

trusted messengers

IMPACT REPORT 2024

Overview

Trusted Messengers is Allergy & Asthma Network's signature health equity initiative. It is aimed at promoting fair access in healthcare. Trusted Messengers strives to bridge gaps in healthcare access by providing people with credible and trusted sources to support informed care decisions.

Trusted Messengers:

- Aims to close the gaps in care and outcomes related to asthma, COPD, eczema and food allergies.
- Reaches individuals with limited healthcare access through community engagement.
- Meets people with limited access to healthcare resources where they are.
- Provides education materials that include and respect different cultures, offered in English and Spanish.
- Encourages trust in the healthcare system, self-management, self-advocacy, and shared decision-making.
- Creates opportunities for people living with asthma, COPD, eczema and food allergies to learn about engagement in research.

Key elements:

- Community partnerships
- Community engagement events in areas with limited resources
- Free Virtual Asthma Coaching Program to improve asthma outcomes

Background

Black and Hispanic/Latino communities face notable gaps in asthma, COPD, eczema and food allergy-related health outcomes. Economic challenges, barriers to access care and environmental factors contribute to poor health outcomes, increasing worse symptoms, hospitalizations and disease-related mortality.

Trusted Messengers launched in 2020 to tackle these gaps by offering medically accurate and culturally relevant patient education and community outreach.

Through partnerships with faith-based organizations, local health centers and community groups, the initiative has expanded beyond asthma education to encompass asthma, COPD, eczema and food allergies. The key program, the **Trusted Messengers Virtual Asthma Coaching Program**, has demonstrated measurable improvements in asthma control, self-management and healthcare utilization.

Trusted Messengers Strategic Framework

Vision	Lead initiatives that reduce health gaps and enhance access to essential health information and screenings for individuals at higher risk of asthma, allergies and related conditions. Our goal is to be a trusted leader in collaborating with others to expand access to essential health resources and screenings, especially for those most impacted by asthma, COPD, eczema and food allergies.
Mission	Establish a trusted national initiative designed to expand healthcare access and support lasting health outcomes for all communities.
Strategic priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Engagement: Promote healthy lifestyle changes through culturally relevant education.• Healthcare Access: Minimize obstacles for individuals at high risk for poor health outcomes.• Digital Innovation: Utilize patient data to create personalized health solutions.
Outreach Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programs: Asthma, COPD, food allergy, and eczema surveys and assessments at local health events, supplemented by a 6-week virtual asthma coaching intervention.• Platforms: Digital health hub (Health In Motion Breathe platform), website (TrustedMessengers.org), and partner digital channels.• Partners: Collaborations with national and local organizations providing technical expertise and resources.
Core Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborative • Authentic • Rapid • Scalable • Gold Standard

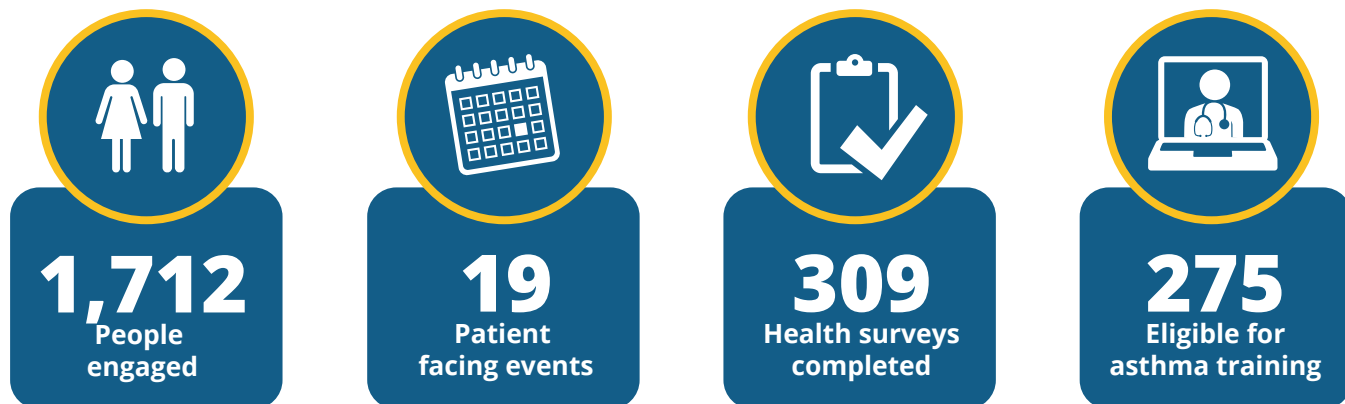
How the Trusted Messengers Program Works

