

# 13th EFA Conference: Allergy, Asthma & Future of Patient Organisations

12-13 June 2009, Rome.

## Know Your Air for Health:

Communicating EU air quality  
information to allergy, asthma and COPD  
patients



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# Presentation Overview

About the Health & Environment Alliance

- About HEAL
- EU Air Quality Policy Context
- EFA and HEAL project – Know Your Air for Health (2008-2009)
- Plans for 2009-2010
- Lessons learned



# HEAL: Who we are, What we do

About the Health & Environment Alliance

**A European umbrella platform with more than 60 member organisations in 22 countries**

- Monitor environmental health concerns/evidence.
- Advocate for health to be at the centre of EU (and other governmental) environmental policy.
- Increase health community's understanding and participation in EU and national decision-making processes
- Ensure communication of new scientific studies and consensus documents to policy makers/ stakeholders
  - reduce science-policy lag



# EU Policy Context

About the Health & Environment Alliance

- **Directive on Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe– 2002**
- **Thematic Strategy – 2005**
- **New Directive on Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe - June 2008, national legislation by June 2010.**
- **National Emission Ceilings - Must be achieved by 2010**



# A Joint EFA and HEAL Project

www.Know Your **Air For Health**.eu

To help communicate EU air quality information and alerts to allergy, asthma and COPD patients in Europe.



**Asthma and allergy groups are key partners in the decision making process**

# Know your air for health



- Health effects
- Your right to cleaner air
- Useful links



This website provides citizens with information on national and local air pollution in Europe. It also offers useful links and references on how to find information about action aimed at improving air quality at the national level and in your local area. The text is particularly intended to meet the needs of those considered susceptible to air pollution.

English (en)   
English (en)  
Italiano (it)  
Suomi (fi)

## Find your local respiratory health forecasts:



"Know your air for health" is a joint project by the [Health & Environment Alliance \(HEAL\)](#) and the [European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients Associations \(EFA\)](#).

Our main objective is to help communicate EU air quality information and alerts to allergy, asthma and COPD patients in Europe.

# Policy Opportunities in 2009-10

- **Derogations** - EU countries asking for more time to respect EU air quality limits (*Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Latvia; Poland; Portugal; Slovakia; Spain; The Netherlands*\*).
- **New European Parliament** – natural allies for protective air quality levels at local and national level, and EU role in ensuring implementation
- **WHO Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Parma in February 2010** – 53 countries

<http://www.euro.who.int/parma2010>

\*[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/time\\_extensions.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/time_extensions.htm)



# Actions for this year

1. **Model letters for governments**
  - a. Have you formulated specific advice for parents, schools and children?
  - b. Have you applied for air quality derogation and what is the health impact?
3. **Follow up model letter to new national MEPs**
4. **Website updates:** highlight governments advice, derogations, links to climate change and the bigger picture
5. **Possibility for EFA members to disseminate specific advice to schools and parents' associations**



# Lessons Learned

About the Health & Environment Alliance

- Participation of the **health community** in EU environment policy-making is key to promote sustainable and healthy environments
- The importance of **patient group involvement** in implementation of EU law.
- Know you **Air for Health** is a **successful model** for future patient groups' activities related to environmental issues



# A resource for members

About the Health & Environment Alliance

[www.KnowYourAirForHealth.eu](http://www.KnowYourAirForHealth.eu)

An ongoing resource for members, especially those who are not working on air quality

For information on the Health and Environment Alliance:

[www.env-health.org](http://www.env-health.org)

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