

The new ACAP online package, Asthma First Aid for School Staff, was released in September 2014.

Asthma Kids was released in April this year. Asthma Kids is a web-based activity for primary school aged students that uses video, multiple choice questions and interactive elements as users progress through Chester’s Asthma Trail, collecting blue balloons as they go. It can be done in classrooms and in the home.

A Facebook community page and a closed group for young people with asthma commenced in April.

Parent engagement through the relevant sections of the Asthma Australia website has been astounding and illustrates clearly the demand for quality online information.

The reach of the ACAP programs makes it one of the largest asthma programs in the world. We are proud that in 2015 our achievements against the targets established with the Department of Health are,

- 16,258 students engaged (target 10,000)
- 81,911 parents engaged (target 5,000)
- 1,543 young people engaged (target 1,500)

Working with students

A highlight from this period has been the overwhelming demand for presentations to students in schools. ACAP has developed a range of approaches to meet the local needs for this early intervention strategy. Our teams are working with class and year level groups or at assemblies to deliver key messages, including how to help a friend having asthma flare up. The new Asthma Kids microsite includes two age appropriate videos that introduce asthma and engage the students, with Chester’s Asthma Trail then able to be used as a follow-up resource by primary teachers to reinforce and enhance the face-to-face delivery by Foundations.

Asthma Kids – new dedicated asthma website for children

Asthma Kids was developed to provide an online option for primary aged students to learn about asthma in a fun way and is set up to cater for use in the home and school environments. After viewing the previously mentioned videos at the start of the Asthma Kids microsite, users are then guided along Chester’s Asthma Trail where they collect blue balloons as they progress through interactive elements. On completion of the trail, kids can ask their parent or teacher to help them enter into a draw for monthly prizes (a Grit scooter and helmet or Spencil stationery).

Parents of students with asthma

The vast majority of parents (of school aged children with asthma) are engaging with asthma information through the Asthma Australia website. With sessions in schools for parents historically poorly attended, we have found that a Q and A with Asthma Experts held in a community setting is proving more popular and several Foundations have now held successful Q&A events.

One Foundation has trialled delivering a hands-on Live Well with Asthma session for parents and young children together and this has attracted significant interest from other Foundations as a worthwhile approach.
The National Young People and Asthma Strategy (NYPAS) launched the findings of the survey of 533 young people with asthma at the Sydney Trapeze School on January 20. Among the key survey findings is the high number of young people with asthma who also experience mental health issues – with a general trend being the less controlled their asthma, the higher their levels of mental health problems. A Roundtable discussion is being set up for later in the year with representatives from key respiratory, mental health and young people well-being groups to explore opportunities to work collaboratively to find innovative strategies to tackle this issue. Two Fact Sheets have been produced on this topic, one for young people and their families, the other for health professionals.

A Facebook community page has been established specifically for young people with asthma aged 12-25 years and their supporters. Alongside this, a closed group just for young people has also been established. One strategy to be implemented using the Facebook community page is for regular Q&A sessions on a given topic. The first of these was on the topic of Asthma and Mental Health and had over 800 people engage with the conversation.

Looking forward as ACAP enters the final year of the current funding, the new target groups described above and our successes engaging with them offer new directions in broadening the scope of the impacts of our work with children and young people with asthma as the focus.
To celebrate World Asthma Day 2015, Asthma Australia staged its biennial conference for health professionals and Asthma Foundation staff in Brisbane, Queensland. Queensland was selected to host this event to coincide with the Foundation’s 50th Anniversary.

The 2015 Connecting Asthma Care Conference continues Asthma Australia’s long-standing role as a leader in the asthma health care debate. Our role in promoting the asthma cause was significantly demonstrated through the conference, which received national and international media coverage. We also welcomed and appreciated the participation of the National Asthma Council Australia and the Asthma Foundation of New Zealand as supporting partners.

The conference brought together 300+ health professionals supporting people with asthma, policy makers and government delegates and Asthma Foundation staff to learn more about and explore new research, programs and services that reduce the burden of the disease.

Australia is very fortunate to have global leaders in asthma research and the world’s best practice treatment guidelines. Yet sadly these are not translating into improved health outcomes for many. Looking overseas at best practices and sharing promising strategies that engage and empower patients was a critical element of the 2015 conference.

Considerable media attention focused on Dr Mark Levy, the lead author of the UK’s National Asthma Death Review project and how Australia can learn from these findings, specifically underlining issues within a health system that contribute to patients dying from asthma and how many of these are largely preventable.

Professor Mika Makela, Chairman of the Skin and Allergy Hospital in Helsinki, Finland stunned the audience into silence when he explained the outcomes of this country’s Asthma and Allergy Strategy that has resulted in zero children’s deaths from asthma in the last 15 years. Finland’s focus on outpatient follow-up by a qualified asthma nurse post an asthma flare-up, integrated e-health systems that track medication prescribing mirrors and alert doctors when patients are not filling scripts, and a close alignment between allergy and asthma, were strategies that were debated and well received by an enthusiastic audience.

