

Managing Occupational Asthma in Primary Care: Continuing Professional Development Strategies.

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Problem: Occupational asthma (OA) is the most frequent type of work-related lung disease. The Canadian Thoracic Society Guidelines for OA describe interventions likely to be effective for diagnosis, management and prevention of OA. However, without a complementary strategy for continuing professional development (CPD), these guidelines are unlikely to have impact in clinical practice.

Objectives: To heighten awareness of occupational asthma by developing and offering interactive and multifaceted CPD opportunities.

Program Description: In collaboration with the Foundation for Medical Practice Education, and using their standardized methods, a Practice-Based Small Group (PBSG) learning module for Work-Related Asthma was developed. Also developed were: a brief case-based questionnaire on management of asthma pertaining to exposures at work; a short self-reflection exercise; and a post-reflection survey regarding impact on practice. The needs assessment confirmed that the module would address a significant gap. It has now been used by over 100 PBSGs resulting in plans to include issues about workplace in both assessment and management of asthma.

Conclusion: This CPD approach has been shown to address a significant practice need in an effective manner.