

Health Campaign Report

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Summary

What is this report about?

This report highlights the findings and recommendations from a health campaign aimed at identifying individuals understanding of asthma. We wanted to draw attention to the rise in cases of asthma in the UK and to inform people of ways to improve their symptoms. The campaign was carried out in March 2022.

What we did:

We set up a stand in the college foyer and created a questionnaire which was available as a hard copy and online via a QR code for people to scan. We spoke to people in person about our campaign, gave them information, signposted them to sources of support, and encouraged them to try out a peak flow monitor (used by people with lung conditions, to measure how well lungs are able to expel air).

Findings:

Overall, most people understood what asthma was and what the symptoms were, however, they were not aware of how symptoms could be improved using alternative techniques.

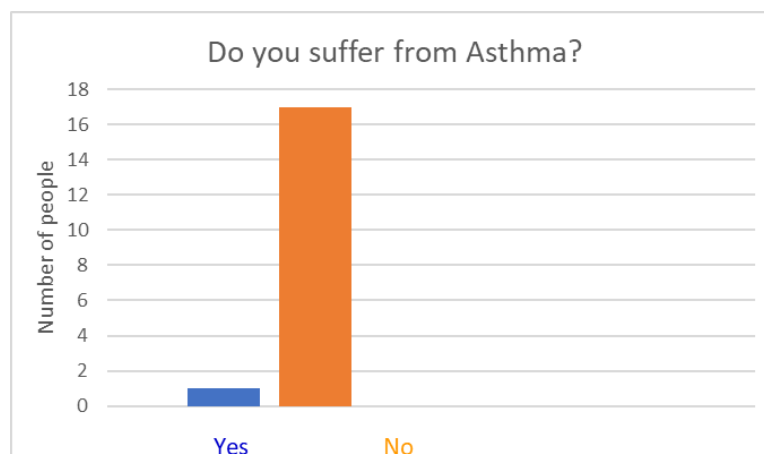
Introduction

We are students from Wiltshire College studying Level 3 Health and Social Care, and collaborated with Healthwatch Wiltshire on our public health campaign to raise awareness of lung conditions, specifically Asthma. Asthma is the most common lung condition in the UK and while it can be a minor nuisance to some people it can cause severe breathing difficulties in others. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted that people with Asthma had a higher risk of serious illness if they contracted the virus and we wanted to find out if people were aware of ways to strengthen the respiratory system through alternative non-medical techniques.

What we did.

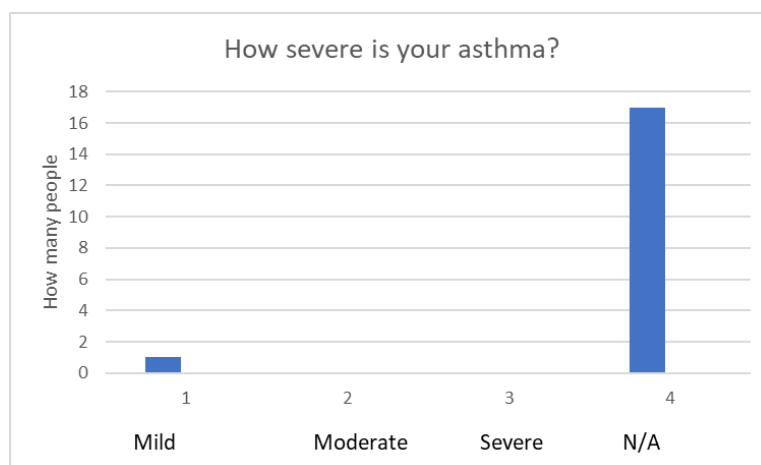
We created a questionnaire to identify how much people knew about Asthma, where they could access information about the condition, and how to improve symptoms. The questionnaire was available as a hard copy and online via a QR code. We also invited people to use a peak flow monitor to see whether they were above or below average on the peak flow chart for their age and height.

Do you suffer with Asthma?