The Trusted Messengers program uses a structured approach that combines education, community engagement, and personalized support:

- **Community partnerships:** We collaborate with local organizations, faith-based institutions, and community leaders to connect with and offer free educational resources to patients and caregivers.
- **Outreach and education:** Trusted Messengers staff participate in workshops, health fairs, and one-on-one sessions to share vital health information and resources.
- **Screening and referrals:** The program includes asthma and allergy surveys, screenings and assessments at events, connecting at-risk individuals with appropriate healthcare providers.
- **Virtual Asthma Coaching Program:** This award-winning program complements in-person efforts, offering accessible support and education through a 6-week online course with a certified asthma educator.
- **Ongoing support:** Trusted Messengers provides follow-up to the Virtual Asthma Coaching Program, at the 12th and 20th weeks and 7th and 13th months, to evaluate progress in asthma management. This helps community members continue to navigate their health journey and access necessary resources to manage their health.

By combining these key components, the Trusted Messengers program creates a comprehensive support system that addresses the unique needs of each community member it serves.

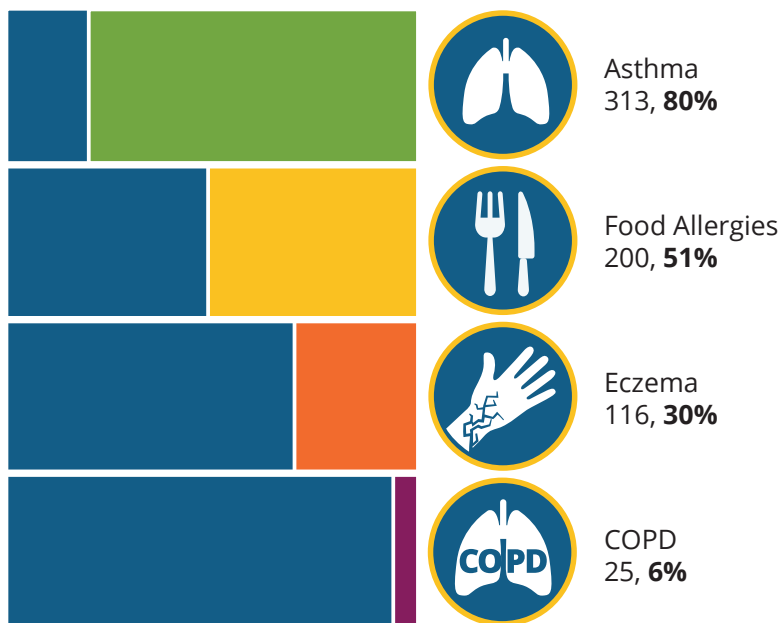
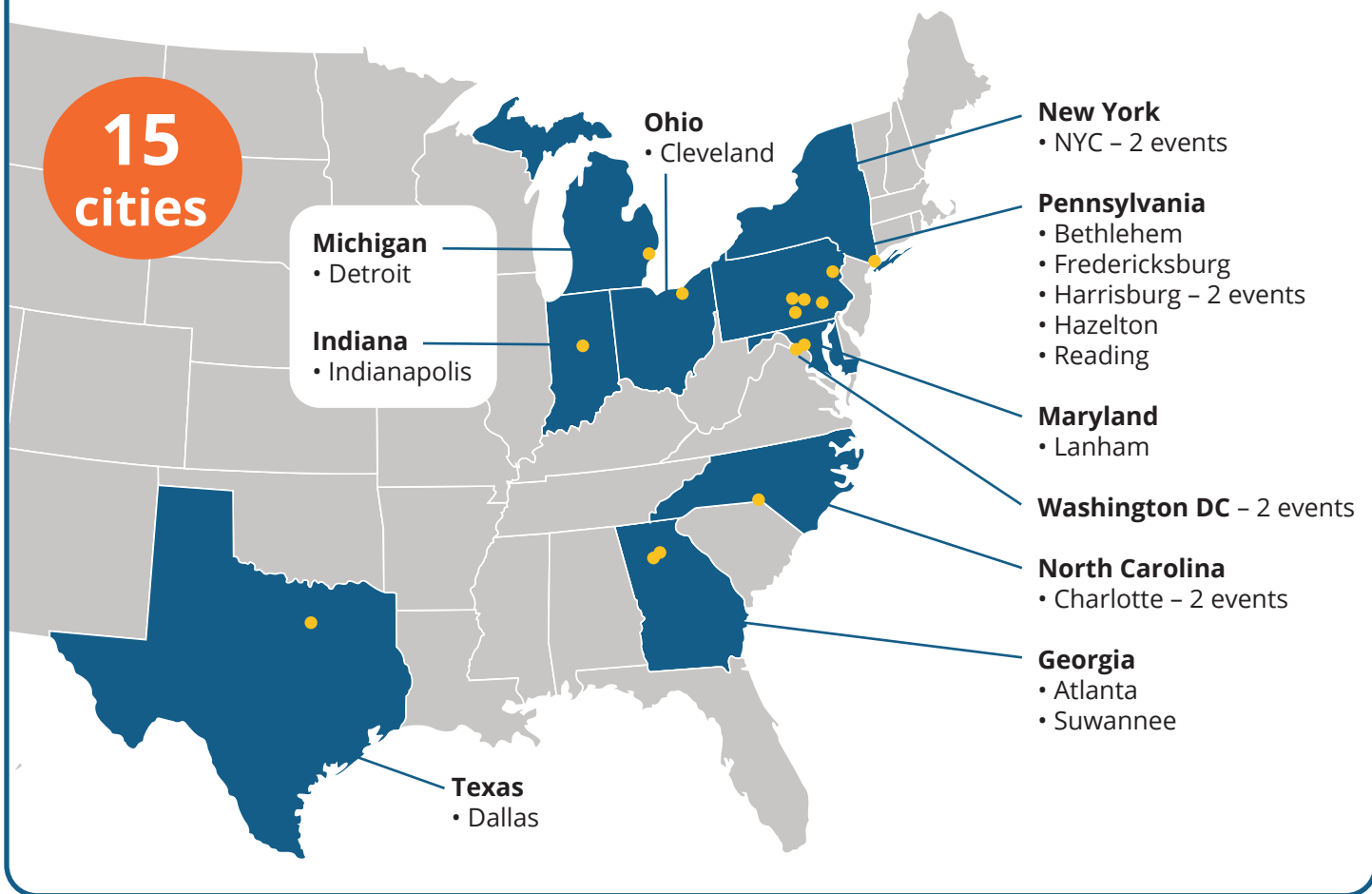
2024 Events Recap



