Bushfires Smoke and Asthma

Recommendations for Health Care Providers

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

Bushfire smoke increases the likelihood of respiratory symptoms including:
- Breathlessness
- Wheeze
- Throat irritation/Dry throat
- Cough

An increase in these symptoms may be acute or ongoing

During bushfire seasons there is an increase in health care use and asthma attacks

Increased symptoms of anxiety and depression can also occur

**Who is affected?**

Anyone can be affected, even people without an asthma diagnosis

**Populations most at risk**

- People with asthma or chronic respiratory conditions
- The elderly and small children

**What can you do?**

Ensure patients have an up-to-date written asthma action plan

Provide accurate and consistent information regarding air pollution

Consider alternative models of care when air quality is poor - such as using telehealth

Patients should continue their prescribed medication and have a 30 day supply

Encourage smoke reduction strategies such as staying indoors

Encourage use a P2/N95 mask when outdoors

Developed as part of the:

SEVERE ASTHMA TOOLKIT
toolkit.severeasthma.org.au

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