

Inhale the facts: Countdown to 2024

Lung conditions are the third biggest killer in the UK, and are the biggest cause of winter pressures in the NHS

What will be your respiratory resolution?



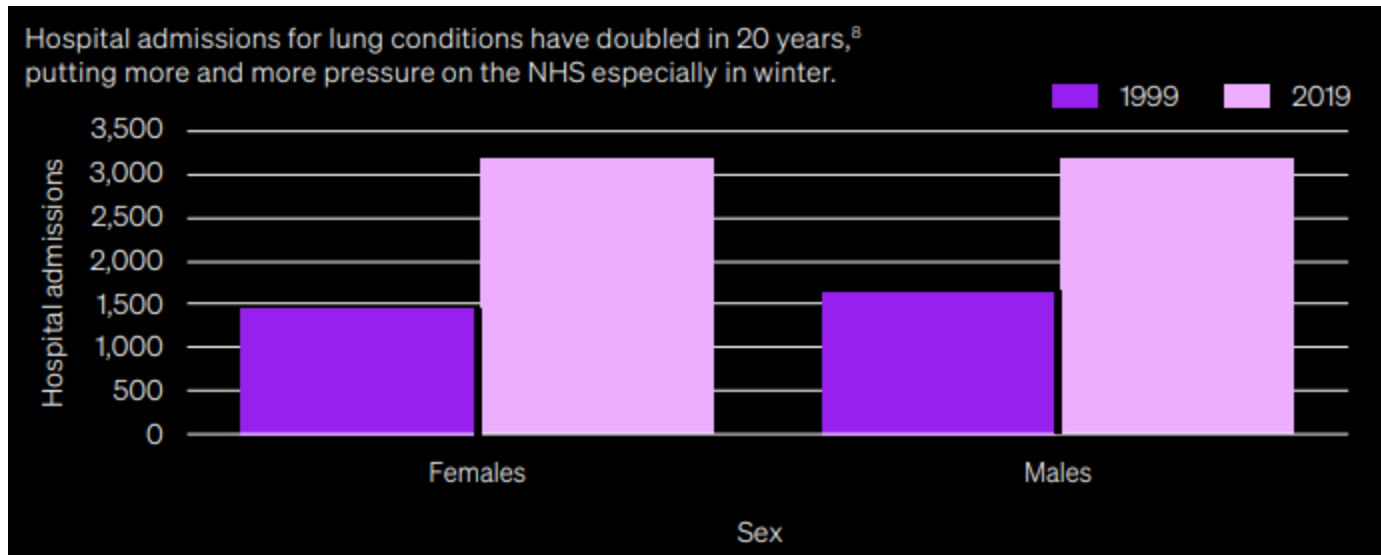
1 in 5 of us will get a lung condition in our lifetime.



Lung disease, including COPD, asthma and pneumonia, is the third leading cause of death in the UK, and places a huge burden on individuals, the NHS and the UK economy



Hospital admissions for lung conditions have doubled in the last 20 years.



Asthma is the most common lung condition in the UK, affecting 5.4 million people (one in every 12 adults and one in every 11 children)



Lung conditions including COPD, asthma and respiratory infections place a huge burden on the NHS, especially in the winter months where respiratory admissions increase by 80%



More people are now dying from a lung condition in the UK than anywhere else in Europe. People in the UK are three times more likely to die from lung disease than in Finland



Lung conditions often develop alongside other long-term conditions, such as high blood pressure, coronary artery disease and heart failure, as well as anxiety and depression.

The effects of these conditions multiply the impact of lung disease but also mean that lung diseases are missed.



Asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are two of the most common lung conditions, but others include interstitial lung disease (ILD) and bronchiectasis.



Lung cancer is also a major concern and is the third most common cancer in the UK.



Respiratory infections like flu and pneumonia are a significant factor in winter pressures on the NHS, resulting in 400,000 people admitted to hospital each year.



The avoidable mortality rate for CVD has improved by 58% over the last 20 years. But for lung conditions, it has improved by only 14%.

If lung health had improved at the same rate as CVD, there would now be around 8,000 fewer deaths each year from lung conditions



This analysis shows that lung conditions, specifically asthma and COPD: cost the NHS £9.6 billion in direct costs each year, representing 3.4% of total NHS expenditure (2019 prices)



An uptake in spirometry testing in primary care to just 40% of eligible patients would result in just over £60 million in direct NHS cost savings



The benefits of pulmonary rehabilitation to people with COPD and other lung conditions is substantial, both to them and to the NHS



The expansion of PR would result in £142.6million of direct NHS savings related to reduced exacerbations, as well as a reduction of 194,000 bed days.



People in the poorest areas are five times more likely to die from COPD and three times more likely to die from asthma.

There is a stronger link between respiratory deaths and deprivation than for any other major disease area



Most lung conditions could be avoided by reducing exposure to risk factors such as tobacco, poor housing, child poverty, air pollution and occupational hazards such as asbestos and other dust, fumes and chemicals.



Due to a lack of proper investigation, around 30% of those with a diagnosis of asthma may not actually have the condition, while others are missing out on appropriate treatment



More than 1.4 million people are diagnosed with COPD, but estimates suggest that when the undiagnosed population is included, the total number living with COPD could be 1.9 million.



