



Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) Guiding Principles for Patient-Centered Public Policy

Background and Introduction

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) promotes public policy initiatives that improve and protect quality of life and treatment options for those affected by asthma and allergies. AAFA's major public policy priorities are:

- to promote access to affordable, quality healthcare for the treatment and management of asthma and allergies for all people;
- to maximize funding for basic, clinical, preventive, and health services research; and
- to promote prevention, screening, and lifestyle interventions that reduce the incidence and adverse effects of asthma and allergies.

Guiding Principles

AAFA has developed a set of patient-centered principles to guide policy and advocacy efforts on behalf of the asthma and allergy communities. These principles reflect AAFA's deep commitment to evidence-based decision-making—whether that is a decision to be made by the patient, her clinician, her family, or by a policy-maker. In a setting in which there is a risk that policy decisions will be driven by emotion and anecdote, AAFA seeks reliable and data-driven research to inform the evidence base and help determine the safety and value of treatments and interventions. Dealing with these complex and inter-related issues requires a steady stream of reliable data and information to develop sound policy positions. Our principles are enumerated below:

1. Promote access and availability to safe, useful and affordable treatments

Access to safe, useful and affordable treatments continues to be a pressing concern for patients in the United States. AAFA supports and advocates for patient access to affordable, quality health care, and for the elimination of barriers to optimal clinical care in the United States.

2. Improve patient outcomes by aligning medical practice and clinical decision-making with the best available evidence, through the use of evidence-based guidelines where available, and through continuous learning about and diffusion of best practices

Evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for the prevention, diagnosis, management and treatment of asthma and allergic conditions are the lynchpin that supports efforts to achieve best outcomes for patients. When rigorous guidelines are not available, it is important to align with published evidence or, where necessary, best practices in the field.



At the same time, it is necessary to commit to collecting the data that will inform clinical practice, going forward.

Decisions about effective clinical practice should be driven primarily by what is best for patients; not by financial and economic considerations.

3. Support patient participation and sound decision-making

Patients are critical members of the healthcare team, and they must be given both the opportunity—and the information they need—to work effectively as partners to clinical professionals, in order to achieve the outcomes that are most important to them. Solving the challenges and problems of living with allergies and asthma requires active engagement of patients, families, and caregivers, in treatment decisions, research, and clinical trials.