

STATE PLAN FOR ADDRESSING  
COPD IN ILLINOIS

Executive Summary







May 2008

Dear Friends:

Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago is pleased and proud to have convened the Illinois COPD Coalition and to have worked on the development of the *State Plan for Addressing COPD in Illinois*.

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When we opened as Chicago Tuberculosis Institute in 1906, our founders never anticipated the lung health challenges we would face in the future, the victories we would share, or the challenges that lay ahead. Over the past century, our primary focus has shifted from lung health threats such as tuberculosis (although tuberculosis persists today) to the modern challenges of COPD, the number four cause of death in the United States and Illinois. Our work on the State COPD Plan for Illinois is an important step forward in meeting the needs of Illinoisans living with COPD.

The ultimate goal of this effort is to improve the care and treatment of COPD patients and to prevent COPD and reduce the prevalence of the disease. If we are to achieve our goal, we must work hard together to implement the recommendations of the Plan. The benefits of success are tremendous—decreased medical costs, improved quality of life for COPD patients, and fewer people with the disease. Simply stated, that would mean more grandparents seeing their grandchildren graduate from school, and more parents walking their children down the wedding aisle.

Please read the Plan and get involved. Achievement of our goals will require work by every facet of society, from government to private employers, from giant medical systems to individual health care providers and people living with COPD. For more information and ways to get involved, please visit [www.copdillinois.org](http://www.copdillinois.org) or call Respiratory Health Association at 312.243.2000. We need your help.

Formerly known as:

American Lung Association  
of Metropolitan Chicago\*  
(1993-2007)

Chicago Lung Association  
(1972-1993)

Tuberculosis Institute of  
Chicago and Cook County  
(1937-1972)

Chicago Tuberculosis Institute  
(1906-1937)

\*Respiratory Health Association  
of Metropolitan Chicago is not  
affiliated with American Lung  
Association.

Sincerely,

Joel J. Africk  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Dear Readers:

On behalf of the Illinois COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) Coalition, a group of health professionals, patients, and organization representatives concerned with the lung health (or breathing health) of the citizens of Illinois, I am pleased to present the *State Plan for Addressing COPD in Illinois*. The Plan is a call to action for addressing the COPD epidemic in Illinois. Developed from a collaboration of approximately 100 individuals from around the State, the *State Plan* lays out recommendations for increasing general awareness of COPD, for reducing COPD-related morbidity and mortality, and for improving the quality of life of those living with the disease.

COPD is currently the fourth leading cause of death in the United States, and is poised to become the third unless measures are taken to prevent it, to diagnose it early, and to ensure that people with COPD are provided access to appropriate therapies. Many people do not realize that smoking is the primary risk factor for COPD, or that exposure to occupational and environmental hazards also place them at risk of developing COPD. Moreover, those at risk may not be diagnosed at a point when medical intervention is most likely to be successful, if they are diagnosed at all. COPD is both treatable and manageable. Seeking prompt treatment and engaging in self-management activities can improve one's quality of life and even length of life.

Members of the Illinois COPD Coalition are unified in their desire to bring more attention to COPD in Illinois. The diversity of Coalition membership, which includes representation from community agencies, public health departments, health care providers, patients, and caregivers, reflects the great impact felt by this disease.

It has been my honor to serve as Chairperson of the Illinois COPD Coalition and the *State Plan for Addressing COPD in Illinois*. I am grateful to the dedicated Coalition members and other partners who helped make the Plan a reality, and I hope it will help Illinoisans live longer, healthier lives. I look forward to progress in changing the face of COPD in Illinois as a result of the *State Plan*, and to a continued and growing collaboration to implement the recommendations of the Plan.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Glassroth, MD

## **Executive Summary**

The *State Plan for Addressing COPD in Illinois* was developed through the work of the Illinois COPD Coalition – a 100 member coalition, convened by Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago (RHAMC). Coalition members represent a broad group of stakeholders from throughout the State, including community-based organizations, public health departments, professional organizations, patients, caregivers, health care providers (physician, nurses, respiratory therapists, and physical therapists), as well as pharmaceutical companies and home health care providers.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) refers to a group of diseases that cause airflow blockage and breathing-related problems. COPD, also referred to as emphysema and chronic bronchitis, is one of the most significant public health issues in the United States today. It is a preventable, treatable disease that is the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death, and is projected to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death by 2020. It is estimated that 12 million people in United States have been diagnosed with COPD, and that an additional 12 million are believed to have the disease and don't even know it. COPD is also the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in Illinois. It is estimated that 557,120 Illinoisans have been diagnosed with either chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or a combination of both. This does not take into account those that may have the disease, but have not yet been diagnosed. Therefore, more detailed prevalence in Illinois is not known at this time.

