

Medical and professional care

- Only 44 (23%) of the 195 patients who died from asthma had personal asthma action plans
- There was no evidence that an asthma review had been carried out in general practice in the 12 months before death for 84 (43%) of the 195 people who died
- Exacerbating factors, or triggers, were noted in the records of half the patients who died. They included drugs, viral infections and allergy; but a trigger was not documented in the other half
- In 155 cases where severity could be estimated, 61 (39%) appeared to have severe asthma. Fourteen (9%) were being treated for mild asthma and 76 (49%) for moderate asthma
- The expert panels identified factors that could have avoided death in relation to implementation of asthma guidelines in 89 (46%) of the 195 deaths, including lack of specific asthma expertise in 34 (17%) and lack of knowledge of the national guidelines in 48 (25%)