"The educational materials you provide [are] very helpful, and your webinars are very informative."



Location of Trusted Messengers Events in 2024



Outreach event attendees that completed the screening tool had **one or more** of four main health conditions.

They were given information and resources about asthma, COPD, eczema and food allergies.

Formalized partnerships with:

- African American Male Wellness Agency
- Balm in Gilead
- Black Health Matters
- Latino Connection
- National Alliance for Hispanic Health

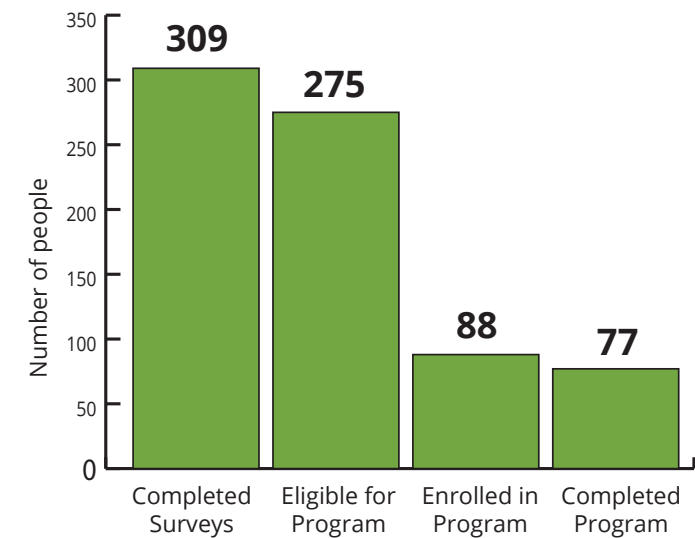
2024 Trusted Messengers Virtual Asthma Coaching Program

