

# Asthma insights in Wales: Life with a Lung Condition Survey 2024

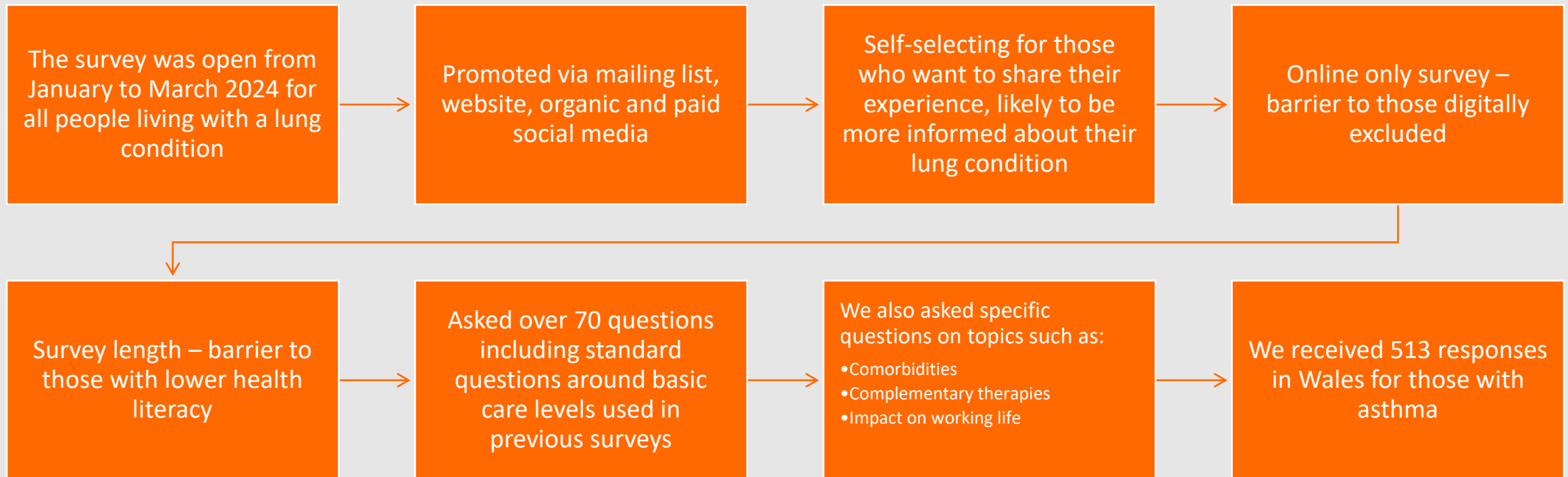
Welsh Cross Party Group on Lung Health  
21<sup>st</sup> May 2024

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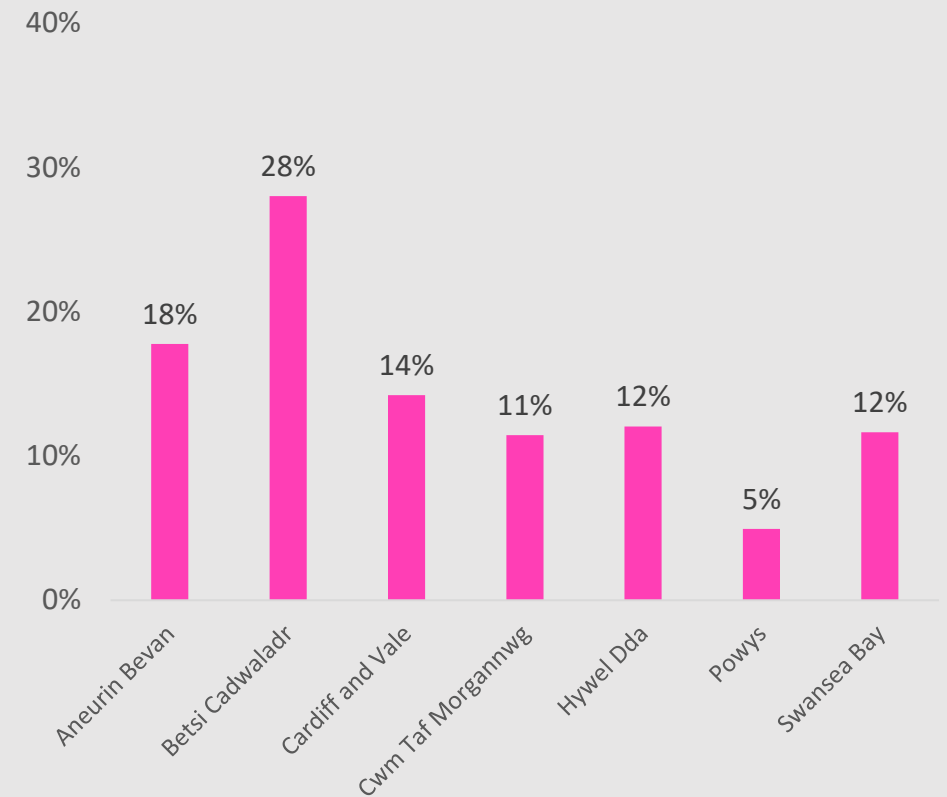
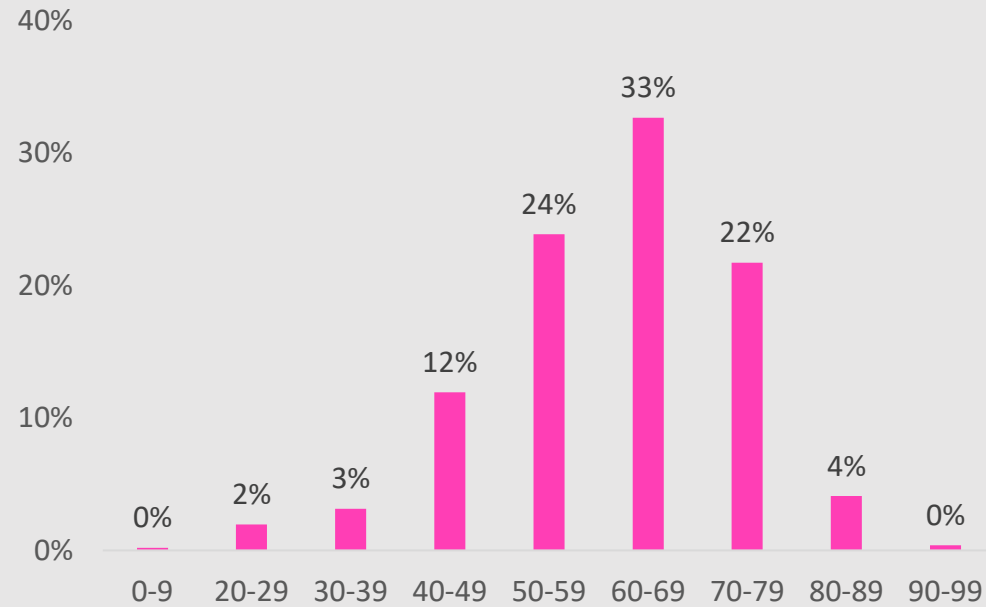
# About the Life with a Lung Condition Survey

