



2026 POLICY PRIORITIES

Allergy & Asthma Network has developed a set of policy priorities to direct our advocacy work. These include:

- Improve Access and Affordability for Medical Care and Treatment
- Increase Federal Asthma and Allergy Program Funding
- Reduce Health Risks for Allergy and Asthma Emergencies
- Mitigate Environmental Health Hazards

Advancing these priorities brings Allergy & Asthma Network closer to fulfilling its mission to improving all lives of individuals impacted by asthma, allergies and related conditions. As part of that mission, Allergy & Asthma Network is dedicated to ensuring the needs and interests of patients and their families are reflected in all major legislative and regulatory decisions made in Washington, D.C. and in all 50 states.

I. Improve Access to Medical Care and Treatment

Access to safe, effective and affordable medical care and treatment is vital for patients as they face unaffordable out-of-pocket expenses (e.g., deductibles and coinsurance) and utilization management barriers (e.g., prior authorization and step therapy) that impact how and when they can access healthcare services and medicines. These challenges are putting Americans at risk for poorer health outcomes, especially for those with chronic and life-threatening conditions such as asthma and severe allergies. These barriers have led to patients not filling a doctor's prescription, reducing their dosage to make medication supplies last longer, buying medicines from foreign countries, or substituting alternative therapies. Stable treatments are necessary for patients with chronic conditions and access to medications is critical.



Access to high-quality, affordable healthcare and insurance coverage is essential to achieve the most successful health outcomes for patients. This includes adequate coverage for patients who rely on government programs including Medicare and Medicaid. Access to innovative therapies and technologies (e.g., biologic medications, immunotherapy, telehealth, remote patient monitoring) are important to address specific medical needs and improve patients' lives.

Allergy & Asthma Network supports:

- Access to safe, effective and affordable treatments and medications when people need them.
- Adequate coverage for individuals who rely on Medicare and Medicaid.
- Access to innovative therapies and technology for targeted treatment and personal choice.

- Access to telehealth services for improved disease management.
- Safe, effective and more expeditious approval process by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for new medical treatments.

II. Asthma and Allergy Program Funding

Federal health programs that support disease awareness, management and research are essential to improve the healthcare quality and safety for all Americans, particularly those who live with chronic conditions. Federal funding is necessary to support asthma and allergy research, education and outreach initiatives at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD).



Allergy & Asthma Network supports:

- Continued federal funding for health programs that support individuals living with allergies, asthma and related conditions.

III. Reduce Health Risks for Allergy and Asthma Emergencies

Despite the availability of various treatments and disease management guidelines, people with uncontrolled asthma or life-threatening allergies may face a reduced quality of life.

There are 28 million Americans living with asthma including 6 million children. Asthma remains one of the most serious chronic diseases costing the U.S. healthcare system nearly \$82 billion annually in direct healthcare expenditures (emergency department visits and hospitalizations) and indirect costs from lost productivity (missed school days and workdays). Approximately 3,733 Americans die each year from asthma. Standardized Asthma Action Plans and access to medication in an emergency would help schools better prepare and manage a child's health, while also ensuring the child is able to remain in the classroom and focus on learning. As the number of students with chronic medical needs continues to increase, it is vital they have regular access to a school nurse.



There are 32 million Americans living with severe allergies from food, insect venom, medication and latex who are at risk for anaphylaxis (a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction). The first-line treatment for anaphylaxis is epinephrine, yet approximately 225 American still die from anaphylaxis each year. Immediate access to this lifesaving medication is critical in daycares, schools, businesses, organizations, community settings, and on airplanes. Greater investments in research and innovative therapies are needed to address specific medical needs and improve patients' lives. For those people living with severe food allergies, a standard, easy-to-use, front-of-package nutrition labeling system would help people identify potential allergens. This would also reduce consumer confusion and the need to contact the manufacturer to determine if a food product is safe.

Allergy & Asthma Network supports:

- Improvements to healthcare delivery systems that will reduce asthma or allergy hospitalizations and deaths.
- Greater investments in research to understand, treat, and ultimately cure food allergies and related conditions.
- Expanded asthma tracking and surveillance to all states.
- Expanded in-home allergen education, monitoring and reduction programs.
- Food nutrition labeling system that is easy-to-read with potential allergens identified.
- Expanding precautionary nutrition labeling to include Top 9 allergens.
- Stock albuterol and epinephrine in schools, including all FDA-approved epinephrine delivery systems.
- Standardized Asthma Action Plans in schools to manage a child's health.
- Regular access to a school nurse in every school by students when needed.
- Access to epinephrine in public places, including restaurants, aircraft, children camps, and daycare centers.

IV. Mitigate Environmental Health Hazards

People who have asthma and other respiratory illnesses are vulnerable to environmental contaminants from air pollution (indoors and outdoors). Solutions to reduce environmental hazards must involve public health to protect our most vulnerable populations, including the elderly, children, the sick, and people with lower incomes.



Ground-level ozone and particulate matter (e.g., dust, dirt, soot or smoke) and living and/or working within proximity to major sources of harmful air pollution (e.g., major roadways, solid waste landfills) can trigger asthma symptoms. Indoor pollutants and environmental hazards, such as mold, dust mites, cockroaches and mice, cigarette smoke, and living in substandard housing, can also trigger asthma symptoms.

Allergy & Asthma Network supports:

- Reduction in environmental hazards to support lung health.
- Enhanced understanding of environmental and health-related issues in local communities.
- Mitigation of indoor mold and water-damaged buildings.
- Advocating for policies that mitigate uncontrolled expansion of data centers that have a harmful impact on the environment, especially in historically disenfranchised communities.