Overall Reach

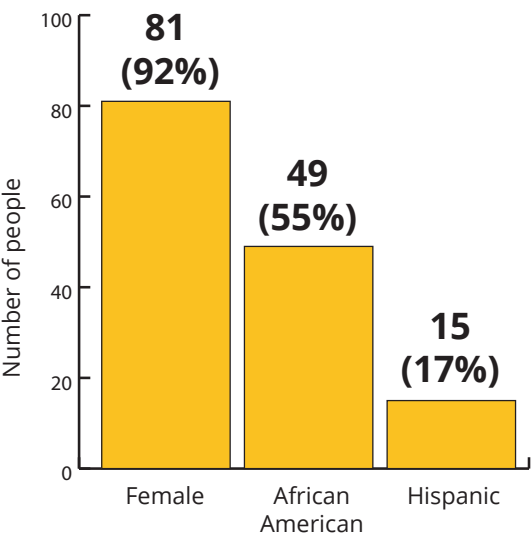
The **Virtual Asthma Coaching Program** demonstrates strong asthma management outcomes.

In 2024, the Virtual Asthma Coaching Program saw an enrollment rate of 32% among eligible individuals who completed outreach surveys. With ongoing enrollment, 88% of the current participants in the Virtual Asthma Coaching Program have completed the six-week asthma education sessions.

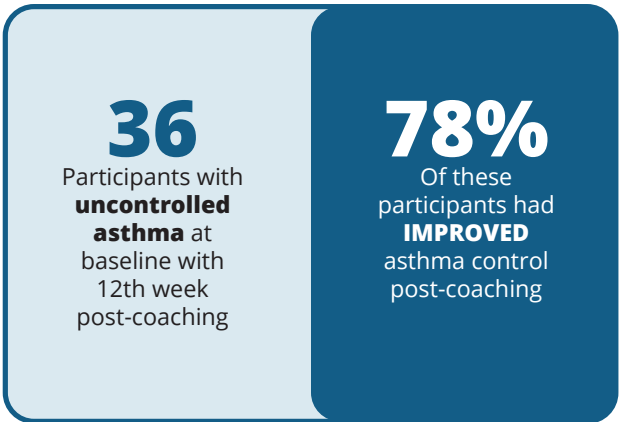
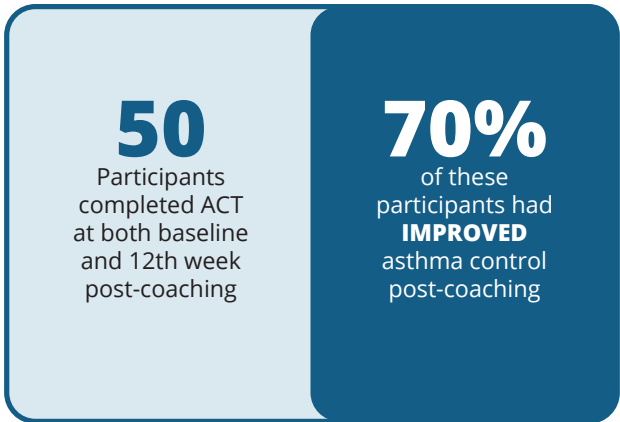
Asthma Education Program
Participation Funnel



The demographics of the people
enrolled in asthma education
sessions:



2024 Asthma Control Test Survey Results



Of those (n=36) who had uncontrolled asthma at baseline



50%

Experience a **DECREASE** in corticosteroid use



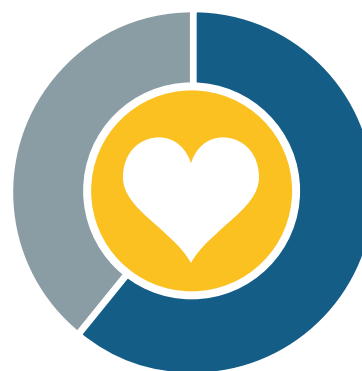
33%

Experience a **DECREASE** in number of asthma-related doctor visits



28%

Experience a **DECREASE** in urgent care and emergency room visits



61%

Experience an **IMPROVED** quality of life

"I think [the program is] perfect. I've learnt a lot."

"[The asthma coach] is very professional, creative, a good listener, and an excellent coach."