This is our 2nd all lung conditions survey as Asthma + Lung UK – successor to the Annual Asthma Survey conducted by Asthma UK + the Annual COPD Survey conducted by BLF



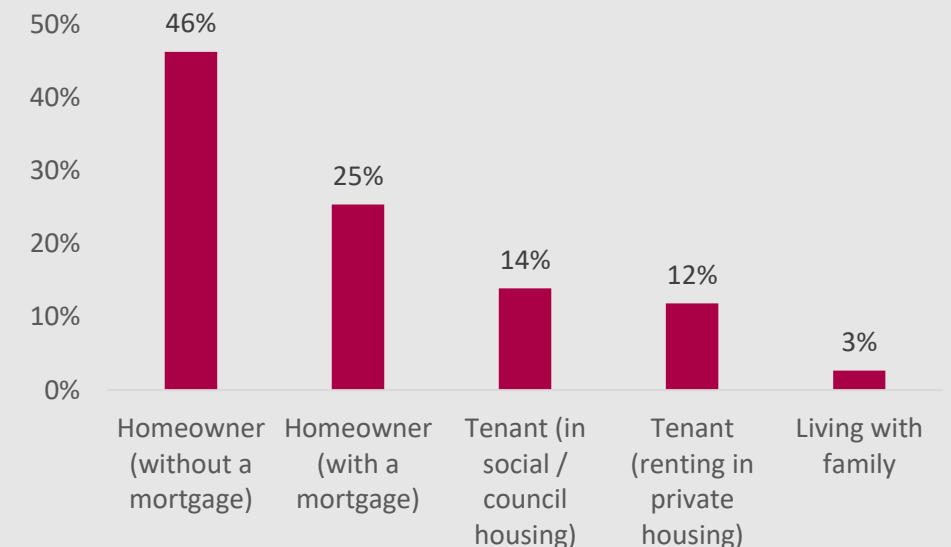
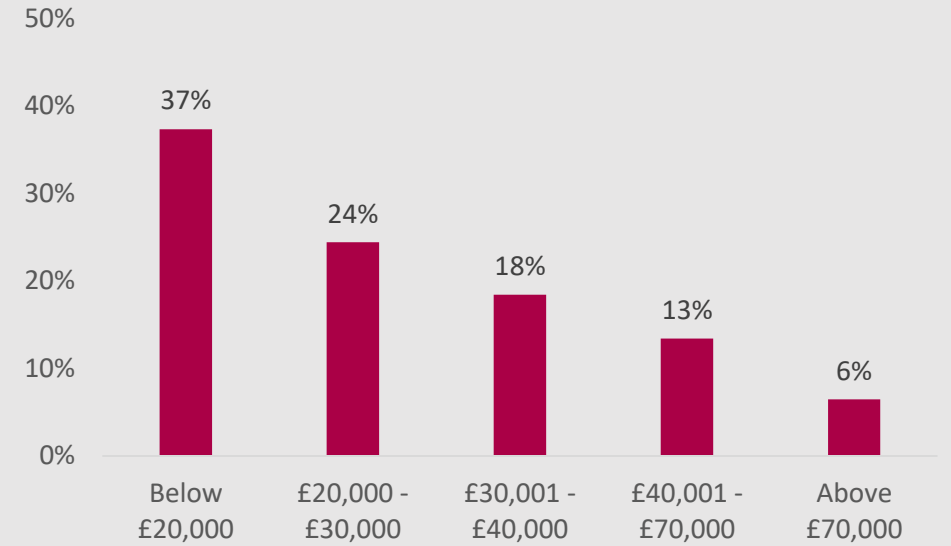
# Who answered the survey?

- 79% female, 21% male
- 99% White
- Majority between 40 and 80 years old



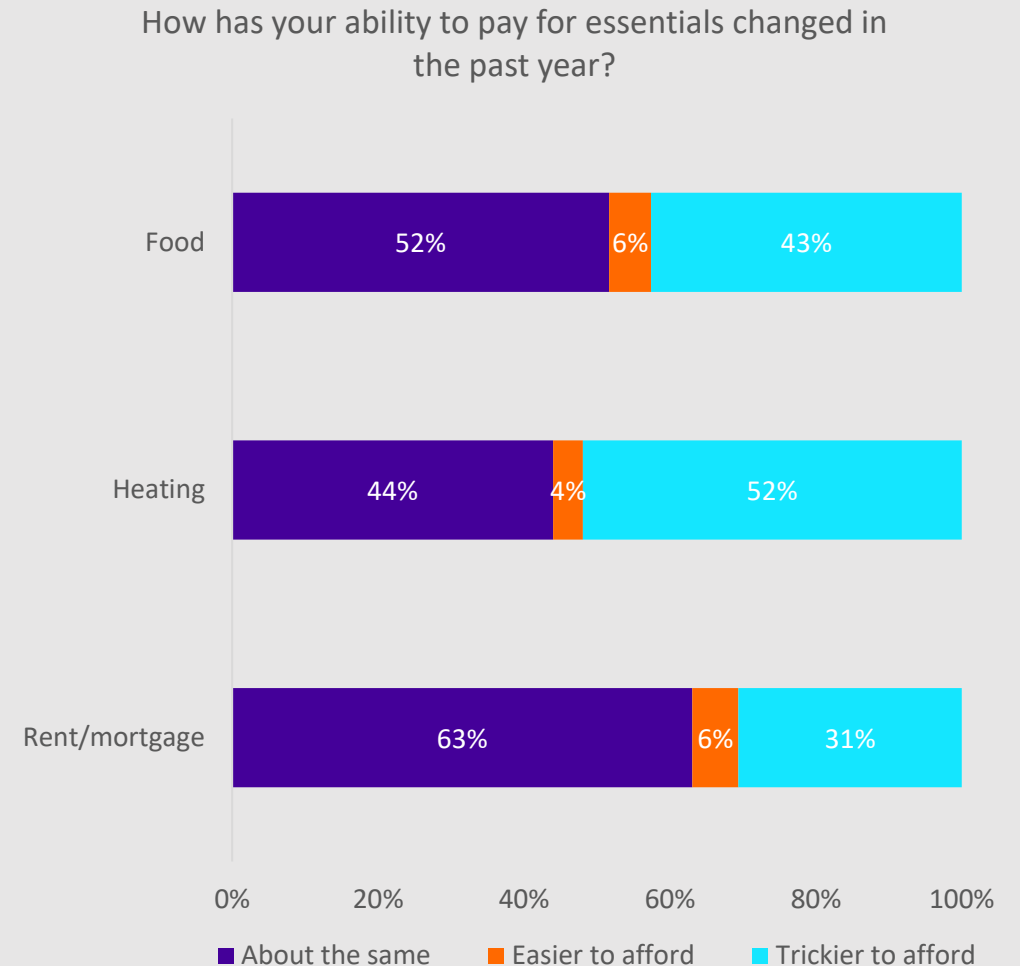
# The financial situation of those with asthma

