

**To:** Urgent Care (UC) and Emergency Department (ED) Facilities  
**From:** IEHP Pharmaceutical Services Department  
**Date:** June 11, 2025  
**Subject:** **Best Practices for SMART Asthma Management**

---

---

We would like to **encourage the use of controller medications as best practices for asthma management** to improve member outcomes and to reduce future UC/ED visits.

Per 2024 GINA Guidelines, **inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) medications combined with Formoterol, a long-acting beta<sub>2</sub> agonist**, as a single inhaler may be utilized as reliever AND controller therapy together as **Single Maintenance and Reliever Therapy (SMART)** to replace the need for a short-acting beta<sub>2</sub> agonist (SABA) (e.g., albuterol) as a reliever.



Combination inhalers not only **manage acute asthma symptoms**, but also **prevent future exacerbations**.

For reference, Budesonide/Formoterol (Symbicort®) is an example of one of the medications containing an ICS + formoterol available in the United States.

**What you need to know:**

- 1) When IEHP members visit the UC/ED, evaluate if they may benefit from SMART therapy
- 2) If appropriate, **send a prescription for a 3 MONTH SUPPLY of a combination inhaler** as SMART therapy to the member's pharmacy

We appreciate your continued support in optimizing medication therapy for our shared members.

For more information about SMART therapy for asthma, visit [www.aaaai.org](http://www.aaaai.org).

If you have any questions or comments regarding this, please email IEHP Clinical Pharmacy Program team at [ClinicalPharmacyPrograms@iehp.org](mailto:ClinicalPharmacyPrograms@iehp.org).

All IEHP communications can be found at: [www.providerservices.iehp.org](http://www.providerservices.iehp.org) > News and Updates > Notices

All Pharmacy communications sent by IEHP can also be found at: [www.providerservices.iehp.org](http://www.providerservices.iehp.org) > Pharmacy > Pharmacy Resources > Pharmacy Provider Notices