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OP Oral Presentation : Primary care: asthma**15:45**

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Are we in control of asthma? - a UK population perspective

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Background: Guidelines for asthma management have been used in the UK for over a decade and are increasingly evidence based. Whether they are being universally implemented is a matter of debate as evidence suggests that patients have poor levels of symptom control^[sup1]. A review programme has allowed a large United Kingdom population to be profiled in a real life setting. **Method:** Using a specially designed computer template, practices reviewed patients receiving prophylactic medication or who were overusing short acting β_2 -agonists. The information recorded included current symptoms, medication, inhaler technique, compliance, days lost from normal daily activities, smoking status, and self management and education provision. **Results:** 1713 practices were recruited with 1078 returning data on 59,972 patients. 49,720(83%) patients reported symptoms at first review; 12,907(22%) were experiencing symptoms once or twice a month, 15,895 (27%) once or twice weekly, and 20,918(35%) patients on a daily basis. 7,155(12%) patients reported days lost due to asthma in the month previous to the consultation. 6,074 (23%) of patients were recorded as poorly compliant with medication, and 9,214(34%) were over using their short acting β_2 agonist medication. **Conclusion:** Poor control is apparent in patients throughout the severity spectrum of asthma. To improve patient asthma outcomes health professionals may have to be more proactive in the way they implement guideline recommendations.

¹Rabe et al. Eur Respir J 2000;16:802-807