- 2 in 5 are on an income less than £20k
- Only 1 in 20 are on an income above £70k
- Almost half of respondents own their home outright
- 1 in 4 own their home with a mortgage
- 1 in 4 are renters either in private or social housing



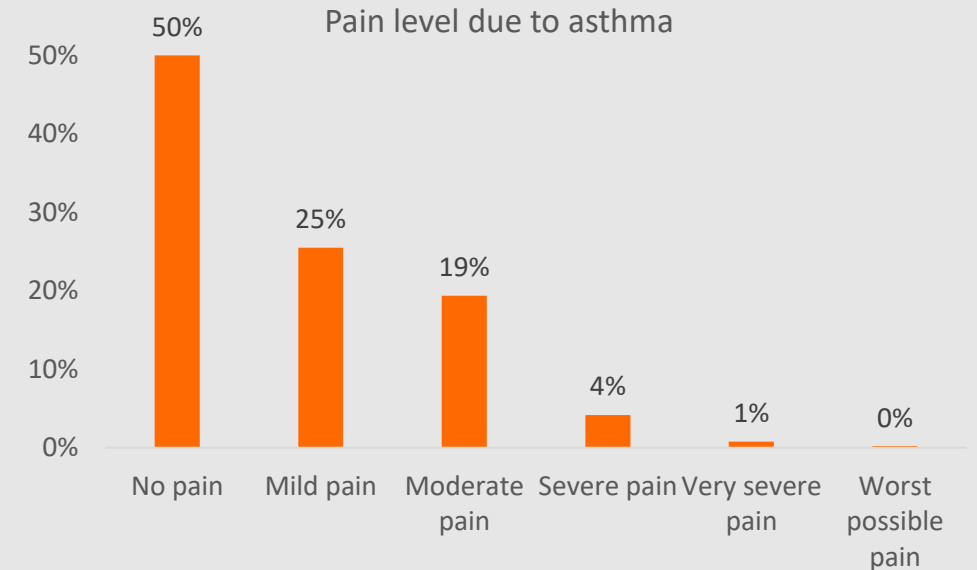
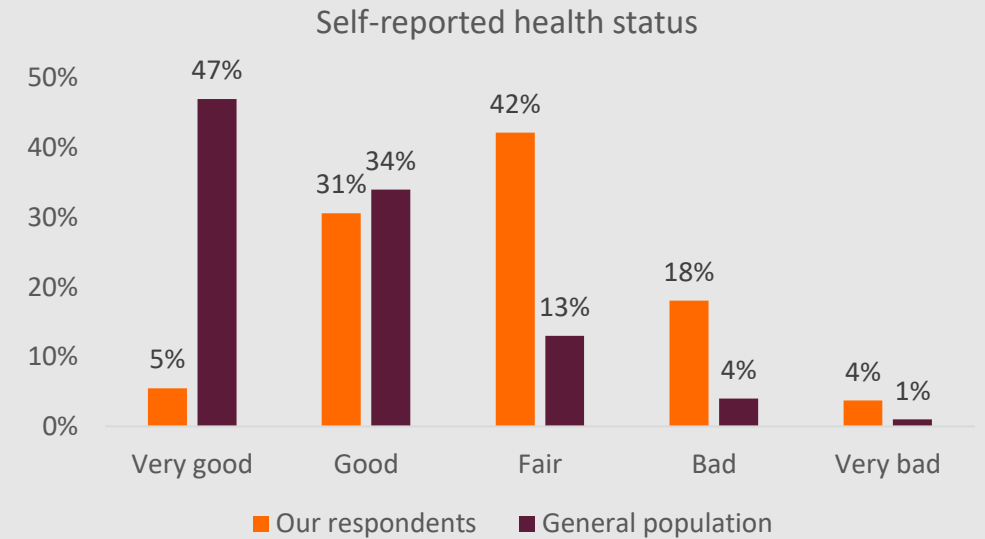
# Respondents are struggling to afford essentials

- It is trickier to afford:
  - Food for 2 in 5 respondents
  - Heating for half of respondents
  - Rent or mortgage for 3 in 10 respondents
- 1 in 5 are in either material or severe material deprivation
- 1 in 4 report that their asthma is impacted by damp and/or cold in their home



