



New Pulmonary Rehab Education Portal Helps Patients C.O.P.E. with Lung Disease

Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) can now complete the education component of pulmonary rehabilitation via a new, free, web-based resource called C.O.P.E. – COPD Online Patient Education.

Lung Foundation CEO, Heather Allan, welcomed the opportunity to partner with Bupa Health Foundation to develop a unique online platform designed to enable COPD patients and their carers who do not have physical access to pulmonary rehabilitation programs to complete the educational component from the comfort of their own home.

Pulmonary rehabilitation programs consist of 6-8 weeks of exercise and education generally offered in a hospital or health service setting. The sessions are evidence-based and designed especially for people with chronic lung conditions to better manage their symptoms and stay well and out of hospital.

Mrs Allan said that due to the limited availability of programs across Australia, access to pulmonary rehabilitation is limited to less than 10% of patients with COPD. “These programs tend to be available in metropolitan or larger regional centres, leaving rural patients with little or no access. Other patients might not have access to the program because they are still working, a shift worker or don’t have access to transport.”

“C.O.P.E fills the gap by offering the opportunity for remote learning. Ideally it would be used in conjunction with an exercise program like *Lungs in Action* supervised by a suitably qualified exercise professional,” Mrs Allan added.

Professor Christine Jenkins, Clinical Professor and Head of Respiratory Discipline at the University of Sydney, said C.O.P.E. fills a real need in the patient community. “Pulmonary rehabilitation education equips patients with the skills to manage their disease for the rest of their lives. Education is powerful and instils confidence in patients ensuring they understand their disease and are armed and ready to face whatever challenges come along.”

Bupa Health Foundation Executive Leader Annette Schmiede said the platform was an important and innovative tool for Australians and their carers to direct and take control of their rehabilitation.

“Improving access to the right health information is critical and at the heart of the Bupa Health Foundation’s commitment to enabling real health and care solutions,” said Ms Schmiede.

“We’re proud to support the Lung Foundation and its pioneering C.O.P.E platform to enable patients to better manage their own rehabilitation and improve health outcomes.”

The content for C.O.P.E. was developed in consultation with expert clinicians and input was sought from a diverse range of potential users which resulted in a user-friendly program that enables patients to download and print resources, watch videos and be linked to further information on topics that may be of specific interest. To access C.O.P.E. visit cope.lungfoundation.com.au.

Note to Editor

COPD is an umbrella term for lung disease that includes emphysema, chronic bronchitis and chronic asthma which isn’t fully reversible. COPD affects one in seven Australians aged 40 or over¹. It is the second leading cause of avoidable hospital admissions in Australia².

¹ Toelle B, Xuan W, Bird T, Abramson M, Atkinson D, Burton D, James A, Jenkins C, Johns D, Maguire G, Musk A, Walters E, Wood-Baker R, Hunter M, Graham B, Southwell P, Vollmer W, Buist A, Marks G. Respiratory symptoms and illness in older Australians: The Burden of Obstructive Lung Disease (BOLD) study.

² Page A, Ambrose S, Glover J et al. Atlas of Avoidable Hospitalisations in Australia: ambulatory care-sensitive conditions. Adelaide PHIDU. University of Adelaide. 2007.

Lung Foundation Australia is a national organisation supporting all aspects of lung disease from COPD to lung cancer including rarer lung diseases such as pulmonary fibrosis. Our goal is to make lung health a priority for all Australians through advocacy, training, patient and health professional support, research and by increasing awareness of the value of lung health. www.lungfoundation.com.au

The Bupa Health Foundation is one of Australia’s leading corporate foundations dedicated to health. We are committed to improving the health of the Australian community and ensuring the sustainability of affordable healthcare through our collaborative partnerships. Celebrating its 10th year, the Foundation has supported more than 100 projects, focused on translating Australian research into real health and care improvements. www.bupa.com.au/foundation

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