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Title: The New Zealand respiratory health survey- rationale, methodology and response rate

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Body: Previous cluster analyses have reported candidate phenotypes of asthma and COPD, however the validity and response to medication of different phenotypes is not known. The NZRHS was designed to address this. Here we report the study design and Phase 1 results. Aims To describe clinical phenotypes of adults with symptoms of airways disease recruited from a random sample of New Zealand adults and compare the response to bronchodilators and inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) between phenotypes. Methods The NZRHS had 3 phases: Phase 1 A random population sample of adults aged 18-75yrs was drawn from the electoral roll and a brief respiratory questionnaire posted to all participants. Phase 2 Detailed characterisation of airways disease and response to salbutamol and ipratropium was performed on 451 participants with symptoms of wheeze and breathlessness. Phase 3 Steroid naïve participants from Phase 2 were offered a 12 week trial of ICS to assess response to treatment. Results of Phase 1 Questionnaires were posted to 16,459 adults. 11,397 responses were received (69.2%) and are summarised in Tables 1 & 2. Conclusions The NZRHS has demonstrated a high symptom burden amongst adults in NZ. Phases 2 & 3 will allow description of candidate phenotypes and comparison of their response to medication.

Summary of Responses

Completed questionnaires	8,628
Wrong address	2,658
Deceased	35
Spoiled/ missing data	76
Total	11,397

Reported Symptom and Disease Prevalence

	N / N	%
Symptom		
Wheeze & breathlessness	1,264 / 8,540	14.8
Cough	1,856 / 8,509	21.8
Sputum	1,027 / 8,501	12.1
Drs Diagnosis		
Asthma	1,969 / 8,519	23.1
Chronic Bronchitis	574 / 8,500	6.8
Emphysema	78 / 8,509	0.9
Smoking Status		
Current	785 / 8,519	9.2
Ex	2,650 / 8,519	31.1