



*Building Community.  
Empowering Families.*

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**National Asthma Awareness Month**

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**HUD GRANTS \$549K TO LSA FAMILY HEALTH SERVICE AND NY ACADEMY OF  
MEDICINE TO IMPROVE HEALTH OF EAST HARLEM CHILDREN**

*Partnership Will Combat Asthma in Public Housing*

EAST HARLEM, NEW YORK CITY— **LSA Family Health Service's Environmental Health Program**, in partnership with the New York Academy of Medicine (NYAM), has been awarded a 3-year, \$549,000 grant by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to improve the health and quality of life of East Harlem children living with severe or persistent asthma in public housing by improving indoor environmental conditions through home-based interventions.

Never before has HUD funded programs to improve health hazards for asthmatic children living in public or assisted multifamily housing.

The grant supports ***Controlling Asthma through Home Remediation (CAHR)***, which takes an innovative approach to targeting the causes and triggers of asthma in public housing through home visits by trained LSA community health workers. The program will help reduce or eliminate household environmental conditions that exacerbate asthma symptoms such as mold, poor ventilation, pest infestation (roaches, bedbugs, rodents), house dust and second-hand smoke.

“We are excited about expanding our work helping children living public and federally-assisted housing,” said Ray Lopez, Director of LSA’s Environmental Health Program. “This grant will enable us to demonstrate the success of our community health worker model, allow us to continue to develop leadership within NYCHA tenants, and share our best practices with organizations in New York and other states.”

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East Harlem children shoulder a disproportionately high burden of asthma relative to the rest of NYC and the nation as a whole, a grim reality LSA has been tackling for years. Asthma is now recognized as a leading cause of school and work absences, emergency room visits and hospitalizations among low income, minority populations in communities like East Harlem.

Approximately 18.5% of East Harlem children ages 4-5 have asthma, double the NYC prevalence rate; 23% of children ages 5-12 suffer from asthma, and rates for East Harlem students of Puerto Rican descent approach 35%. The hospitalization rate is the second highest in NYC and one of the highest in a nation where asthma is the number one cause of absenteeism in school (Source: EPA).

“LSA’s Environmental Health Program has a proven record of success in combating asthma triggers,” said LSA’s Executive Director, Gary S. Carter, LICSW. “In 2008, we reduced the number of missed school days, emergency room visits, and missed work days for families by 40% as a result of our remediation work. This grant will allow us to significantly expand the number of children we can help who live in public housing.”

Through CAHR, families will be provided with information on household asthma triggers and trained how to safely remediate health hazards, if appropriate. Recognizing that low income families may lack the resources to buy the supplies and equipment needed to sustain environmental improvements, CAHR will offer loans of equipment, such as HEPA-filtered vacuums and air cleaners.

CAHR will be a truly collaborative project: LSA will implement the project (conduct home assessments, perform remediation and “hands-on” training, offer workshops and other program activities), and NYAM will evaluate and measure outcomes and a consultant will conduct a comprehensive cost benefit analysis. The project is part of the *Asthma Interventions in Public and Assisted Multifamily Housing* program under HUD’s Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control.

To date, over 1000 families have received LSA environmental health services, including education, skills building, direct remediation, case management, and advocacy.

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### **About LSA Family Health Service**

*The Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service, Inc., a community-based, nonprofit organization, has been improving the lives of vulnerable families in East Harlem for over 50 years. We offer a range of healthcare and social services, education programs, advocacy, and crisis counseling to help families address the physical, emotional, educational and spiritual dimensions of family health. No family or individual is ever turned away because they cannot pay. Our innovative home-based and center-based programs empower struggling families to access life's most basic necessities, and strengthen the entire community by affirming the dignity of every individual.*

**View LSA's environmental health program videos on asthma triggers and home interventions on YouTube:**

[http://bit.ly/LSA\\_Mold](http://bit.ly/LSA_Mold)

[http://bit.ly/LSA\\_Bedbugs](http://bit.ly/LSA_Bedbugs)

[http://bit.ly/LSA\\_HSCVideo](http://bit.ly/LSA_HSCVideo)

### **About HUD**

*HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes: utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) and [espanol.hud.gov](http://espanol.hud.gov).*

### **About The New York Academy of Medicine**

*An independent organization since 1847, NYAM addresses the health challenges facing the world's urban populations through interdisciplinary approaches to policy leadership, education, community engagement and innovative research. Drawing on the expertise of diverse partners worldwide and more than 2,000 elected Fellows from across the professions, our current priorities are to create environments in cities that support healthy aging; to strengthen systems that prevent disease and promote the public's health; and to implement interventions that eliminate health disparities.*