



Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of the Air Products newsletter, providing you with information about what we have been up-to in recent months as well as future events to look forward to!

COPD strategy

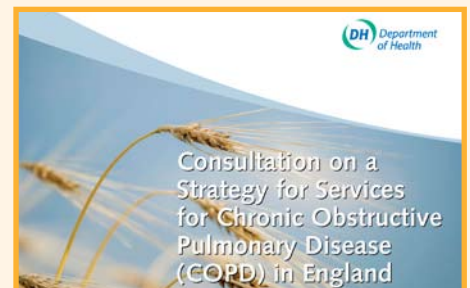
Air Products is pleased to see the Department of Health's COPD Strategy for England is nearing completion and welcomes the long-awaited publication. The aim of the strategy is to ensure that everyone diagnosed with COPD receives high quality care and that identification of sufferers is improved.

The strategy also aims to provide education and support to sufferers of COPD and their carers, as well as providing advice and understanding about preventing COPD, poor lung health and reducing inequalities. Support for commissioners, hospitals, GP surgeries, PCTs and SHAs will be provided under the strategy in accompanying guidelines.

The strategy document has recently undergone a consultation period which you hopefully had chance to participate in. As the national

strategy for COPD is being finalised, the Department of Health is calling for people to put forward examples of local best practice and innovation that have benefited patients and staff. Examples should be selected for piloting for inclusion in the national best practice guide to accompany the strategy.

If you have a best practice example that has worked in your area, go to www.improvement.nhs.uk/lung for details of how to submit it.



In this issue...

- Charity support
- Patient Safety Awards result
- COPD strategy update
- SUI/SEAN process
- POC/TOC update
- Website details
- Holiday oxygen
- Heated humidification
- Feedback event
- Patient forum dates
- Bank holiday ordering
- Exhibition dates

Easter performance

Like Christmas, Easter is a period of peak activity for the Home Oxygen Service.

As hospitals try to get patients home for Easter and people make plans to travel on holiday or to see family, oxygen orders and phone call volumes see significant increases.

The number of calls rose by 20% in the week prior to Easter with an increase of around 50% in cylinder demand. We saw a 30% increase on the number of HOOFs received, a 30% increase for 4 hour requests and a rise of 30% in hospital discharges.

As with every year, we plan extra resources to meet this demand. Again, we handled the increased activity and retained our performance levels.



Supporting those in need

Air Products is committed to helping charities and causes around the world and is proud of all employees who take the time to support such activities. Here are just some of the organisations who we have been supporting recently:

One of our Yorkshire engineers, Jim Bengé, is taking part in a fundraising cycling challenge from Lands End to John O'Groats. The event will be taking place in May and is in aid of the British Lung Foundation.

Air Products is backing Jim all the way and is looking forward to following him as he progresses with the tough challenge in May!

Corporate citizenship — working with and for our communities — is a longstanding commitment and an essential part of our corporate culture. One such example is the UK Healthcare team's support of the charity THET (Tropical Health and Education Trust), which is dedicated to improving health services in developing countries. Recently the UK Healthcare team donated oxygen concentrators and accessories to the Edna Adan Maternity hospital in Somaliland to allow mothers and babies to have oxygen - which was previously unavailable.

Jill Smith, patient services manager, comments: "In the UK we are fortunate to have oxygen services in all hospitals and at home for patients who need it. In Somaliland, this is not the case. As a clinician I desperately wanted to do something to improve the patients' care at Edna Adan."



Edna Adan Ismail

Patient Safety Awards - the result!

You may recall in our last edition we told you our Sunshine magazine had made it to the final six in the 'Communicating Patient Safety' category in the HSJ Patient Safety Awards. These awards target the entire width and breadth of the healthcare community in the UK. The 'Sunshine' editorial team attended the awards ceremony in February where the results were announced. Air Products was awarded Highly Commended behind the winner Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Hospitals Foundation Trusts. We were thrilled with our overall result and are pleased that our focus on communicating to patients and the importance of the safety message to this particular group of patients was recognised.

The latest edition of our Sunshine magazine has been sent to our oxygen patients. If you would like to download a copy please visit our website www.airproducts.co.uk/homecare or ask your regional nurse advisor for a copy.



left to right: Adam Sullivan, Simon Preece, Philippa Cracknell, Jill Smith, Jay Shingler, Anita Lloyd, Serena Hudson, Lynne Taylor, Rob Hulme, Sophie Iurlano

Patient forums

Each year Air Products holds frequent patient forums in each of our regions. These are excellent opportunities for patients and carers to get together with other oxygen users to discuss the service we provide and for us to learn about their experiences. Each forum is attended by our clinical nurse advisor for the area, the patient services manager, the regional engineer supervisor, local engineer and representatives from the Healthcare UK headquarters.