COPD causes 30,000 deaths and 130,000 emergency hospital admissions every year



Treating COPD costs the NHS £1.9billion a year, and COPD is the second largest cause of emergency hospital admissions.



Severe asthma accounts for around 5% of the total asthma population, this is still around 200,000 people.

Such is the severity of their symptoms that this group is estimated to account for at least half of all economic expenditure on asthma – around £1 billion a year.



Research demonstrates that for patients with severe Asthmas receiving biologics they can reduce exacerbations by over 50%, and therefore significantly reduce the number of emergency admissions for respiratory care.

Around three quarters of those with severe asthma are not currently receiving biologics



Pulmonary rehabilitation (PR) is a physical exercise and education programme, it helps keep people's lungs healthy and is primarily used for those with COPD and conditions such as idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.

90% of those who complete a PR programme report higher activity levels and an improved quality of life



27% of those with COPD who responded to the 2023 Asthma and Lung UK Life with a Lung Condition survey had given up work because of their breathlessness, and many others reduce their working hours, retire, or die earlier than those without the condition



Asthma attacks kill three people in the UK every day, and someone has a potentially life-threatening asthma attack every 10 seconds

There are 60,000 hospital admissions and 200,000 bed days for asthma per year in the UK



There is a stark north-south divide in respiratory outcomes in England.

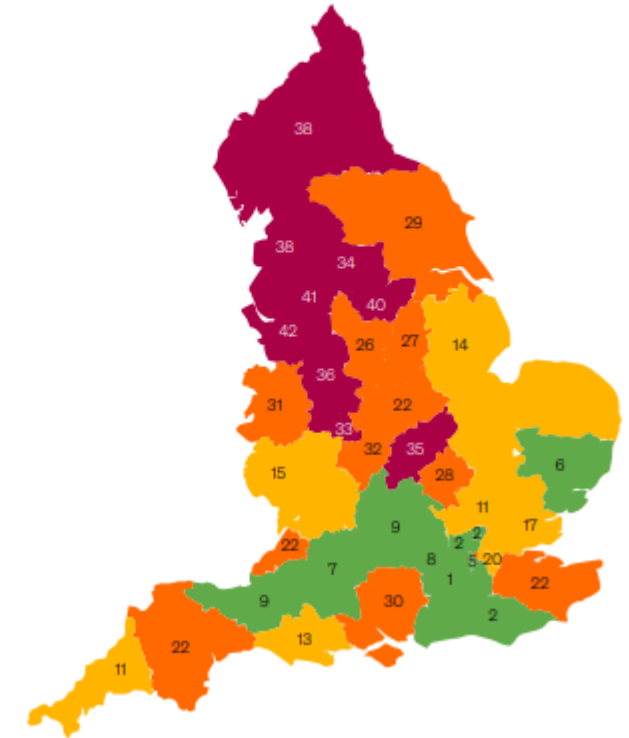
The most deprived ICBs have much higher emergency hospital admissions and death rates for respiratory disease when compared to the least deprived ICBs.

The North-South divide in lung health

ICB ranking

Based on respiratory admission + death rates

- Top 10
- Upper 11
- Lower 11
- Bottom 10



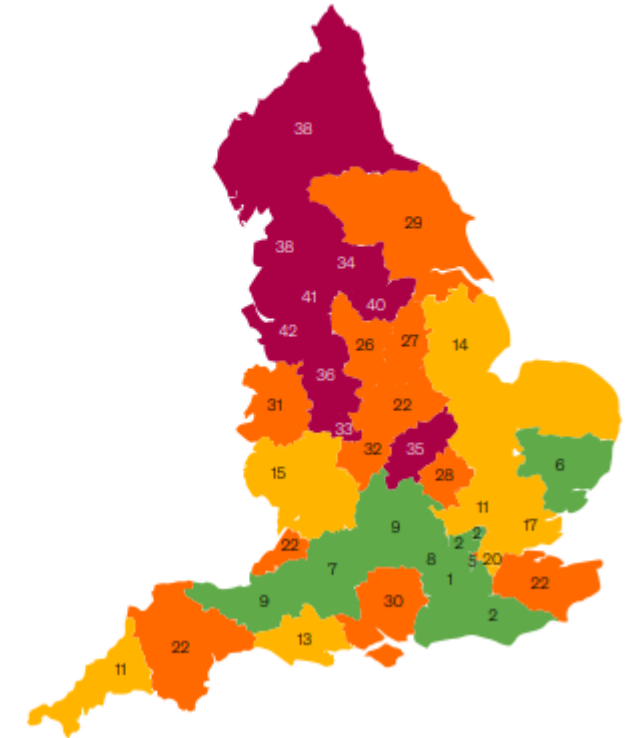
This inequality gap was even wider for asthmatic children. Children in the most deprived communities were four times more likely to end up in hospital in an emergency over winter compared to the least deprived

The North-South divide in lung health

ICB ranking

Based on respiratory admission + death rates

- Top 10
- Upper 11
- Lower 11
- Bottom 10



Between 2019-2022, average winter asthma hospital admissions were 130% higher than summer admissions, while for COPD, winter admissions were 66% greater.

However, much of this burden is preventable with best practice diagnosis and care



Making it possible for people to adopt a healthy lifestyle and positive lung behaviours such as exercise can also greatly reduce the chances of people developing lung conditions at all stages of their life, while also improving general health and wellbeing.

So, what will be your respiratory resolution for 2024?