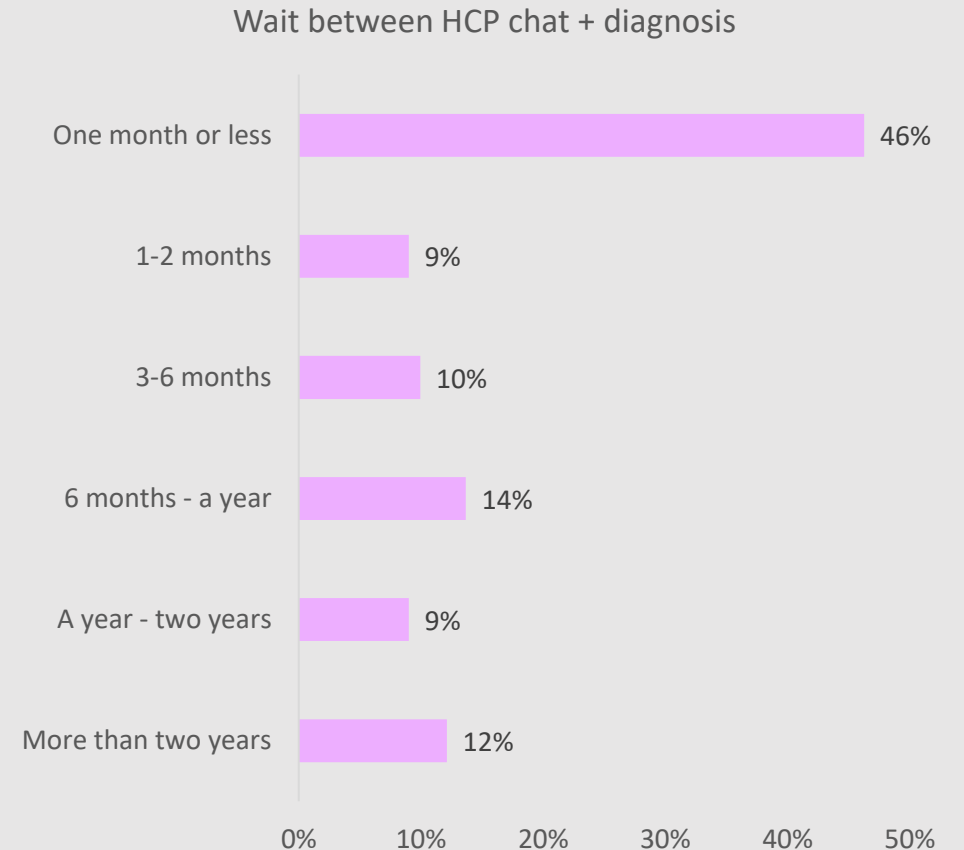
# Respondents aren't as healthy as the general population

- Respondents are **9x less likely** to be in very good health vs. general population
- Respondents are **4x more likely** to be in bad and very bad health vs. general population
- Half of respondents report pain caused by their asthma
  - 1 in 20 report severe or very severe pain
- 7 in 10 respondents have at least 1 comorbidity
  1. Musculoskeletal
  2. Mental illness
  3. Digestive system
- Only half of respondents had discussions about their comorbidities with their HCP



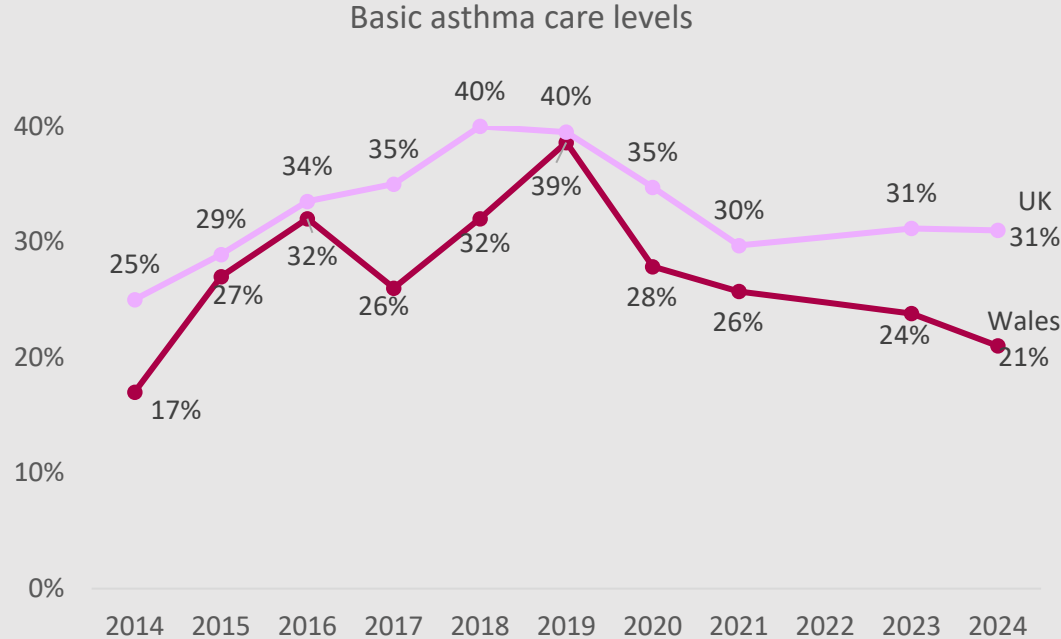
# Diagnosis

- Almost half (46%) of respondents were diagnosed within 1 month
- 4 in 5 (79%) were diagnosed within 1 year
- 1 in 8 (12%) waited over 2 years for diagnosis
  - Misdiagnosis was the biggest barrier and delay to diagnosis – reported by half (54%) of respondents
- The wait between symptom onset and diagnosis was:
  - 5 years or more for half (52%)
  - 10 years or more for 2 in 5 (39%)
  - 15 years or more for over 1 in 4 (27%)