Forums are held in a relaxed and informal atmosphere enabling patients to feel free to talk openly about their experiences of the oxygen service. The views of patients are important to us in identifying areas where we could improve and feedback has resulted in many changes being made.

The next patient forums are being held on:

23rd April – Leicester, East Midlands

14th May – Runcorn, North West

21st May – Harrogate, Yorkshire

If you would like to find out more information about our patient forums or know a patient who would like to attend, the number to contact is 0800 373580.





POC/TOC update

We are happy to announce that after regional patient acceptability trials of portable (POC) and transportable (TOC – slightly heavier and used for static and ambulatory needs) concentrators, we are now supplying these technologies across all Air Products regions. There has been a great deal of interest expressed about POC and TOC and we have held many educational sessions about the technologies, which differ from existing ambulatory equipment due to their settings not being based on standard flow rates and the duration limitations. It is therefore critical that patients are assessed for suitability on the equipment before ordering. For the Inogen (POC), patients must be appropriately clinically assessed as the device delivers on a pulse dose which has not been clinically proven to be suitable for overnight use as it is breath activated. For the Sequal (TOC), certain set criteria must be met which include lifestyle requirements. Patients who are frail or require walking aids are not suitable for the device. These requirements can be established from the information provided on the HOOF. Both pieces of equipment are available through assessment service packages from Air Products. For more information please contact your local Air Products nurse advisor.

SUI/SEAN process

The Department of Health formed HOS Working Groups in 2009 to address service improvements as suggested via patient surveys and service review meetings. One group reviewed the Serious Untoward Incidents (SUI). The following deliverables were set in the resulting action plan:

- Develop an agreed SUI definition, categories and risk matrix for all HOS SUIs
- Develop an agreed SUI management process and resolution targets
- Develop agreed SUI reporting
- Lessons learnt, how we learn from SUIs and how we share best practice

From this, a new process was developed and went live in October 2009. The SEAN (Significant Event, Accident, Incident and Near miss) process now supersedes the previous SUI reporting, the process is as follows:

- Once informed of an incident, the incident lead will assess against the risk matrix and decide upon the severity
- All incidents at levels 1-5 will be added to our internal incident log, however only incidents at levels 3-5 will be notified as they occur
- Straightforward incidents can be notified and closed at the same time but those requiring further investigation should be closed within 60 days
- An incident update will be sent every 30 days until a closure notification can be sent
- All incidents must be reported within 1 working day of Air Products being notified and sent via a secure network

For further information please contact us via email at UKHCSUI@airproducts.com

Tell me more.....

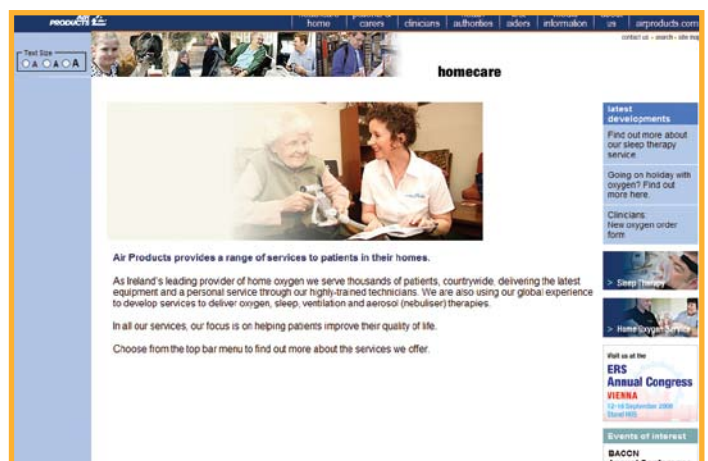
If you're looking for answers to questions regarding our service or more information about what services Air Products healthcare can provide, you need look no further than our website: www.airproducts.co.uk/homecare

This website contains everything you need to know about all aspects of our home care services, from our home oxygen service to our home CPAP service. There are separate sections for patients and carers and clinicians, so you can be assured the information is relevant and up-to-date.

Whether you're a patient looking for safety information or a clinician looking for advice regarding HOOF completion, the website is an essential tool for everyone. There is also a link to the BTS website where you will find the recently published papers, Emergency Oxygen Use in Adult Patients and the new guidelines for Home Oxygen in Children.

As part of our website there is a dedicated section on emergency services that features basic safety advice, fire safety awareness and much more!

Take a couple of minutes to have a look through the pages of our website, we're sure you'll find it very useful.



Summer sun....

It is that time of year again where people are booking their summer holidays. Air Products operates a convenient holiday service in the UK and abroad, where by oxygen is provided to holiday makers ready and waiting for their arrival at their holiday destination.

Having this service readily available allows patients to plan their holidays without worrying about their oxygen. It also helps to reduce the number of A&E admissions when patients go on holiday and inadvertently run out of oxygen.

