- 2 Lietzen R, Virtanen P, Kivimäki M, *et al.* Stressful life events and the onset of asthma. *Eur Respir J* 2011; 37: 1360–1365.
- 3 Bosley C, Fosbury JA, Cochrane GM. The psychological factors associated with poor compliance with treatment with asthma. *Eur Respir J* 1995; 8: 899–904.
- 4 Moore CM, Meyers DA, Wenzel SE, *et al.* Identification of asthma phenotypes using cluster analysis in the severe asthma research program. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 2010; 181: 315–323.
- 5 Haldar P, Pavord ID, Shaw DE, *et al.* Cluster analysis and clinical asthma phenotypes. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 2008; 178: 218–224.

DOI: 10.1183/09031936.00036712

From the authors:

We would like to thank Z. Pond and co-workers for their interest in our recent editorial with regard to the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) Asthma Challenge [1]. We are also delighted by their enthusiasm, in terms of embracing this concept, and framing the issue in the context of their local population. We recognise that the GINA recommendations provide a framework for the management of asthma in the general population of patients [2], but it is also recognised, within the body of the document, that management needs to be individualised. As Z. Pond and co-workers have outlined patient management must go beyond the appropriate prescription of medications, but also take account of the socio-cultural factors [3, 4] as well as the importance of psychological issues as outlined in their audit [5]. We also feel that the assessment of the phenotype of asthma patients should take account of these factors as they are likely to contribute to an increased risk of hospitalisation. We strongly recommend that others embrace this approach of adapting locally our global challenge to reduce asthma hospitalisations. We suggest that by using the GINA asthma strategy as a framework for achieving asthma control that we can move closer to achieving our ultimate aim of reducing morbidity and mortality associated with this global public health challenge. It should be noted that our challenge of a 50% reduction in hospitalisations is targeted at a general population level and we appreciate that this may not be feasible in a more specialised setting, such as Z. Pond and co-workers working at a tertiary or quaternary level.

J. Mark FitzGerald*, **Eric D. Bateman[#]**, **Suzanne Hurd[¶]**, **Louis-Philippe Boulet[†]**, **Tari Haahtela[§]**, **Alvaro A. Cruz[‡]** and **Mark L. Levy****

*Respiratory Division, Dept of Medicine, Vancouver Hospital and Health Science Centre, Vancouver, BC, [†]Institut Universitaire de Cardiologie et de Pneumologie de Québec, Université Laval, Québec, QC, Canada. [#]Lung Institute, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa. [¶]Global Initiative for Asthma, Vancouver, WA, USA. [§]Dept of Allergy, Helsinki University, Helsinki, Finland. [‡]ProAR – Nucleo de Excelência em Asma of Federal, University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil. **Primary Care Research and Development, Division of Community Health Sciences, GP Section, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK.

Correspondence: M.J. FitzGerald, Respiratory Division, Dept of Medicine, Vancouver Hospital and Health Science Centre, 2775 Heather Street, Vancouver, BC, V5Z 3J5, Canada. E-mail: markf@interchange.ubc.ca

Statement of Interest: Statement of interests for J.M. FitzGerald, L-P. Boulet, T. Haahtela and M.L. Levy can be found at www.erj.ersjournals.com/site/misc/statements.xhtml

REFERENCES

- 1 FitzGerald JM, Bateman E, Hurd S, *et al.* The GINA Asthma Challenge: reducing asthma hospitalisations. *Eur Respir J* 2011; 38: 997–998.
- 2 Bateman ED, Hurd SS, Barnes PJ, *et al.* Global strategy for asthma management and prevention: GINA executive summary. *Eur Respir J* 2008; 31: 143–178.
- 3 Poureslami I, Rootman I, Doyle-Waters MM, *et al.* Health literacy, language, and ethnicity-related factors in newcomer asthma patients to Canada: a qualitative study. *J Immigr Minor Health* 2011; 13: 315–322.
- 4 Poureslami I, Nimmon L, Doyle-Water MMR, *et al.* Using community-based participatory research (CBPR) with ethno-cultural groups as a tool to develop culturally and linguistically appropriate asthma educational material. *Divers Health Care* 2011; 8: 203–215.
- 5 Alvarez GG, FitzGerald JM. A systematic review of the psychological risk factors associated with near fatal asthma or fatal asthma. *Respiration* 2007; 2: 228–236.

DOI: 10.1183/09031936.00053912