"This is an extremely informative training. I learned a lot from participating."

100%

Agree or strongly agree that the asthma coaching program was useful.

Educational Resource Development

New materials released in 2024:

- **One-page handouts in English and Spanish**, covering:
 - Asthma management, triggers, and pregnancy with asthma
 - Food allergies, eczema, and chronic urticaria
- **Spanish-language website relaunch** (redalergiayasma.org)
- **Asthma Equity Explorer database** helps researchers track gaps in asthma health outcomes (asthmaequity.org)

Publications, Abstracts and Articles

Trusted Messengers' impact and reach are enhanced and disseminated through peer-reviewed publications and presentations at national and international conferences.

Abstract/Poster Presentations

- Virtual Asthma Self-Management Education Program Offered by Certified Asthma Educators and Digital Platform. Presented at AAAAI in San Diego, California. February 2025.
- Trusted Messengers Virtual Asthma Coaching Using an Asthma App Improves Asthma Control and Engagement. Presented at ACAAI in Boston, Massachusetts. October 2024.
- **Conference Presentations**
 - PriMed Virtual Webinar
 - Ohio Public Health Department
 - National Asthma Network
 - Indiana Environmental Public Health Division
 - Trusted Messengers Outreach & Virtual Asthma Coaching Program – American Thoracic Society in The Innovation Hub. San Diego, California. May 2024.
 - Health Equity Advocacy Heroes Conference (2024) – Virtual Asthma Coaching Impact



The National Institute of Health's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) awarded a Small Business Innovation Research Grant in collaboration with Blue Marble Health that supported the development of the application used for the Virtual Asthma Coaching Program. This digital platform has the potential to address minority health and disparities by using patient-centered design approaches and access.

Looking Ahead to 2025 – 2026

Key Goals	Status
Increase referrals to the Virtual Asthma Coaching Program.	Develop new marketing strategy to increase referrals to the Virtual Asthma Coaching Program.
Increase participation in health-focused events.	Participate in 20 or more community events in 2025.
Refine the strategic approach for event planning.	Participate at events expecting a minimum of 300 attendees in locations with a high asthma burden.
Formalize strategic partnerships.	Secure partnerships with Black Health Matters, Right2Breathe and other groups that will reach and impact more people.
Expand bilingual educational resources.	Develop bilingual education focused on COPD, health insurance, nasal polyps and allergic rhinitis.
Enroll 500 people in the Virtual Asthma Coaching Program.	Develop strategies to support enrollment in the Virtual Asthma Coaching Program.
Expand the coaching model to other disease states.	Complete needs assessments to determine feasibility of additional coaching programs.

Additional Health Equity Program Goals

- **Trusted Messengers** will evolve into a multi-dimensional initiative to close healthcare gaps and improve care for all.
- **Black and Hispanic/Latino virtual conference series:** *“Black People Like Me”* and *“Unidos Hablemos”* events. Topics in 2025 and 2026 will build on sessions already completed for people with asthma, COPD, eczema, food allergy and chronic urticaria.
- **Clinical Trial Diversity:** Promote the importance of engagement in research.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Prioritize expanding healthcare services, promoting environmental fairness, and securing support for government-funded programs.
- **Future Expansion:** Exploring virtual health coaching for people who are newly diagnosed with eczema and/or food allergies.

Conclusion

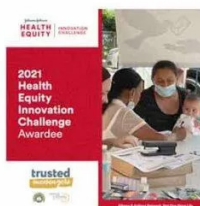
Trusted Messengers has grown into a **nationally recognized initiative** driving measurable improvements in healthcare outcomes. With expanded programming, innovative digital platforms and strengthened partnerships, we continue to make a meaningful impact in communities that have limited access to resources.

Looking ahead, our focus remains on supporting **patients, expanding healthcare access, and advocating for improvement** in asthma, COPD, food allergies and eczema

The success of this program is a direct result of the involvement/engagement of our Trusted Messenger participants. Thank you for making the program a success!

We are grateful to our Trusted Messengers program sponsors for their continuing support of these initiatives. Their continued support of our Trusted Messengers health equity initiatives allows us to educate and empower people who are at greatest risk for poor health outcomes.

Awards



Founding Partner



Collaborator



Sponsors



The views expressed in this publication are those of the AAN and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the National Institutes of Health.