

# European Respiratory Society Annual Congress 2012

**Abstract Number:** 4650

**Publication Number:** P1008

**Abstract Group:** 6.1. Epidemiology

**Keyword 1:** Primary care **Keyword 2:** Epidemiology **Keyword 3:** No keyword

**Title:** The impact of medical education on asthma/rhinitis management by general practitioners

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**Body:** Background: studies on the effectiveness of medical education programs to improve the adherence to guidelines (GL) report conflicting results. Aim: to evaluate the impact of a medical education course (MEC) on the behavior of general practitioners (GPs) to treat asthma and allergic rhinitis (AR). Methods: 1820 patients with either AR or asthma (mean age 41yrs) of 107 Italian GPs. 50% of GPs attended a preliminary MEC (group A) and 50% did not (group B). The adherence for AR and asthma treatment was evaluated according to ARIA and GINA GL. Results: AR and asthma were diagnosed in 78% and 56% of patients, respectively. Higher compliances to ARIA GL were found in Group B for treating mild AR, in Group A for treating moderate-severe AR. Adherence to GINA GL for asthma treatment did not significantly differ between group A and B: an insignificant trend to higher compliances was observed in group A for treating severe persistent asthma without AR (63 versus 46%), in group B for treating severe persistent asthma with concomitant AR. Conclusions: We confirmed that GPs often tend to treat patients independently from GL. A single medical educational course seems to improve adherence to GL only for treating severe patients. This work was supported by the "Italian Medicines Agency (AIFA)", within the independent drug research program, contract no. "FARM5JYS5A".