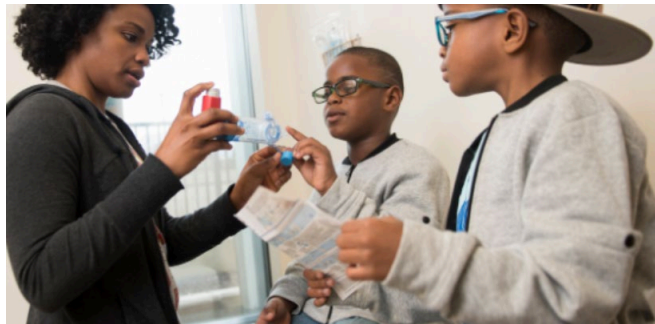




Press Release

## Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) and IMPACT DC Partner on Bridging Health Disparities Gap

*AAFA, IMPACT DC team up with a focus on expanding nationwide community health programming*



*Image courtesy IMPACT DC*

Washington D.C., October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 —In the United States, the burden of asthma falls disproportionately on poor, low-wealth, and minority populations. Decades of research and public health data show stark disparities in asthma prevalence, mortality and health care utilization along socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic lines with Black, Hispanic and Indigenous Americans under the heaviest burden. This was once again demonstrated in the comprehensive report [\*Asthma\*](#)

[\*Disparities in America: A Roadmap to Reducing Burden on Racial and Ethnic Minorities\*](#) issued by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA).

The problem can't be solved alone. That's why **AAFA** and the **Improving Pediatric Asthma Care in the District of Columbia (IMPACT DC) Asthma Clinic at Children's National Hospital** are coming together to lead a national collaborative dedicated to reducing asthma disparities by strengthening self-sustaining, community-based asthma management. The goal is to implement a new, national model that will reduce emergency room visits, cut death rates, lower school and work absences, bring down health care spending, and improve quality of life within the next ten years.

“Community programs have proven to be an effective intervention tool for improving health outcomes in local communities,” said Kenneth Mendez, president and CEO of AAFA. “Unfortunately, systemic barriers get in the way of the growth of these programs on a national scale. Our partnership with IMPACT DC helps advance our mission of prioritizing policies and programs to improve asthma health for Americans most at risk while dismantling systems that fuel harmful disparities. Making a real and lasting difference is an achievable goal when groups and individuals with a shared, critical interest come together. Partnering to find sustainable solutions will help lead to a vast reduction in asthma disparities and help promote health parity overall. When we narrow gaps in asthma care and outcomes for underserved groups of people, we truly advance care and management for everyone with asthma.”

"Despite novel treatments and guideline-based care, asthma remains a significant public health problem, disproportionately affecting minorities and socioeconomically disadvantaged children.

Asthma health disparities are often due to the effects of poverty and substandard housing, with environmental triggers as a major contributor. At IMPACT DC, we partner with local housing organizations and the government to improve poor indoor air quality due to mold and other hazards," said Dr. Shilpa Patel, medical director at IMPACT DC and attending physician in the division of emergency medicine at Children's National Hospital. "Coordinating world-class care at Children's National Hospital, with our incredible community partners, has allowed us to improve the lives of the most at-risk children with asthma. We hope to leverage AAFA's national platform to bring together programs in other cities so that we can learn from each other and create a best-practice model to address pediatric asthma health disparities at the national level."

AAFA and IMPACT DC will bring leading experts together to share best practices and develop new solutions to help local asthma management programs sustainably and effectively reduce asthma disparities. The coalition will also work together to recruit additional stakeholders and like-minded individuals dedicated to expanding effective community health programs.

To kick off our joint community health initiatives, AAFA and IMPACT DC will host a webinar on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 from 2pm – 3pm ET: [Ask the Experts: Managing Asthma During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

Register here: [Ask The Experts: Managing Asthma During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

**Press Contact:**

Kafi Drexel Brown, Public Relations Director  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA)  
Cellular: 202.974.1223  
[kbrown@aafa.org](mailto:kbrown@aafa.org)

##

**About AAFA**

Founded in 1953, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to saving lives and reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA offers extensive support for individuals and families affected by asthma and allergic diseases, such as food allergies and atopic dermatitis (eczema). Through its online patient support communities, network of local chapters and affiliated support groups, AAFA empowers patients and their families by providing practical, evidence-based information and community programs and services. AAFA is the only asthma and allergy patient advocacy group that is certified to meet the standards of excellence set by the National Health Council. For more information, visit [www.aafa.org](http://www.aafa.org).

**About IMPACT DC Asthma Clinic at Children's National Hospital**

The IMPACT DC Asthma Clinic provides clinical and educational interventions and works in the community to strengthen the linkages among all those providing asthma care to children – in the schools, community and health care system. IMPACT's goal is to steer children away from episodic use of the emergency room for their asthma management, and towards more effective primary long-term asthma care and ultimately healthier lives. For more information, visit <https://childrensnational.org/departments/impact-dc-asthma-clinic>.

**About Children's National Hospital**

Children's National Hospital, based in Washington, D.C., celebrates 150 years of pediatric care, research and commitment to community. Volunteers opened the hospital in 1870 with 12 beds for children displaced after the Civil War. Today, 150 years stronger, it is among the nation's top 10 children's hospitals. It is ranked No. 1 for newborn care for the fourth straight year and ranked in all specialties evaluated by U.S. News & World Report. Children's National is transforming pediatric medicine for all children. In 2020, construction will be complete on the Children's National Research & Innovation Campus, the first in the nation dedicated to pediatric research. Children's National has been designated twice as a Magnet<sup>®</sup> hospital, demonstrating the highest standards of nursing and patient care delivery. This pediatric academic health

system offers expert care through a convenient, community-based primary care network and specialty outpatient centers in the D.C., metropolitan area, including the Maryland and Northern Virginia suburbs. Children's National is home to the [Children's National Research Institute](#) and [Sheikh Zayed Institute for Pediatric Surgical Innovation](#) and is the nation's seventh-highest NIH-funded children's hospital. It is recognized for its expertise and innovation in pediatric care and as a strong voice for children through advocacy at the local, regional and national levels.