

Research Award:

Uncontrolled Asthma and Related Risk Factors in Children In Ireland – MSc Allergy, University of Southampton

Awarded to: Dr Sarah Lewis

Lay summary

Asthma is the most common long-term illness in childhood. Asthma can be ‘controlled’, or treated, using safe and effective asthma medicines, enabling most children to live a healthy and active life. Despite this, many children have frequent asthma symptoms and miss school and activities, with some needing hospitalisation.

Complacency around asthma is common among parents and healthcare providers and asthma symptoms are often not recognised. Previous studies found that uncontrolled asthma was common in children attending hospital clinics, even among those not attending for asthma care.

There is limited recent research in Ireland about uncontrolled asthma. The aim of this study was to find out how many children attending hospital services in Dublin, Ireland, had poorly controlled asthma, and to further explore why this might be.

We found that nearly 60% of children who attended outpatient clinic appointments had uncontrolled asthma. Younger children, and children who had missed activities over the previous year, were more likely to have uncontrolled asthma. Children with poorly controlled asthma received more oral steroids, had more emergency department visits, and had found it harder to get medical care for asthma, than children with well-controlled asthma.

Uncontrolled asthma is common in children attending paediatric hospitals in Ireland. All hospital visits are an opportunity to ask about asthma, and to reduce the avoidable burden and risk from asthma for children.