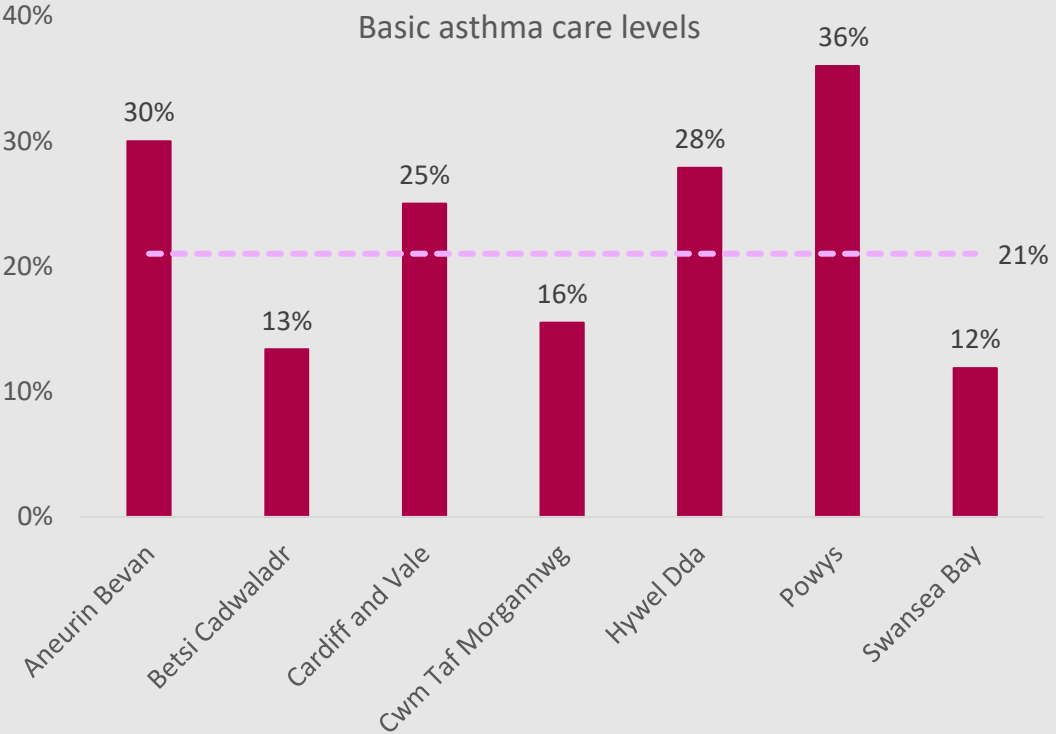


# Asthma care levels have declined

Only 1 in 5 respondents have received all 3 elements of basic asthma care

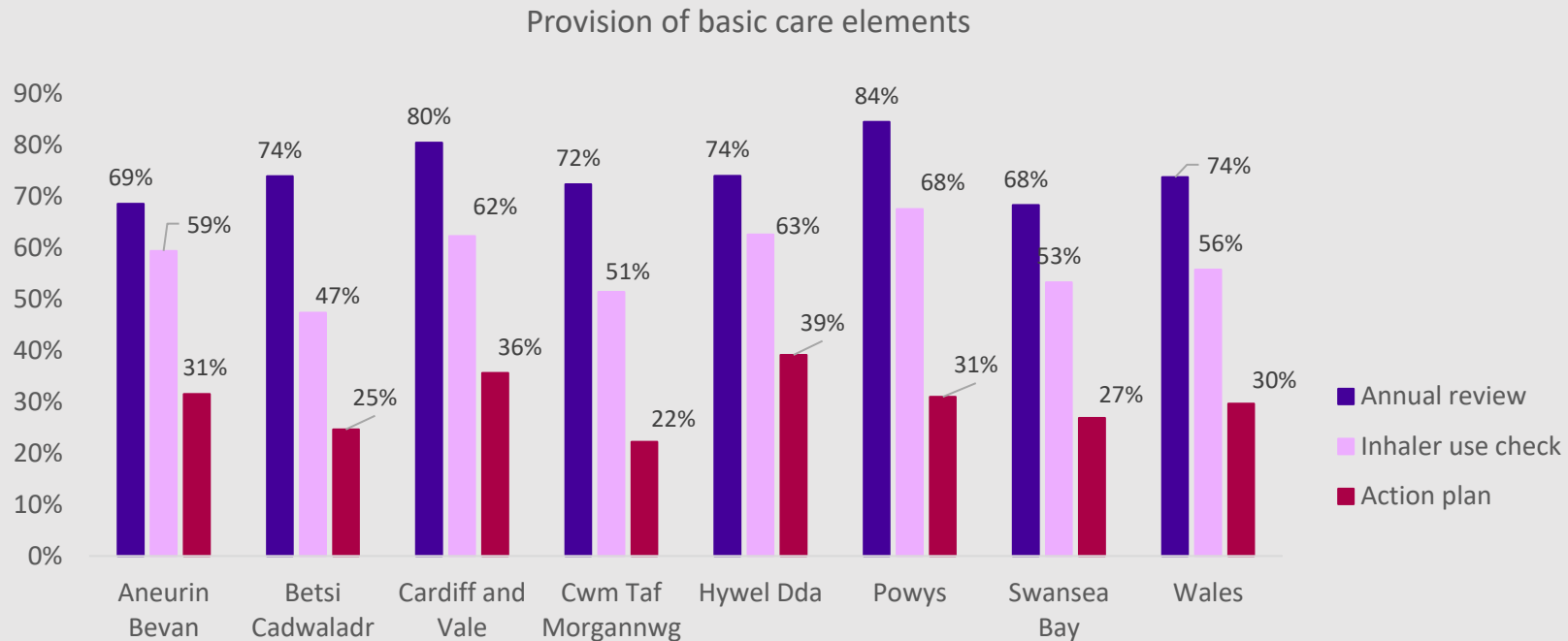


Significant regional variation in care levels across Wales



# Asthma care levels have declined

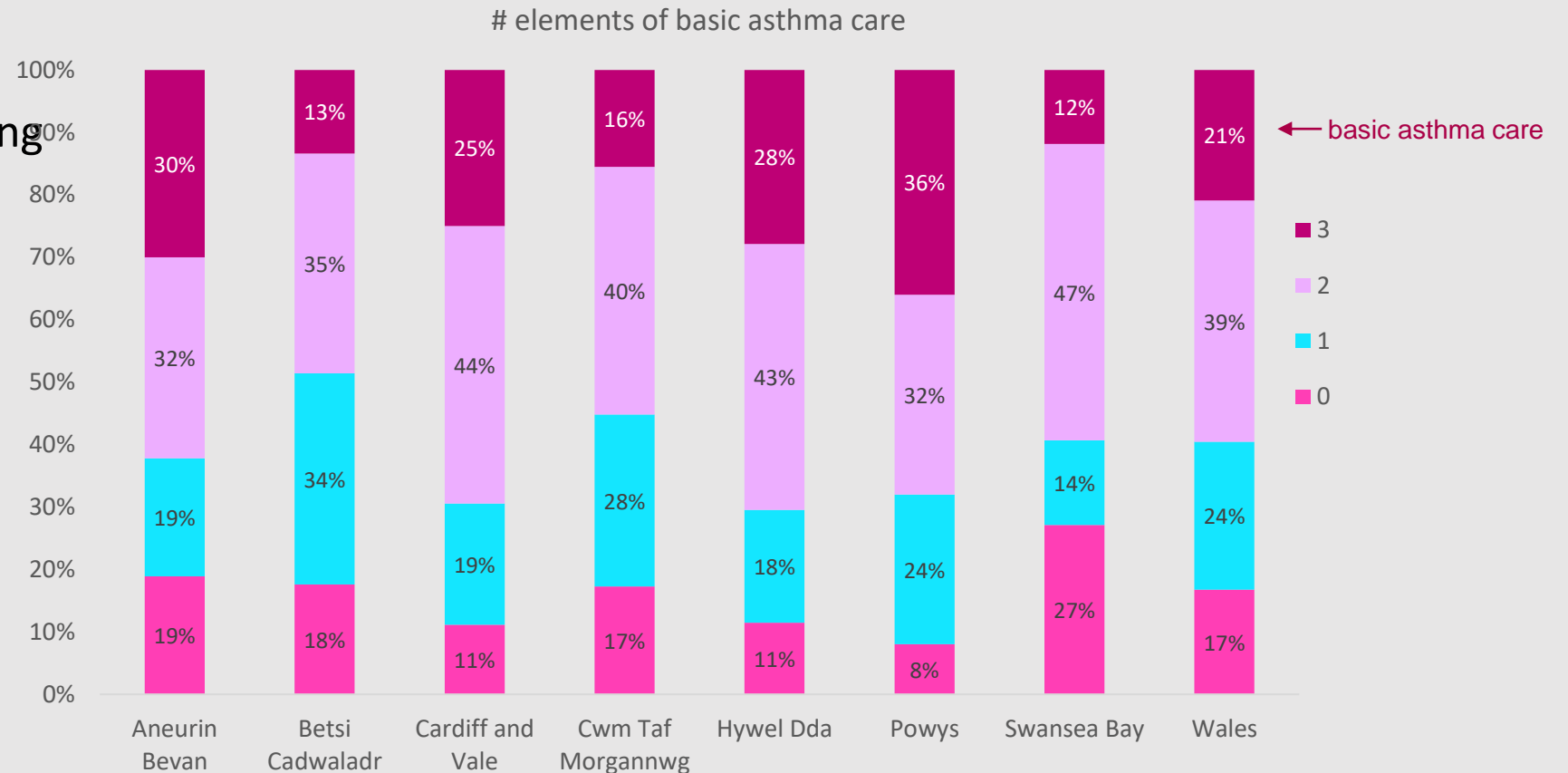
- ~3 in 4 have an annual review
- ~half have their inhaler technique checked
- Only 1 in 3 have a written asthma action plan



