



**Asthma**  
Foundation SA

# every breath matters

Issue 15, August 2016

## Kimberley's brave asthma journey



*Pictured: Kimberley is 23-years-old and her asthma care network has been vital in her journey to regain control over her asthma and allergies.*

### Kimberley shares her story

I developed asthma as a three-year-old and from the start I felt my life was a merry go round with bouts of poor health through each season of the year with the occasional feeling of wellness. I was in and out of doctors' surgeries, and I reckon I must have tried preventer puffers of every single colour that existed.

It was a constant uphill battle to get on top of my asthma symptoms and at times, I felt I had to resign myself to the fact that my life would never be 'normal'. Being able to play a quarter of a netball match made me feel somewhat normal.

I started a university career in nursing four years ago; I tried my utmost to juggle work, netball, relationships, assignments, and my asthma. I had emergency gall bladder surgery earlier this year and even though I thought I had pretty good knowledge of my health, I felt totally at sea when it came to my asthma flaring up post-surgery.

**My life was spiralling out of control. What could I do? I decided to call the 1800 ASTHMA Helpline.**

After chatting with an Asthma Health Professional, I realised that I was going through a myriad of complex health issues that I needed to tackle one by one. She referred me back to my doctor, set me up with an appointment with a respiratory nurse to perform spirometry and talked me through my step-up asthma plan. I was quickly referred to a respiratory specialist who identified multiple allergy triggers in a simple blood test. The change in asthma preventer medication along with recognising my allergy triggers has helped me to put the jigsaw puzzle back together again in a way that I did not think was possible.

The asthma journey varies from one

person to the next. With the passage of time, my asthma has changed as I came into contact with different trigger factors. As with any chronic health condition, I still encounter challenges, but I know it is a whole lot easier utilising the expertise of the asthma care team to assist me in better managing my asthma. Although my health care team is spread out all over Adelaide, everyone works so well together to bring about some truly positive changes in my health and wellbeing. **Thank you Asthma Foundation SA for getting this ball rolling! I can now face each season with confidence.**



We're **#RacingToCureAsthma**



### This Issue:

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**1800 ASTHMA**  
**asthmaaustralia.org.au**

# Our Impact

1 July 2015 - 1 June 2016



1,967 calls to the  
1800 ASTHMA Helpline



546 Health Professionals  
received training



986 Children's Services staff trained  
in Emergency Asthma Management



735 Children's Services staff trained  
in Anaphylaxis Awareness



3,032 school staff trained in  
Asthma First Aid



547 people from sport and recreation  
clubs trained in Asthma First Aid

**1800 ASTHMA**  
[asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au)

## Ask an Asthma Health Professional

My friend has asked me to go travelling with her to Vietnam. I would love to go, but I am also anxious about the idea of visiting an unfamiliar country away from my usual key supports. What if I have an asthma flare-up while I am far away from home? I don't know what to expect and wonder what I can do to ensure that I have a safe trip. Any advice would be most appreciated! Sasha.

Thank you for your email, Sasha. What a wonderful opportunity to travel to this great country and asthma should not limit you from pursuing your dreams! Here are a few simple tips that could alleviate your concerns and minimise the risks relating to asthma control and management while you are away.

- Ask your doctor to write a letter that outlines your asthma management, including a list of asthma medications that you are currently taking
- Ensure that you have a copy of your up-to-date asthma action plan with you and follow it!
- Take extra supplies of your medications and a spacer in a separate carry-on bag, in case your luggage gets lost
- Take extra prescriptions for medications in case you need them
- Always have your asthma reliever

(blue) puffer on hand while you are travelling

- Remember to take your asthma preventer medication regularly as prescribed
- If you suffer from hay fever, ensure you manage this as well
- Find out the emergency phone number equivalent to triple zero (000) in the country you are visiting
- Ensure you have travel insurance before you leave for your trip
- Keep up-to-date with immunisations including the flu vaccine
- Ensure good personal hygiene while you are away, such as hand sanitisation

If you would like more information about asthma and travel, please do not hesitate to ring one of our Asthma Health Professionals for a chat! You can also visit our Asthma Shop for products such as spacers and nebulisers suitable for travelling.

### 1800 ASTHMA Helpline

A wide variety of asthma resources are downloadable from:

[asthmaaustralia.org.au/resources](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au/resources)

**Do you have an iPhone or iPad?  
Download the Asthma App today!**

## Asthma Kids

Looking for a way to help your child understand more about their asthma or about a friend with asthma? Asthma Kids is an online, interactive tool to help primary school aged children understand what it's like to have asthma and what they can do to help. Watch one of the introductory videos then take Chester's Asthma Trail. There are prizes to win too! [asthmakids.org.au](http://asthmakids.org.au)



## Young people and asthma

Asthma Australia is working with key organisations supporting young people's health to help improve asthma health outcomes for 12-25-year-olds. A Facebook page, Young People with Asthma – Australia, provides a range of information for young people and their supporters.

