



Asthma UK Centre
for Applied Research



Impact Summary 2014 – 2024



Co-led by Professor Sir Aziz Sheikh from the University of Edinburgh and Professor Chris Griffiths from Queen Mary University of London, the Asthma UK Centre for Applied Research (henceforth Centre) conducts world-leading evidence-based research which can prove life-changing for people with asthma.

We are a UK-wide network of researchers, clinicians and people with asthma which uses applied research methods and data science to drive forward asthma policy, practice and research.

Did you know?...

Since 2014, the Asthma UK Centre for Applied Research has:

- Brought together and effectively networked researchers from 22 academic, NHS and other collaborating institutions from across the UK to create a vibrant, asthma collaborative focused on applied research.
- Facilitated opportunities to share research ideas, knowledge, skills and expertise to improve asthma outcomes
- Developed and nurtured one of the largest Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) groups in the world with more than 100 actively engaged members
- Leveraged an additional £83 million of funding for asthma research beyond the initial grant monies of circa £4 million - representing a 20-fold increase
- Conducted some of the largest asthma clinical trials and observational studies ever undertaken in the UK or indeed anywhere in the world
- Significantly contributed to applied asthma science base by publishing over 750 scientific publications in peer reviewed journals, many of which regularly feature in the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric
- Generated evidence and insights that now offers the opportunity to achieve a step-change in asthma outcomes across the UK and internationally
- Influenced asthma-related policy, guidelines and practice, and research methodologies
- Successfully trained over 50 doctoral (both PhD and MD) students and research fellows, increasing the capacity and capability of the next generation of applied asthma scientists and future leaders
- Established ongoing innovative collaborations between academia, industry and healthcare partners

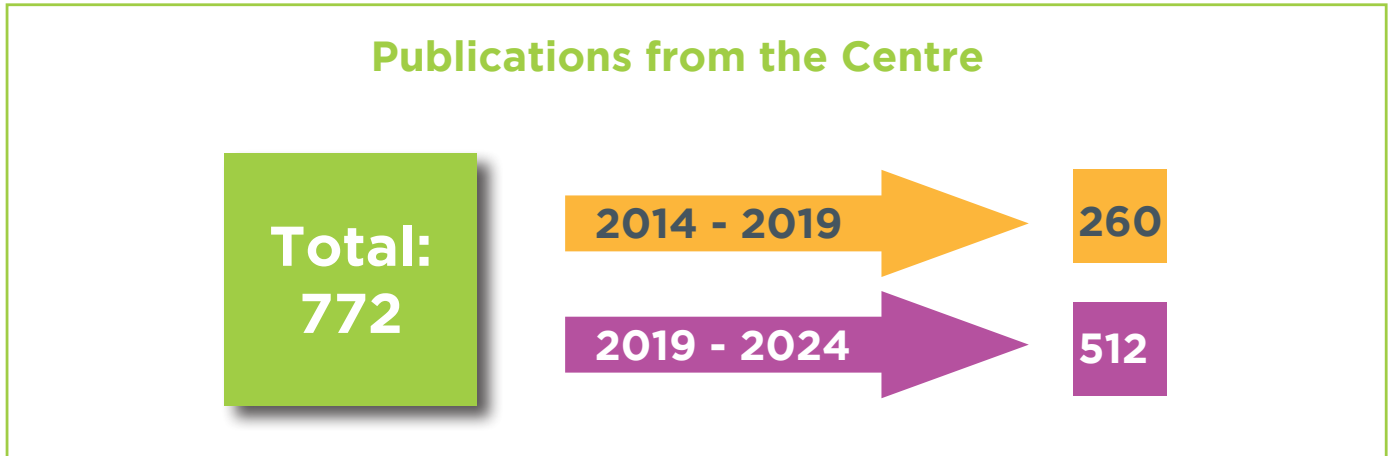
Our research has:

- Identified environmental risk factors for asthma, both indoor and outdoor, that are important triggers for asthma attacks
- Identified those at highest risk of asthma attacks through conducting some of the largest population-based studies ever undertaken
- Embedded the use of asthma self-management into primary care
- Developed and shown the benefits of novel digital tools to support people live with their asthma

Our 5 key impacts

Made Asthma Research a Priority

A key impact from the Centre has been its influence in helping bring funding into asthma research. Beyond the core funding of £4 million (M) from Asthma + Lung UK over the past 10 years, the Centre has collectively generated more than £83M of external research grant monies across 106 grants and £2.5M of support for postgraduate training through Centre members at partner and affiliate institutions. Every one pound invested has seen more than a 20-fold return.



The Centre has produced over 750 peer-reviewed publications, many of which have been published in the world's leading journals, pushing forward the applied asthma knowledge base. These outputs have influenced:

- Policymakers in UK and devolved nations' parliaments;
- Industry partners to innovate and develop health-based technologies and;
- Clinical practices through contributions to guideline development groups and training materials for healthcare professionals;
- The asthma research environment both in the UK and internationally by presenting at conferences and symposia.

Pushed the Boundaries of Patient and Public Involvement

Working together with people with asthma has always been at the heart of the Centre, and Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in research has had a culture shift during the lifetime of the Centre. It has been at the forefront of this shift, through creating one of the largest and most diverse PPI groups in the world, who have supported

the evaluation of the National Institute for Health and Care Research's UK Standards for Public Involvement in Research, and by publishing guidelines on how to fund staff to support the facilitation of meaningful PPI.

The Centre PPI team has facilitated involvement in over
100 grant applications
and research studies and supported
35 doctoral student studies

Trained the Next Generation of Asthma Researchers

The Centre has supported and trained over 50 doctoral (PhD students, MD students), and Early Career Researchers. It has played a leading role in developing the next generation of interdisciplinary applied asthma researchers and championing future leaders. The Centre's training programme is a unique offering helping develop comprehensive skills within a safe and supportive environment. Some of the Centre's alumni have become co-applicants on major collaborative projects, gaining ongoing confidence, training and networking through the network.

Established a Unique Collaborative Research Environment

The Centre has established a vibrant, patient-centred, multi-site Centre of excellence. It has an inter-disciplinary, team science approach, without a limiting hierarchy. The network has grown to 22 diverse academic, NHS and other collaborating institutions who work together to the shared goal of improving asthma outcomes. This breadth of methodological expertise in applied research, both qualitative and quantitative, when combined with that offered by frontline clinicians and lived experiences, offers a potent combination that has been instrumental in achieving the many advances made by the Centre.



“There is a nucleus around which people can congregate. It's just a huge stimulus. I think as an organisation structure, ambition, outlook, it is working extremely well”

Centre Member



Continuing to Transform Respiratory Research Culture

The collaboration and partnerships that started in the Centre have transformed the applied asthma research culture and environment. Despite these impacts, the Centre's journey has in many ways only just begun. The momentum, spirit, ethos and aim of the Centre have laid an outstanding foundation on which to now build: people living with asthma and other common respiratory conditions deserve the best outcomes possible, only achievable with world-leading evidence-based research and a strong advocacy focus.

The future

After 10 years, it is clear we have made noteworthy progress on many fronts, but our work is not done. Despite major impacts on the personal lives of people with asthma, researchers, and the asthma research environment, there is still much that we can and must do.

We want to attract new collaborators, as well as continuing our work with our multiple partners. We want to engage and empower patients, policy makers and the public.

Join us and help to ensure that what we know works is implemented, embedded and sustained at scale in daily clinical practice.

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Read the full Impact Report and find out more about the work of the Centre on its website and social channels: aukcar.ac.uk | [@aukcar](https://twitter.com/aukcar) | [LinkedIn: Asthma UK Centre for Applied Research](https://www.linkedin.com/company/aukcar)

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