

BACKGROUND

Asthma affects 10% of local adult population in Singapore. Self-management of asthma has been shown to improve the health outcomes of adult asthma patients.

Tele-healthcare innovations have been increasingly used to support patients in their self-management of these chronic diseases. This is particularly important in enabling patients to respond promptly and appropriately to changing environmental situations such as haze and impending asthma exacerbations.

DEVELOPMENT OF ASTHMACARE BUDDY

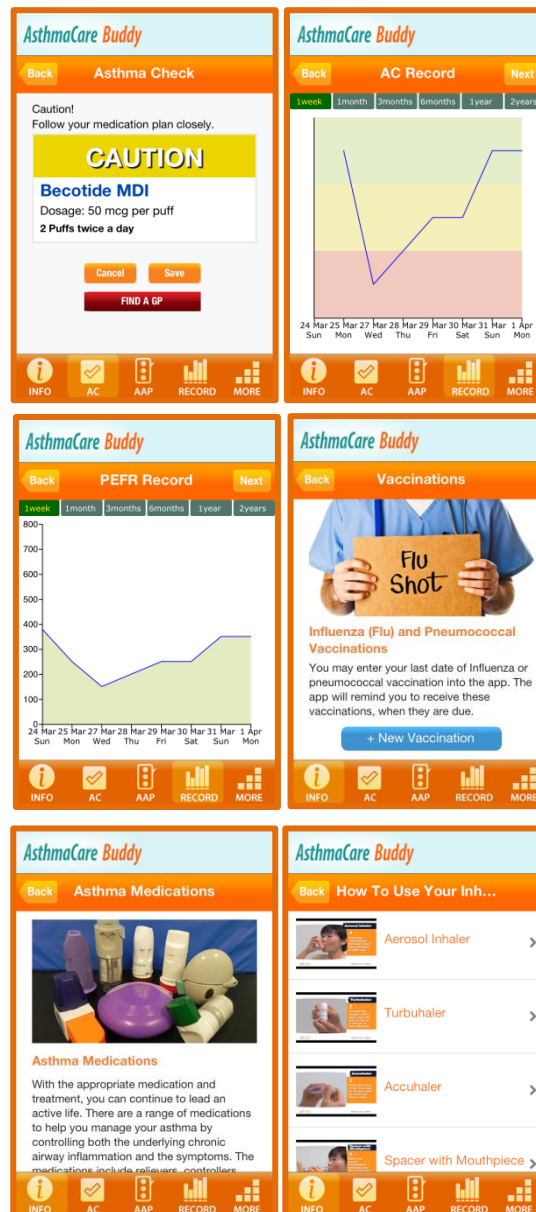


SingHealth Polyclinics (SHP) launched a phone application (app) - AsthmaCare Buddy on 2 April 2013. This is an improvement over the current self-management using paper-based asthma control assessment and written asthma action plan.

FUNCTIONALITY AND FEATURES OF ASTHMACARE BUDDY



Users and/ or patients can update their medications and action plan for reminders so that AsthmaCare Buddy can help guide them on what they should do when they are feeling well, unwell or during an emergency.



Users can show the monitoring charts to their doctor or nurse via phone to work out a good care plan.

Information on asthma management and the video library on how to use the various types of inhalers are also available.

PUBLICITY AND TAKEUP OF APP



Within one month of its launch, 84 users have downloaded the app, with ages from 12 to 74 years.

Publicity materials such as video, posters and flyers were produced to create awareness.

CONCLUSION

A phone app is a feasible tool to support asthma self-management, but its effectiveness in improving health outcomes awaits further study.