To focus more attention on this chronic condition, the Illinois COPD Coalition was brought together to create a comprehensive COPD State Plan for Illinois that outlines strategies for reducing the burden of COPD in Illinois. The State Plan will serve as a guide to reduce the incidence of COPD and COPD-related morbidity and mortality as well as improve the quality of life for those living with COPD. Some objectives for doing this include:

- Enhance the prevention of COPD, by promoting smoking cessation activities and increasing awareness of environmental causes of COPD;
- Educate primary health care providers to help increase diagnosis rates and to provide patients with the GOLD standard of COPD care;
- Increase COPD awareness among at-risk populations and others to improve health care decision-making;
- Provide a statewide network of resources for those living with COPD to increase self-management skills and adherence to treatment; and
- Increase surveillance through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and other data collection tools to provide specific information about COPD in Illinois.

Five working groups were formed to develop the *State Plan for Addressing COPD in Illinois*:

The *Prevention, Early Detection, Surveillance and Data* working group developed recommendations for COPD prevention and improving early detection practices. It also examined existing data sources to define recommendations around monitoring COPD. Key points include:

- Promote public health campaigns directed at patients and health care providers that: a) help smokers quit; and b) increase the use of spirometry to diagnose COPD in those with risk factors and respiratory symptoms.
- Increase the availability and affordability of high quality smoking cessation programs.
- Increase the availability of accurate, high quality diagnostic testing with spirometry, a noninvasive breathing test that determines how well a person's lungs are working.
- Promote clean air, both indoor and outdoor, to reduce the risk of developing COPD and to reduce morbidity in people who already have COPD.

The *Treatment and Management* working group focused on COPD care – ensuring that health care providers offer state of the art care for patients and that patients have access to pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic therapies. Key points include:

- Increase awareness among health care providers about appropriate treatments for COPD through the formulation of a COPD curriculum for medical students and residents, creation of a COPD Disease Expert Network, and dissemination of a newsletter for medical professionals about standards for COPD care.
- Increase patient knowledge about COPD (cause, treatment, prognosis, and strategies to live with the disease) through delivery of educational opportunities for patients and their caregivers, and dissemination of patient materials and newsletter for COPD patients and their caregivers.
- Ensure access to non-pharmacologic therapy, including pulmonary rehabilitation and home medical equipment and oxygen, by collaborating with community fitness resources and establishing a standardized menu of home oxygen equipment options.

The *Public Awareness, Patient Education and Resources* working group focused on ways to increase overall awareness of COPD and proper medical management, as well as ways to link patients to resources. Key points include:

- Educate the general public, people living with COPD, and medical providers through implementation of National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's (NHLBI) *COPD Learn More Breathe Better Campaign*, and launching radio and print public service announcements utilizing NHLBI resources.
- Identify existing resources for COPD patients; create a comprehensive resource list and a resource driven website geared toward patients and providers.

The *Policy and Advocacy* working group explored policy approaches for improving COPD outcomes. Key points include:

- Remove barriers to access for diagnostic and care opportunities for COPD by determining public and private insurance coverage of smoking cessation treatments, spirometry, and pulmonary rehabilitation, and maximizing insurance coverage and reimbursement.
- Increase programming related to COPD through increased state funding for COPD, and encourage Illinois Department of Public Health to dedicate staff resources to COPD.
- Raise awareness among elected officials by holding annual COPD Awareness Days in Springfield, increasing district-specific visits, and creating a toolkit for legislators.
- Increase advocacy among patients by providing advocacy trainings and an advocacy toolkit.
- Increase COPD surveillance.

The recommendations generated for the *Research* section include:

- Increase communication among researchers statewide in the area of COPD by holding an annual COPD Research Conference.
- Promote research opportunities among people living with COPD by developing a centralized website for research opportunities.
- Improve communication on research advancements to the COPD patient community through the expansion of patient education materials, such as RHAMC's *Inspiration* newsletter.
- Commission future research that evaluates the effectiveness of strategies recommended in this plan.

The *COPD State Plan Outcomes and Evaluation* working group discussed ways to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the Plan as well as the sustainability and functioning of the Coalition itself. Key outcomes include:

- Decreased COPD-related mortality as measured by Illinois state mortality data.
- Increased prevalence data through the addition of COPD-related questions to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.
- Decreased number of COPD-related hospitalizations, as measured by Illinois hospitalization data.
- Annual Coalition meetings for discussions on progress and implementation.
- Increase of Coalition membership by 5% each year between 2008 and 2011.
- Each year, at least one collaboration will be developed for implementation of one or more of the strategies of the Plan.

To view the entire plan please visit [www.copdillinois.org](http://www.copdillinois.org)