

Public Health Specialty Registrar Projects

# April 2017

# Project number 4

# Project title: **Asthma and obesity**

# Project lead or supervisor: Dr John Blakey

# Email address: John.blakey@lstmed.ac.uk

# Description of the project

Asthma is the commonest chronic disease in the UK, and remains a major source of preventable morbidity despite the availability of effective treatments. Obesity is an independent risk factor for the development of asthma, and for having asthma attacks. People who are obese gain less benefit from commonly used medicines such as long-acting beta-agonists. Having poorly controlled asthma results in a sedentary lifestyle and the use of oral corticosteroids, which results in weight gain and more problems from asthma.

Weight loss interventions are effective in improving asthma control for those who complete them. However, most eligible people do not engage with weight loss services. If we could persuade those eligible to attend, current capacity would be overwhelmed.

This project will be supported by an academic asthma physician (Dr J Blakey), an obesity expert (Prof J Wilding) and an expert in obesity-related breathing disorders (Dr A Manuel). The public health registrar will work alongside clinical and academic staff in collecting data and other information on the burden of obesity in specialist (tertiary) and community asthma clinics. They will explore possible associations between obesity and asthma-related healthcare costs (compared to those of normal BMI). The registrar will seek to understand the barriers to accessing weight loss services for people with asthma, and determine the knowledge of weight loss interventions / services amongst respiratory staff.

The aim of this project is to provide standard information for obese people with asthma in terms of basic weight loss advice and details of the effect of obesity on their condition. We also aim to ensure a clear and well-publicised pathway to weight loss services for people with asthma.

# Anticipated start date:

August 2017, but flexible and depends on registrar availability

# Days per week

Full time, or part-time of two or more days per week depending on availability

# Anticipated completion date or duration

One year duration

# Any specific qualifications, experience of knowledge needed

This is a flexible project and trainees may choose to shape the project with greater emphasis on analysis of routine NHS data-streams, or more toward interviews with patients or staff.

# Linked competencies

Key Area 1: Use of public health intelligence to survey and assess a population’s health and wellbeing

Key Area 2: Assessing the evidence of effectiveness of interventions, programmes and services intended to improve the health or wellbeing of individuals or populations

Key Area 3: Policy and strategy development and implementation

Key Area 4: Strategic leadership and collaborative working for health

Key Area 5: Health improvement, determinants of health, and health communication

Key Area 7: Health and care public health

Key Area 8: Academic public health

Key Area 9: Professional personal and ethical development (PPED)

# Any health and safety considerations

The project will involve limited interaction with members of the public but not in a hazardous environment and with no biological /clinical sample handling.

If you are interested in this project or for more information, contact:

Mary Lyons FFPH

Senior Lecturer in Public Health

Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine

Phone: +44(0)151 705 3745

Email: mary.lyons@lstmed.ac.uk