Every few months Asthma Australia will also run a 'Question and Answer' session that is proving to be very popular. Check out our posts and promotion for upcoming sessions, [Facebook.com/AsthmaFoundationSA](https://www.facebook.com/AsthmaFoundationSA)

# Your asthma shop & support service

Did you know that you can talk to an Asthma Health Professional about asthma? Asthma Foundation SA's friendly staff are here to support you and your family. Chat to an Asthma Health Professional either face-to-face or via the free 1800 ASTHMA Helpline. Our Helpline is proudly sponsored by our Major Partner, SA Power Networks.

We can provide information and support about:

- Learning what asthma is
- How to recognise signs and symptoms of asthma
- What makes your asthma worse
- How to use asthma medications and devices
- Asthma Action Plans and Care Plans
- How to find an asthma friendly doctor
- What to do in an asthma emergency

Asthma Foundation SA also has a shop where you can buy asthma related products like spacers at low cost.



Located at 300 South Road, Hilton from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or phone the 1800 ASTHMA Helpline. You can also go online and place an order via [asthmasa.org.au/shop](http://asthmasa.org.au/shop)

## Member discount!

If you are a member of Asthma Foundation SA, you will also receive a 10% discount on any purchases.

## Asthma in regional South Australia

People living outside a major city or town are more likely to have asthma. They often have limited access to health care services, and this can result in limited access to the information, support, resources, and care they need to empower them to take control of their asthma. Thanks to ongoing support from our major partner,

ElectraNet, Asthma Foundation SA is well positioned to extend our reach into regional South Australia and make a positive difference to the lives of people living with asthma as well as those who care for them.

To date this year, Asthma Health Professionals have delivered services

to Tailem Bend and Port Augusta, as well as working in the Elizabeth area. We have visits planned for Port Lincoln and the mid-north areas of Burra and surrounding towns.

Asthma Foundation SA is committed to supporting all regional South Australians with asthma.

## Launching asthma resources for new and emerging communities!

Asthma Foundation SA is delighted to launch a range of asthma resources for new and emerging communities.

This project was made possible by the generous support of Australian Executor Trustees (AET).

Consultations with Swahili, Burmese and Dari speaking communities in South Australia underpinned the planning, design, and development of these new resources.

The communities expressed the need for

resources that were very visual, with simple key messages about asthma in their languages and English. A close working relationship between the community members, a local artist, asthma health professionals, translators and a graphic designer resulted in the production of the resources. Resources in five additional languages are currently in development for release in 2017.

The resources can be downloaded via [asthmaaustralia.org.au/resources](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au/resources)



# ‘Closing the Gap’ in lung health

Asthma Foundation SA’s Asthma Health Professionals continue to work across South Australia in collaboration with Aboriginal Health Workers to support Indigenous Australians, who live with asthma. Asthma is one of the most commonly reported health concerns for Indigenous Australians and the prevalence rate is almost twice as high among Indigenous Australians than among other Australians, particularly in adults.

With ongoing support from the CMV Group, we are providing asthma-related training and resources to Aboriginal Health Workers. Training includes the most up-to-date guidelines and evidence-based information and provides Aboriginal Health Workers with the necessary skills and resources needed to work towards ‘closing the gap’ in lung health in Indigenous



Australian communities. We will be visiting Mount Gambier and Ceduna/Koonibba as well as local Aboriginal Health Services in the coming year.

*Pictured: Asthma Health Professional, Sophie, with Aboriginal Health Worker, Whitney, from Port Lincoln.*

## Asthma Friendly Children’s Program

The Asthma Friendly Children’s Program, supported by The Fay Fuller Foundation provides child care centres, kindergartens, out of schools hours

care, and family day care with the most up-to-date asthma and anaphylaxis training.

**Is your family’s children’s program Asthma Friendly?**

Contact [jodie@asthmasa.org.au](mailto:jodie@asthmasa.org.au)

## Free information sessions

### Live Well with Asthma

This session is designed to provide the person who has asthma, or their carer, with an update on current asthma management.

— 23 September  
— 23 November

**Duration:** 1.5 hours  
**Time:** 10am - 11:30am

### Kids Live Well with Asthma

An interactive session for children to learn about their asthma together with their parents and/or carers.

— 6 October

**Duration:** 1.5 hours  
**Time:** 10am - 11:30am

### Live Well with Eczema

This session provides the person who has eczema, or the carers of children with eczema with an update on current management.

— 4 November

**Duration:** 2 hours  
**Time:** 9am - 11am

### Live Well with Allergy & Anaphylaxis

This session provides the person who has allergy/anaphylaxis, or their carer, with an update on current management.

— 8 November

**Duration:** 2 hours  
**Time:** 10am - 12pm

Bookings via [asthmaaustralia.org.au/SA/LiveWell](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au/SA/LiveWell) or free call 1800 ASTHMA Helpline

### Major Partners



### Community Partners



Every Breath Matters Issue 16 will be released in February 2017.