

Foreword



Asthma can occur in any age group from the very young to the very old. However, evidence suggests that a broad range of complicating factors and comorbidities specific to the ageing population frequently confound the accurate diagnosis and treatment of older Australians with asthma.

In response to such evidence, the Asthma Foundations of Australia, in partnership with the Macquarie Bank, hosted a Colloquium focusing on “Asthma and the older Australian: what we know and what we need to do” in October 2004. The Colloquium enabled discussion between leaders in the field of asthma research on issues relevant to older Australians with asthma.

This supplement presents the findings of the 2004 Colloquium and includes the 13 papers presented for discussion at the meeting. It considers key issues associated with asthma in older people that will lead to more accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment, and highlights the priority areas for future research. It is hoped that publication of the findings will help to inform the asthma community about the new developments in this field.

The Australian Government recognises the importance of innovative partnerships such as the Macquarie Bank Asthma Australia Research Alliance in providing opportunities to promote and support Australian research into asthma. With this Colloquium, Macquarie Bank continues to play an important role in advancing asthma research, following on from their successful 2002 colloquium on early childhood asthma.

The Australian Government remains committed to improving the quality of life and health outcomes for all Australians with asthma. I commend this report to you as a guide to recent developments and research priorities concerning diagnosis, management and appropriate treatment for older Australians with asthma.

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