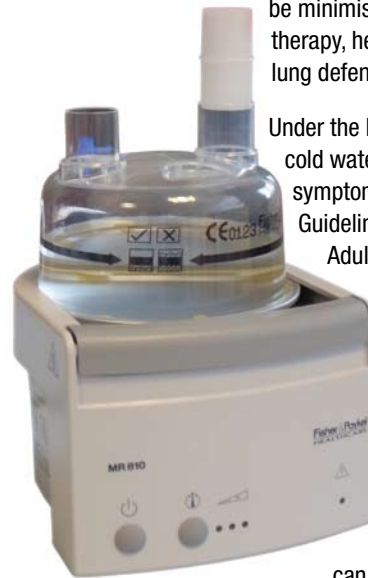
We operate a UK holiday service and a separate service for those travelling abroad. For UK holidays, patients are advised to contact their GPs well in advance with holiday details who then provide us with a completed HOOF containing all holiday information.

Patients travelling abroad should contact us directly on 0800 373580 for advice. If we are able to arrange oxygen for overseas, then this needs to be paid for by the patient. The UK holiday service is PCT/LHB funded. For our fully comprehensive holiday guide and order forms please call 0800 373 580 or visit our website www.airproducts.co.uk/homecare



Heated humidification

It is widely known that oxygen therapy increases dryness in the upper airways, especially for those using high flow oxygen or prolonged usage and leads to discomfort. Inadequate humidification has immediate and far reaching consequences such as decreased pulmonary compliance, destruction of cilia and damage to mucus glands. But risks or effects can be minimised by providing humidified oxygen therapy, helping to maintain airway patency lung defence and compliance.



Under the HOS contract Air Products supplies cold water bubble humidifiers for some symptomatic relief of this problem. The Guidelines for Emergency Oxygen Use in Adult Patients produced by the British

Thoracic Society state that cold water humidifiers may be simple and inexpensive, but there is little or no evidence of clinical benefit. Furthermore, there is an increased risk of infection with the bubble bottles hence the advice from the BTS that they should not be used. Guidelines

can be viewed at www.thorax.bmj.com

The appropriate heated humidification of oxygen therapy can provide rapid relief or comfort, but more importantly it can bring significant clinical benefits to patients, while reducing the risk of bacteria transport through use of heat and specialised technology.

Recognising this, Air Products can provide a heated humidification service to adult oxygen patients. It is a separate service to the National Home Oxygen Service Contract (HOS) and *subject to a separate charge*.

The service mirrors HOS in that it is simple to order and is a convenient, fully managed service with per diem (per patient per day) charging.

For further information about this service please contact your regional Air Products nurse advisor or email us at medsales@airproducts.com

HOS day feedback


We are constantly looking at how our Home Oxygen Service can be developed or improved upon and recently hosted an event to capture the opinions of our stakeholders.

The one-day event consisted of a presentation given by Directions, a research agency, discussing feedback on Air Products from the qualitative research, followed by a session brainstorming concepts for the future. The day was well attended by a variety of NHS representatives, the Department of Health and the British Lung Foundation.

All issues raised have formed an action plan that lists 34 possible enhancements. Categories that require consideration for improvements are patient communication, HOOFs, equipment, secondary supply, communication and reporting. We appreciate the time given to us by those who attended and will be reporting back to them with progress updates.

Bank holiday ordering

Please see below information regarding ordering dates for oxygen for the May bank holidays:



AIR PRODUCTS

Key dates for 2010/11

To make it easier for you, we thought it would be a good idea to inform you of the key bank holiday dates for 2010/11. Hopefully, these will help you organise your oxygen requirements without any last minute panics.

Easter weekend	Friday, April 2, 2010 - Monday, April 5, 2010	
Friday, March 19	Last guaranteed order date	
Monday, March 29		
Tuesday, March 30	April 2 - Monday, April 5	Emergency calls only
Wednesday, April 1	Tuesday, April 6 onwards	Normal service
Friday, April 2		
Tuesday, April 27	Monday, May 3, 2010	
Monday, May 3	Last guaranteed holiday order date	
Tuesday, May 4 onwards	Emergency calls only	
	Normal service	
Spring bank holiday	Monday, May 31, 2010	
Tuesday, May 25	Last guaranteed holiday order date	
Monday, May 31	Emergency calls only	
Tuesday, June 1 onwards	Normal service	

Exhibitions attendance

Air Products will be at various exhibitions over the next few months. Please come and meet us at the following:

Firebreak conference

10th May, Rhyl
12th May, Camarthen
17th May, Cardiff

Impress

11th May, ICC Birmingham

CARE 2010

6th - 8th June at Wokefield Park, Reading

British Thoracic Society (BTS) – Summer Meeting

24th - 25th June, University of Manchester

COPD7

30th June - 1st July, ICC Birmingham

British Sleep Society (BSS) – Spring Meeting

5th - 6th July at the University of Warwick

tell me more
www.airproducts.co.uk/homecare