

Asthma Hospitalizations, Detroit Residents 1996

Kenneth R. Wilcox, MD, DrPH
Joanne Hogan, PhD
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Summary: The asthma hospitalization rates for Detroit have remained high. For children, the rates have continued to rise, in contrast to the rest of the state. It is clear that, to the extent that hospitalizations are a reflection of the asthma problem, Michigan's primary area of concern is Detroit. Concentrated effort and assistance will be needed to bring asthma under control here.

For the state as a whole, the number of hospitalizations for asthma among children has been stable for those under 5 and between 10 and 14, but has risen for the 5 to 9 age group. The number of discharges of children has risen for Detroit but has declined for the rest of the state. In 1995 and 1996, the number of black children hospitalized for asthma in the state exceeded the number of white children. The number of black children hospitalized in Detroit has risen dramatically, whereas the number of black children hospitalized in the rest of the state rose only slightly during this time.

Data is included to show the numbers of hospitalizations in Detroit with a principal diagnosis of asthma and the number having a different principal diagnosis but having asthma included in the diagnoses coded. As expected, the rates for asthma as primary diagnosis were higher in males under 15 and in females 20 or older. Black persons at all ages had higher rates than white persons, and persons of other race had rates lower than white persons.

There were 12 Detroit hospitals and 2 suburban hospitals that had more than 300 admissions for asthma in 1996. If consistency in dealing with asthma is felt desirable, a limited number of hospitals working together could develop compatible protocols and programs.

The greatest numbers of asthma admissions were in the northeast and northwest parts of Detroit. For the most part, the highest rates were in central and southern Detroit. The major exception was ZIP code 48235 where the rate for school aged children was highest. Close examination of the geographic distribution of cases will be necessary to direct programs to the areas most needed.

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Division of Epidemiology Services
(517) 335-8806