# Asthma care levels have declined

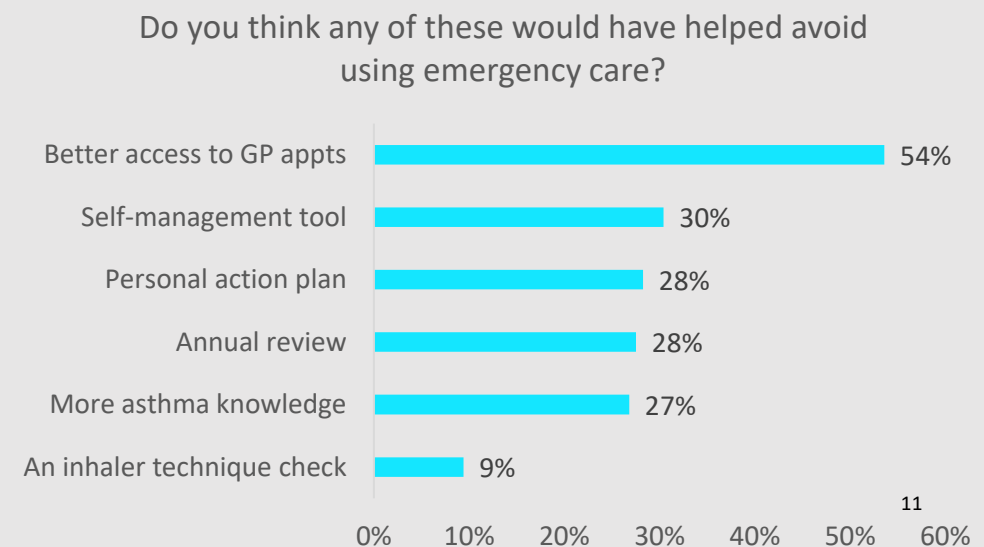
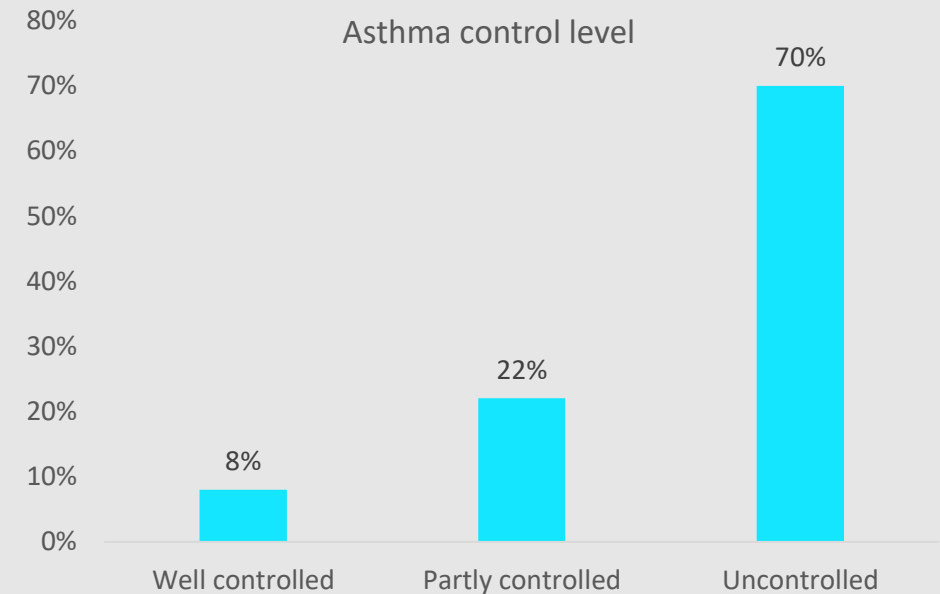
Looking at provision of basic asthma care elements:

- Almost 1 in 5 aren't receiving any elements
- 1 in 4 are only receiving 1 element
- 2 in 5 are receiving 2 elements