Many of the recommended activities in the proposed Australia National Asthma Strategy 2016-2020 and the conference preceded the National Asthma Strategy roundtable.

Asthma Australia would like to thank and acknowledge the Conference Presenting Partners AstraZeneca, Mundipharma, Bird HealthCare, Novartis and in particular the Asthma Foundation Queensland for staging this event.
Asthma Australia provides the leadership, policy direction, support, resources and tools necessary for Asthma Foundations to continue to be successful. Asthma Australia leads by example by implementing best practice governance, financial, risk management and human resource policies and strategies.

**Governance and ethical leadership**

As a charitable institution and incorporated association registered in the Australian Capital Territory, Asthma Australia is reliant upon government funding, member levies and corporate goodwill to achieve its goals.

As a community organisation, Asthma Australia also has considerable legislative, administrative and funding body accountabilities that need to be maintained to a high standard.

The Board is comprised of eleven Directors who bring expertise in asthma and respiratory medicine, medical science and research, governance and management, finance and not-for-profit administration, as well as extensive networks with the private, public and government sectors and the broader community.

**Board Composition**

The Board consists of three independent Directors including an independent Chairman and one Board Member from each affiliated State and Territory Asthma Foundation, usually the President.

**Role of the Board of Directors**

The role of the Board is defined by Asthma Australia’s Constitution, being the legal instrument guiding the organisation. The Board operates in line with a Code of Conduct.

The Board’s primary role is the protection and enhancement of members’ interest and to ensure a range of strategies that support people with asthma are achieved. To fulfil this role, the Board is responsible for the overall corporate governance of the organisation.

This includes:

- Formulating its strategic direction;
- Approving and monitoring financial performance;
- Setting executive remuneration;
- Appointing, removing and creating policies;
- Establishing and monitoring the achievement of organisational goals; and
- Ensuring the integrity of internal control and management information systems.

The Board is also responsible for approving and monitoring finance and other reporting and compliance. The Board delegates responsibility for the operation and administration of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Executive Team. Responsibilities are delineated by formal authority delegations.
Asthma Australia is staffed by a small secretariat with staff located in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.
Board Members and responsible entities

**Board of Directors**
- Mr Terry Evans – Independent Chairman
- Ms Jennifer Robertson – Independent Director
- Mr Kevin Gill – Vice Chairman and ACT Director
- Dr Simon Bowler – Independent Director
- Mr Doug Gould – VIC Director
- Mr Ian Buddery NSW Director
- Mr Kevin Morgan – TAS Director
- Ms Marita Cowie – QLD Director
- Mr Tony Carter – WA Director
- Mr Alan Grove – NT Director
- Mr Robert Stobbe – SA Director

**Asthma Australia National Research Council**
- Prof Judith Black AO – NSW - Chairperson
- Emeritus Prof Richard Ruffin AM – SA
- Prof Michael Abramson – VIC
- Adjunct Prof Richard Beasley – NZ
- Prof Louis Landau AO – WA
- Assoc Prof Kay Price - SA

**Asthma Australia Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee**
- Dr Simon Bowler – Chairman - QLD
- Assoc Prof Helen Reddel – NSW (resigned Oct 14)
- Mr Kevin Morgan – TAS
- Prof Adam Jaffe – NSW
- Prof Graham Hall – WA
- Dr Mark Hurwitz – ACT
- Prof Paul Thompson – SA
- Prof Mark Everard – WA
- Ms Tracey Marshall RN – NSW
- Ms Rikki McTavish RN - QLD

**Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee**
- Ms Jennifer Robertson – Chairperson
- Mr Terry Evans
- Mr Jonathan MacLeod
- Mr Doug Gould

**Board Planning Framework**
The Board operates according to a five year Corporate Plan. The design and development of this plan began following a series of strategic planning workshops including a whole of organisation planning day in March 2013. The new plan carefully defines the national roles and responsibilities.

The Board has also established a framework of management that includes:
- A five year Corporate Plan outlining our mission, purpose, values, goals and strategies of Asthma Australia. These are outcome-focused and are measured by clearly defined key performance indicators (KPIs). Our corporate plan can be found at asthmaaustralia.org.au/national;
- A financial plan, incorporating five year performance targets;
- An annual business plan and budget relating to the corporate plan;
- A reporting framework against KPIs;
- Delegated authorities, recorded in a policy framework, from the Board to the CEO and staff, built around a performance culture measured by a performance appraisal process;

- A risk management plan; and
- A quality assurance framework supported by a defined Program Logic.

