

May 7th is World Asthma Day

Date:

Tuesday, May 07, 2013

Asthma is the most common chronic pediatric illness, affecting more than 7 million children in the United States. Its effects are far-reaching, resulting in loss of work for parents and school for children, lower quality of life, and increased hospitalizations. One potential solution for improving care for children with asthma is to increase shared decision making (SDM) among parents and clinicians, an approach supported by the Institute of Medicine, as well as the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. However, the implementation of SDM in a real-world practice setting has proven difficult, calling for the development of innovative new systems to help facilitate this process.

PolicyLab's [Alexander Fiks](#) has led the development of an electronic medical record-based patient portal, "MyAsthma," designed to facilitate SDM in pediatric asthma. While typical portals include features such as messaging, appointment scheduling, and the delivery of lab results, the MyAsthma portal extends these features with a design that closely follows the elements of the definition of SDM by linking to the child's electronic medical record and providing parents with a platform from which to access educational content, track asthma symptoms over time, identify concerns and goals, and share this information with the child's doctor or asthma care team.

Providing an effective and reliable way for families to actively communicate with clinicians from home is important because research has shown that families who are able to do so are far more likely to report high levels of SDM, which has been associated with improved health and lower health care costs for children with special health care needs, including asthma.

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