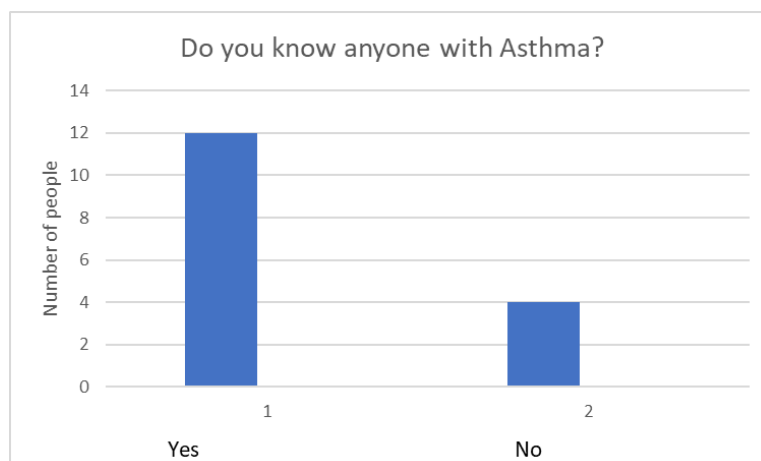
Of the eighteen people who responded to this question one person did have Asthma.

How severe is your Asthma?



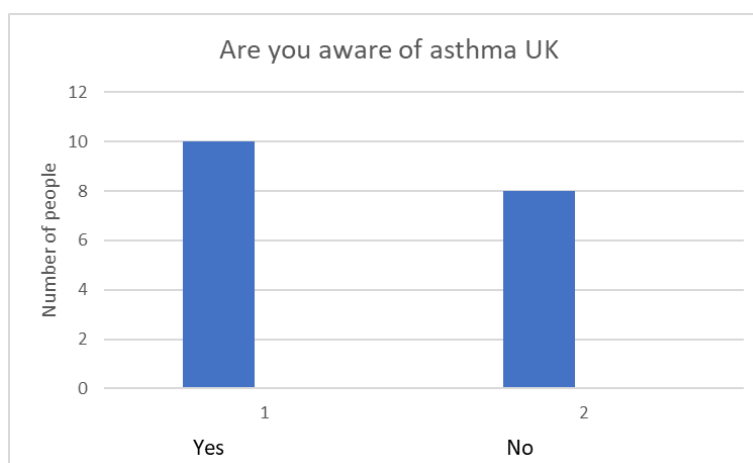
The one person who identified as having Asthma said that their symptoms were mild.

Do you know anyone with Asthma?



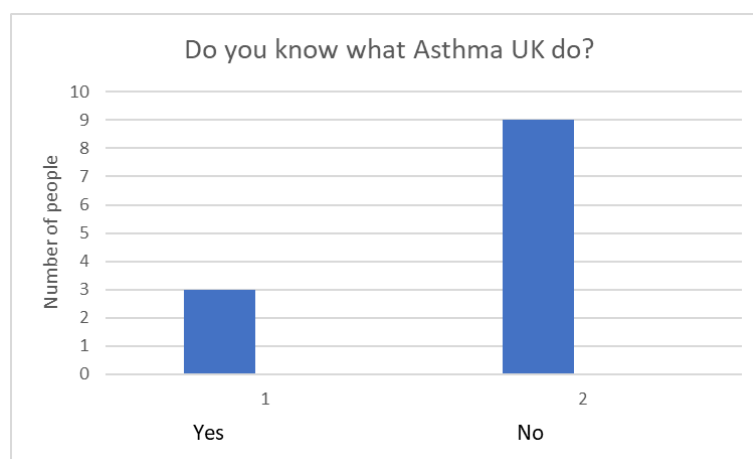
Sixteen people answered this question. Twelve people knew someone with Asthma showing that it is a well-known and common condition.

Are you aware of Asthma UK?



Asthma UK is the national website for those diagnosed with Asthma and it was positive to see that ten respondents were aware that it existed, however half had not heard of it.