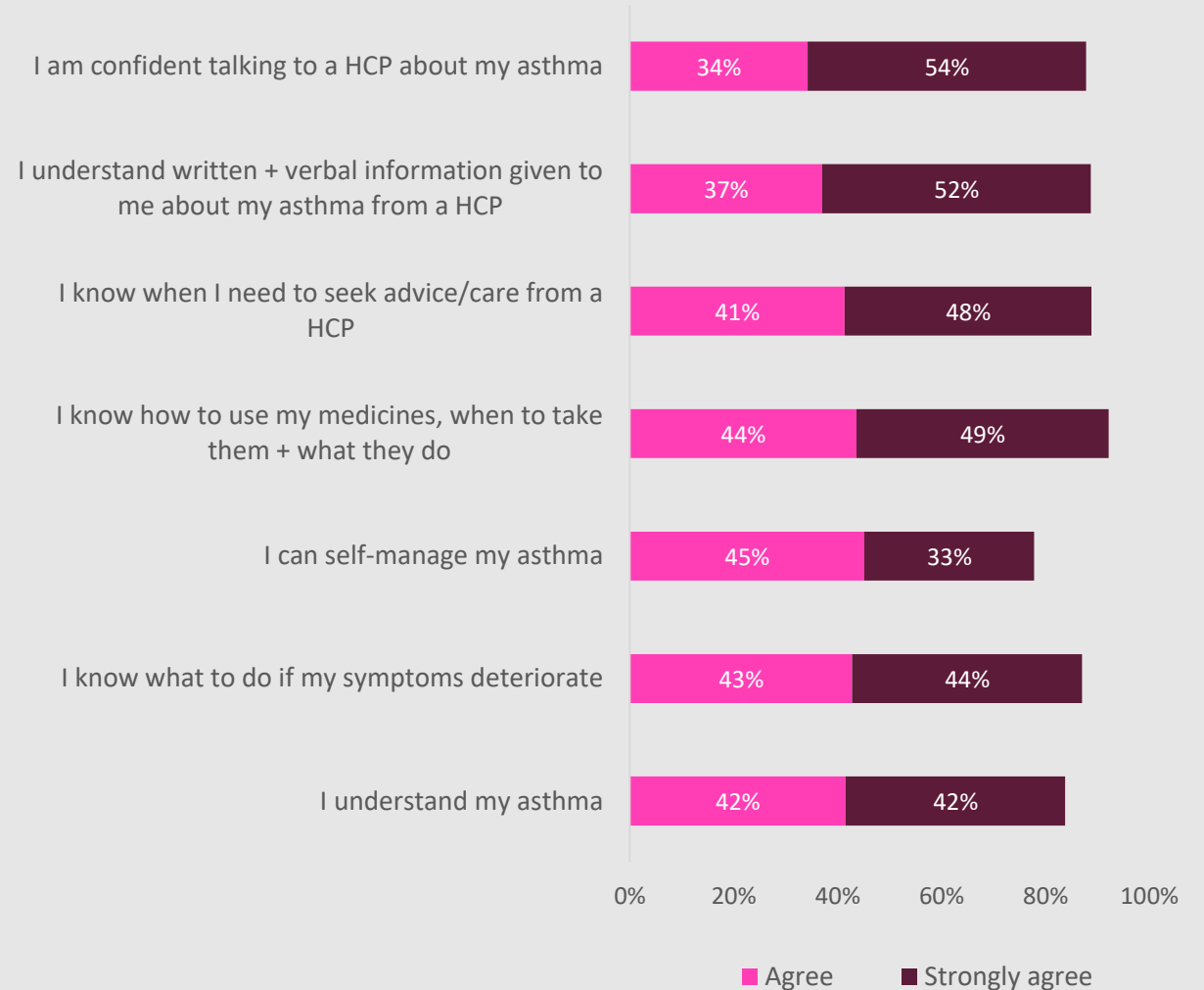
# Most respondents have poor asthma control with detrimental impacts

- Only 1 in 10 have well controlled asthma
- 7 in 10 have uncontrolled asthma
- Over 1 in 4 (27%) have received emergency care in the past year
  - 3 in 5 (62%) did not receive a follow up within 2 days (as mandated in NICE guidelines)
- Respondents think they could have avoided emergency care through:
  - Better access to GP appointments – over half
  - Action plans and an annual review (all part of basic asthma care) – over 1 in 4



# Confidence in managing asthma is high

- Almost 9 in 10 are confident in their interactions with their healthcare professional
- Around 8 in 10 are confident in self-management, their medication and asthma knowledge
- This is contradictory to the levels of uncontrolled asthma – suggests perception of managing asthma is skewed

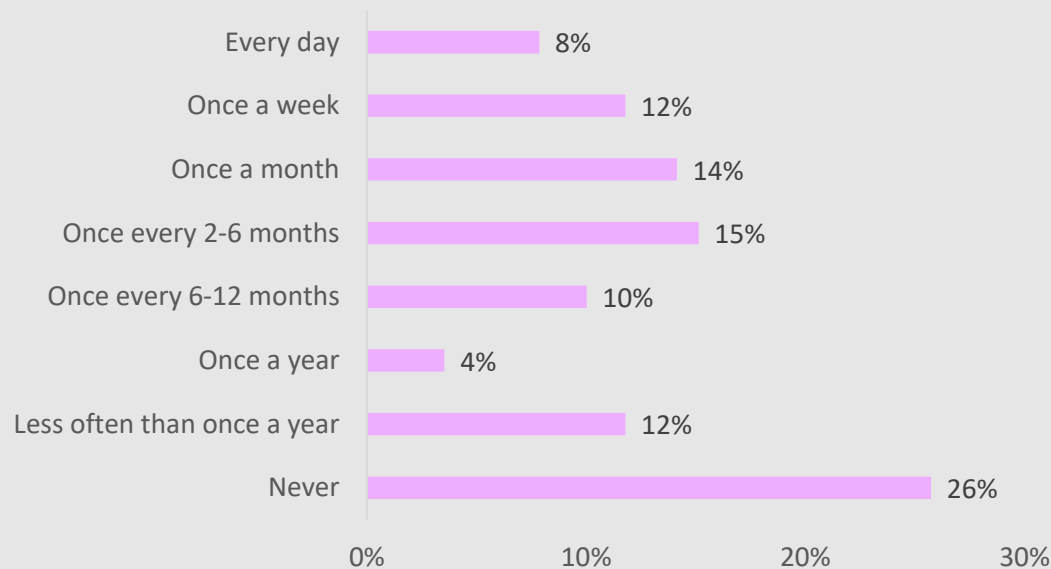


# People use reputable sources for health information

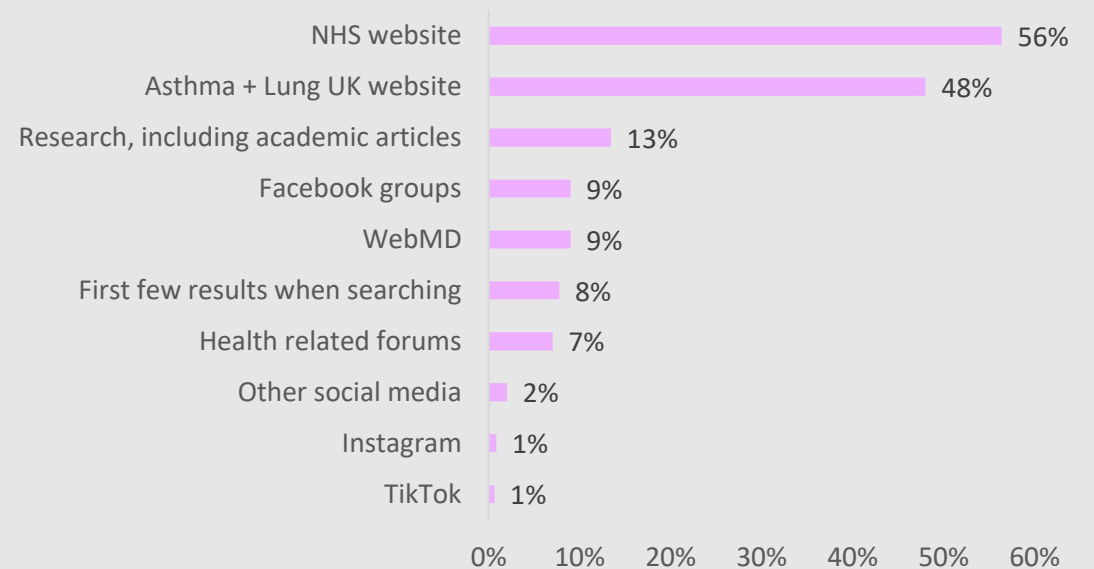
- 1 in 4 (26%) don't go online to find info for managing their condition
- 1 in 3 regularly (monthly or more) go online to find info for managing their condition
- The NHS website and our website are the most common online resources used by half of respondents



