



**Australian Government**

**Australian Institute of  
Health and Welfare**

*Better information and statistics  
for better health and wellbeing*

# **Refining national asthma indicators**

## **Delphi survey and correlation analysis**

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### **Australian Institute of Health and Welfare**

Board Chair

Hon. Peter Collins, AM, QC

Director

Penny Allbon

Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Australian Centre for Asthma Monitoring

PO Box M77

Missenden Road NSW 2050

Phone: (02) 9114 0467

Email: [acam@asthmamonitoring.org](mailto:acam@asthmamonitoring.org)

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**Please note that there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report.  
Please check the online version at <[www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)> for any amendments.**

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## Authorship

Paola Espinel, Leanne Poulos, Patricia Correll, Wei Xuan, Helen Reddel and Guy Marks from the Australian Centre for Asthma Monitoring (ACAM) were responsible for the preparation of this document.

## Contributors

A steering committee was established within ACAM to oversee this project and monitor its progress. Valuable guidance and contributions were received from the members of the steering committee group: Helen Reddel, Brett Toelle, Guy Marks, Patricia Correll, Leanne Poulos, Wei Xuan, Elena Belousova and Teresa To (corresponding member).

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# Summary

This report forms part of a review undertaken by ACAM to refine and simplify Australia's national asthma data monitoring system.

## Why refine the list of asthma indicators?

Currently 24 indicators are recommended for monitoring asthma at a population level to guide policy relating to the prevention and management of asthma in Australia. This is too many for an efficient monitoring program. The overall aim of this body of work was to define an efficient set of indicators for asthma that are useful for stakeholders, avoid redundancy and can be measured reliably and validly using population data.

## Methods used to refine the list of asthma indicators

Two separate methods were employed to assess whether the number of asthma indicators recommended for monitoring could be reduced: a Delphi survey and an analysis of correlation among the indicators. A Delphi survey is an established qualitative research method used to systematically assimilate information from people with knowledge of the topic. We used a web-based Delphi survey, conducted over two rounds, to seek input from relevant asthma experts on the importance of each of the asthma indicators. We also asked them to rate each indicator in terms of its value in providing information to policy makers about the status of asthma in Australia. In the second round, panellists were sent their own previous responses, pooled results and anonymised comments of other participants. With this information they were asked to consider refining their answers. In conjunction with this process, correlation analyses were conducted to investigate whether there was any potential redundancy among the indicators.

## Refined list of core asthma indicators

In conjunction with the correlation analysis, the Delphi survey has helped to obtain consensus about the most important asthma indicators for monitoring asthma at a national level. These indicators are:

- 1) *prevalence of current asthma*
- 2) *deaths (all ages)*
- 3) *deaths (5 to 34 years)*
- 4) *hospitalisations*
- 5) *asthma control*
- 6) *general practice encounters*
- 7) *asthma action plans*
- 8) *quality of life*
- 9) *preventer use*
- 10) *costs of asthma.*

This core set of indicators should be used to gain population-based information on asthma in Australia. However, this list does not preclude the use of other indicators where they are relevant to a specific purpose.