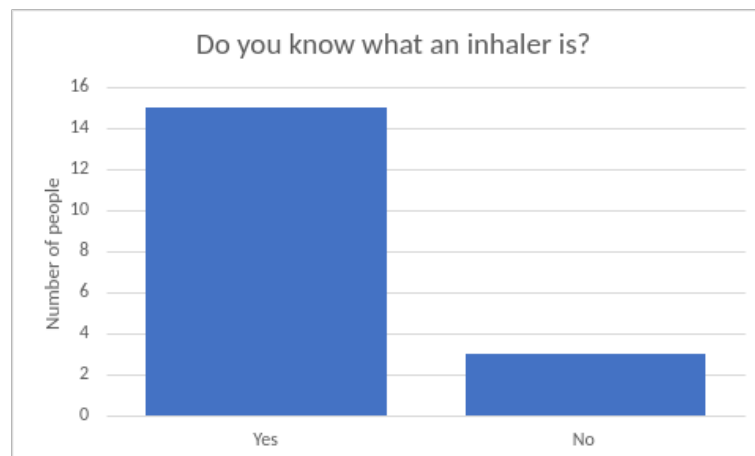
Do you know what Asthma UK do?



It was less positive to note that over half of those who responded to this question were not aware of the work that Asthma UK do. As well as giving advice and support they also carry out research and campaign to improve the quality of care provided

to people with lung conditions. The website also provides resources to help people manage their asthma.¹

Do you know what an inhaler is?



Fifteen people replied that they did know what an inhaler was and when asked to describe they gave the following comments.

'It is a steroid that powers the lungs.'

'It helps clear the airways.'

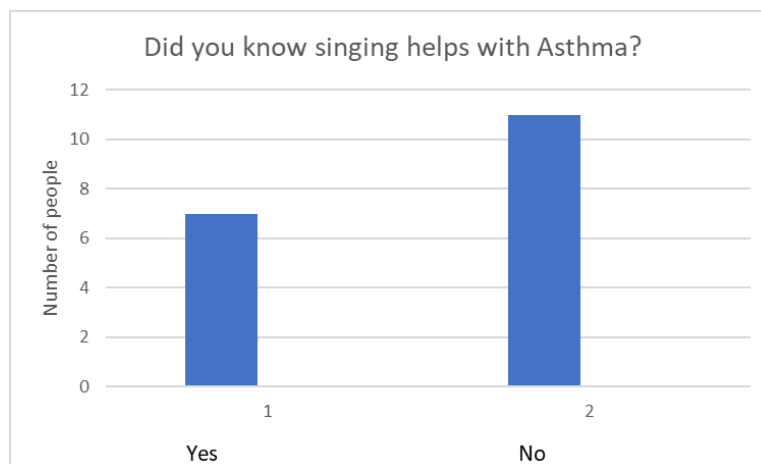
'People with asthma use them to regulate their breathing.'

'A device that opens the airways to encourage breathing.'

'Medication that can be inhaled to open bronchioles in the lungs.'

¹ <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/living-with-asthma/music/#:~:text=But%20early%20research%20is%20encouraging,breathing%20and%20improves%20their%20posture.>

Did you know singing helps with Asthma?



Early research suggests that singing has benefits for people with Asthma, however, eleven of the eighteen respondents were not aware of this. ⁱ Singing helps to control the muscles that help us breathe and strengthens the lungs, however, medication prescribed for asthma should continue to be taken unless the GP tells you otherwise.

In your own words, explain what Asthma is.

This question was asked to check people's understanding of Asthma which overall was very good. Some of the responses given are below:

'A breathing problem.'

'A lung condition.'

'A restriction of air flow.'

'Respiratory problems.'

'Respiratory condition which impacts the lung capacity.'

Conclusion and recommendations

Although only one participant had asthma, it was positive to see that 100% of participants understood the condition and 83% of participants were aware of the benefits of an inhaler.

Just over half of the people who took part in the campaign had heard of Asthma UK, however, two thirds were not aware of the work that the charity did. This highlights the need for more awareness of the support available to people living with a lung condition.

The benefits of singing for people with asthma was not widely known indicating that people were unaware of alternative methods for managing their symptoms. GP's and other healthcare professionals should make people aware of the positive effects that singing has on lung health and encourage people to try it.

Based on what we heard from people who took part in our campaign we make the following recommendations.

- Ensure that people are aware of the support services available for those with lung conditions in Wiltshire and how to access these services
 - GP's and Asthma nurses should encourage people to use alternative methods of managing their symptoms such as singing
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