**Board of Directors Education**
The Foundation has a formal process to educate new and continuing Directors about the nature of the organisation, its current issues, the corporate strategy and the expectations concerning performance and conduct of Board Members.

No Director training was completed for the year.

**Board Diversity**
The Board is a representative Board – this means that the appointment of Directors is largely within the control of Asthma Foundations.
The Board has policies and procedures to ensure that the material risks facing the organisation are adequately assessed, monitored and managed at a national level. A Risk Management Manual has been developed and the Board has adopted a risk management strategy in 2015/2016 consistent with AS/NZS ISO 31000. Each State and Territory Foundation has its own approach to risk management ranging from poor to highly effective.

Overview of Risk Management Process (AS/NZS ISO 31000)

Conflicts of Interest

The Board has a Conflict of Interest Policy and seeks declarations from all Board and Committee Members. These declarations can be requested by contacting info@asthmaaustralia.org.au
Funding from Pharmaceutical Companies

Asthma Australia is funded by government, corporate support, individual donors and community fundraising. Asthma Australia accepts funding from pharmaceutical companies in line with our Corporate Support Policy. Consistent with this policy is a commitment by Asthma Australia to align funding with projects via untied grants. This means that Asthma Australia maintains full control over any resource, program or material. A key requirement of policy is transparency and the following pharmaceutical companies supported Asthma Australia in 2014/2015.

**GSK**
- **$25,000** review and re-publish resources to bring up to date with new Asthma Guidelines
- **$15,000** to develop on-line Asthma Control Test capability
- **$30,000** support for the Severe Asthma Research Study
- **$59,000** to develop Asthma Patient Education Tool
- **$12,000** in-kind support - placebos devices for educational purposes - distributed to Asthma Foundations
- **$33,000** value in Ventolin inhalers to support emergency response – SA and VIC bushfires.

**AstraZeneca**
- **$40,000** National Asthma Conference sponsorship and exhibition
- **$12,400** in-kind support, placebo devices and spacers for education purposes - distributed to Asthma Foundations
- **$40,000** patient awareness campaign
- **$20,000** GP awareness campaign

**Mundipharma**
- **$40,000** National Asthma Conference sponsorship and exhibition

**Novartis**
- **$20,000** National Asthma Conference sponsorship and exhibition

**Alphapharm**
- **$5,000** National Asthma Conference sponsorship and exhibition

Managing Your Privacy

Asthma Australia Inc is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles as set out in the Privacy Act 1988 and the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000/2014 as well as other laws and Department of Health contractual obligations that impose specific obligations in regard to handling personal and health information that directly or indirectly identifies a person. The policy supports Asthma Australia’s need to collect information and the right of the individual to privacy. It ensures that Asthma Australia can collect personal and health information necessary for its services and functions, while recognising the right of individuals to have their information handled in ways that they would reasonably expect and in ways that protect the privacy of their personal and health information.

For details of our Privacy Policy please go to [asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au)
Asthma Australia would like to thank and acknowledge our many community, corporate and organisation partners.

**Funding partners**
The Australian Government Department of Health

**Principle Partner**
Hudsons Coffee

**Program Partners**
Dyson
AstraZeneca
Bird Healthcare
White Magic
Mundipharma
Terry White Chemists
Ernest Heine Family Foundation

**National Asthma Research Trust Fund partners**
Hudsons Coffee
Ventis
Boehringer Ingelheim
GlaxoSmithKline
Pfizer
Novartis
National Home Doctor Service

**2015 Connecting Asthma Care Conference Partners**

**Presenting Partners** – AstraZeneca, Mundipharma and Asthma Foundation of Queensland

**Platinum Sponsors** – Bird Healthcare

**Gold Sponsors** – Australian Government Department of Health

**Silver Sponsors** - Novartis

**Asthma Australia would like to thank and acknowledge our many community and organisation partners:**

**Strategic and business partnerships**

- Sector7g – branding development and design
- Health Objective Pty Ltd – health professional training and course development
- The London Agency – public relations and communications
- Peter Hall Chartered Accountants – auditors
- Angela Gregory – bookkeeping and financial services
- AON – insurance broker
- Westpac – community banking partners
- The Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (Independent Evaluators)
- The George Institute for Global Health (Independent Evaluators)
- ZEST Health Strategies

**Community partnerships**

- Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA)
- Australian Council of State School Organisation
- Australian Indigenous Health Info net
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)
- Australian Men’s Shed Association
- Australian Respiratory Council
- COTA (Council on the Ageing)
- Consumer Health Forum
- Cystic Fibrosis Australia
- Early Childhood Australia
- Live Wire
- Lung Health Alliance
- Lung Foundation Australia
- National Rural Health Alliance
- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
- Royal Flying Doctor Service
- The Pharmacy Guild
- The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand
- The Woolcock Institute
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