

## **The Ambulatory Care Clinical Skills Program: Asthma Management Module.**

Kenreigh CA, Wagner LT, editors. American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Bethesda, Maryland, 2000.  
Softcover, 303 pages.

The *Asthma Management Module* of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists' Ambulatory Care Clinical Skills Program is one of several publications developed in response to an increasing demand for ambulatory pharmacist-directed asthma services and the need to train pharmacists to provide these services.

The book is well organized and progresses through 12 units, starting with why and how the pharmacist should develop collaborative relationships with asthmatic patients; through how to create a patient-specific database, assess medications, and create a list of problems with drug therapy; then dealing with the issues of triage and referral, identification of health-care goals, and design of a therapy regimen; and ending with how to develop, monitor, and reassess the care plan. The introduction immediately piques interest by challenging the reader to assess his or her asthma knowledge with a number of self-assessment questions. The module itself uses the appealing case study format to illustrate important points, and questions at the end of each unit allow the reader to review the information provided and apply it to one of the cases described. There are a number of tables that will be useful in practice, as well as several forms that could be used as provided or adapted to the needs of the individual practitioner.

The emphasis of this module is clearly on establishing a framework for a practice model that the

pharmacist can use in managing patients with asthma. Some sections seem repetitive, even redundant, but this may be intentional, so as to reinforce the drug-related problems commonly encountered by patients with asthma. Each unit has its own appendices, so flipping back to the appendices, as suggested in the module, can be confusing. Because this module refers to the Core Module on many occasions and often directs the reader to that module, the *Asthma Management Module* is not ideal as a stand-alone text. Finally, the American health-care perspective is evident in many of the discussions, some of which may not be pertinent in our health-care system.

Although this module represents a reasonable first step and further acknowledgement of the role of pharmacists in managing patients with asthma, it is just that. While useful to the junior practitioner with limited experience in the area, it offers little additional information for the more experienced practitioner. It might be helpful to students or residents preparing for an ambulatory care rotation involving asthma management.

**Charles D. Bayliff**, PharmD  
Pharmaceutical Care Coordinator  
Pharmacy Services  
London Health Sciences Centre  
London, Ontario

