



## *How to Use the Asthma Care Fax*



### *Asthma Care Fax Background:*

The *Asthma Care Fax* is adapted from a research study, *The Coulee Region Community Pharmacy Asthma Intervention Study: How Community Pharmacists Can Help Control the Asthma Burden*. This study showed that healthcare providers find it helpful when they are notified that their patients are excessively using short-acting beta agonists (SABA).

### *Who is the Asthma Care Fax For?*

The *Asthma Care Fax* can be used for any patient who is excessively using SABA's. National guidelines state that "over reliance on SABA (eg. use of approximately one canister a month even if not using it every day) indicates inadequate control of asthma and the need to initiate or intensify long-term-control therapy." However, some organizations state that using more than two canisters of a SABA per year may indicate the need for tighter control. Regardless, the *Asthma Care Fax* can be used for any patient you feel can benefit from it.

### *How Do I Use The Asthma Care Fax?*

The *Asthma Care Fax* was designed with the busy community pharmacist in mind. Simply download the document and personalize it to your practice site. After that, you merely need to perform an assessment, fill in the blanks, and check the appropriate boxes before you fax it to the patient's healthcare provider.

### *What Sort of Response Can I Expect from Healthcare Providers?*

The Coulee Region Community Pharmacy Asthma Intervention Study found that the majority of responses received from healthcare providers were positive. Pharmacists did not always receive a response, however when they did, 81% of the time healthcare providers found the faxed information helpful.

### *When Should I Recommend a "Step Up in Asthma Therapy?"*

Generally, patients who exhibit proper inhaler technique and appropriate adherence to prescribed controller therapy yet still exhibit symptoms of uncontrolled asthma could benefit from a step up in therapy.

### *When Should I Send the Asthma Care Fax for Information Only?*

If the patient is using his/her inhaler incorrectly, poor technique could be contributing to excessive SABA use. (Education on optimal technique should be provided.) Non-adherence to prescribed controller medication(s) may also be contributing to excessive use of SABA. (Education on the importance of adherence to controller medication should be provided.) These instances would warrant sending the *Asthma Care Fax* for information only.