How often do you use online resources for managing your asthma?

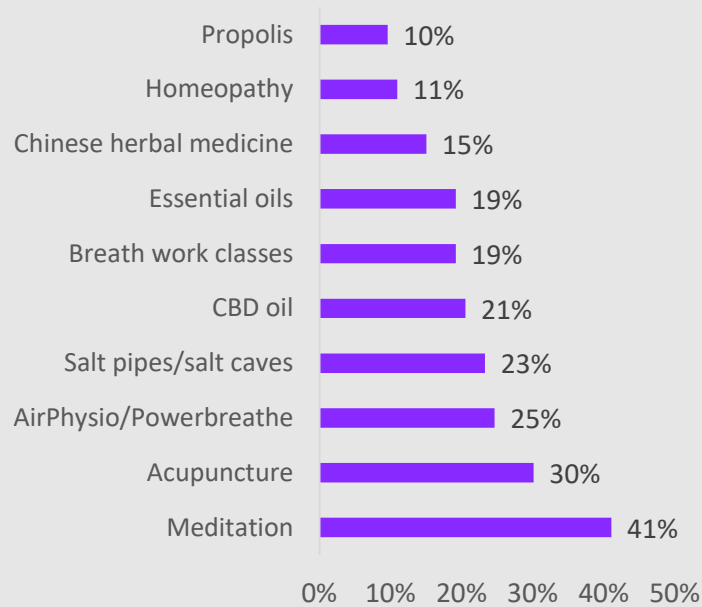


Which online resources do you use to help manage your asthma?



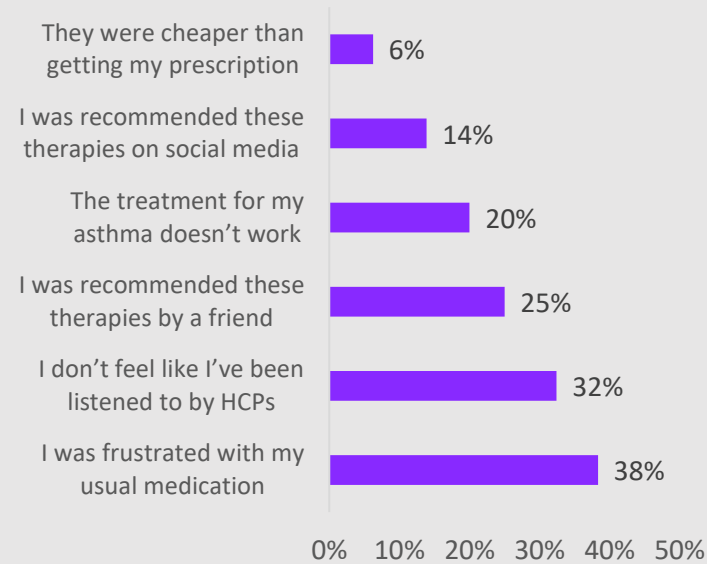
# 1 in 7 have used complementary therapies

Types of complementary therapy used



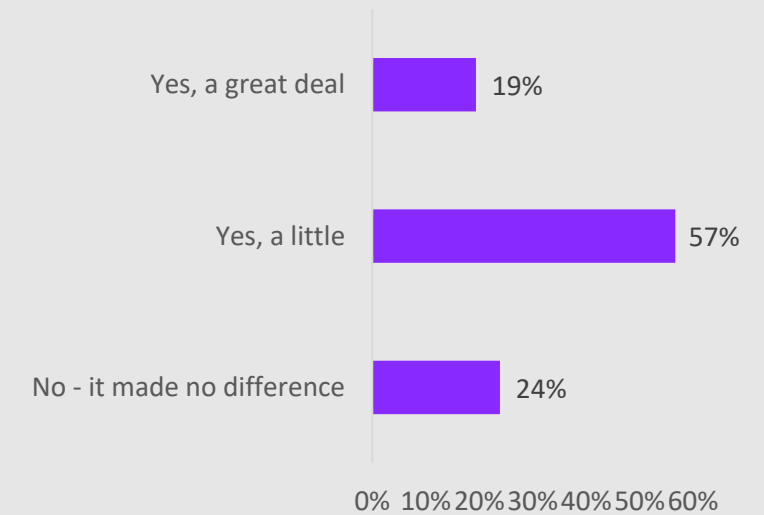
- 3 in 5 have used techniques to improve breathing
- 1 in 5 use essential oils and CBD oil

Why did you decide to use complementary therapies?



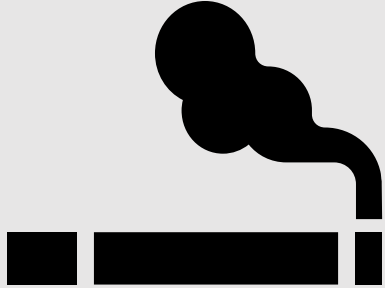
- Frustration with current treatment and care spur people to opt for alternatives

Do you think using complementary therapies improved your asthma symptoms?



- 3 in 4 see improvement in their symptoms
- 1 in 4 see no difference

# Smoking



- Under 1 in 20 (4%) currently smoke or vape while 2 in 5 (39%) have given up smoking
  - The majority, 3 in 4 (77%) of vapers are ex-smokers



- 57% say that cigarette smoke triggers their lung condition
- 36% say that vaping triggers their lung condition



- 5 in 6 (84%) of respondents support the 'Smokefree generation' legislation
  - including 2 in 3 (63%) current smokers and 4 in 5 (81%) ex-smokers

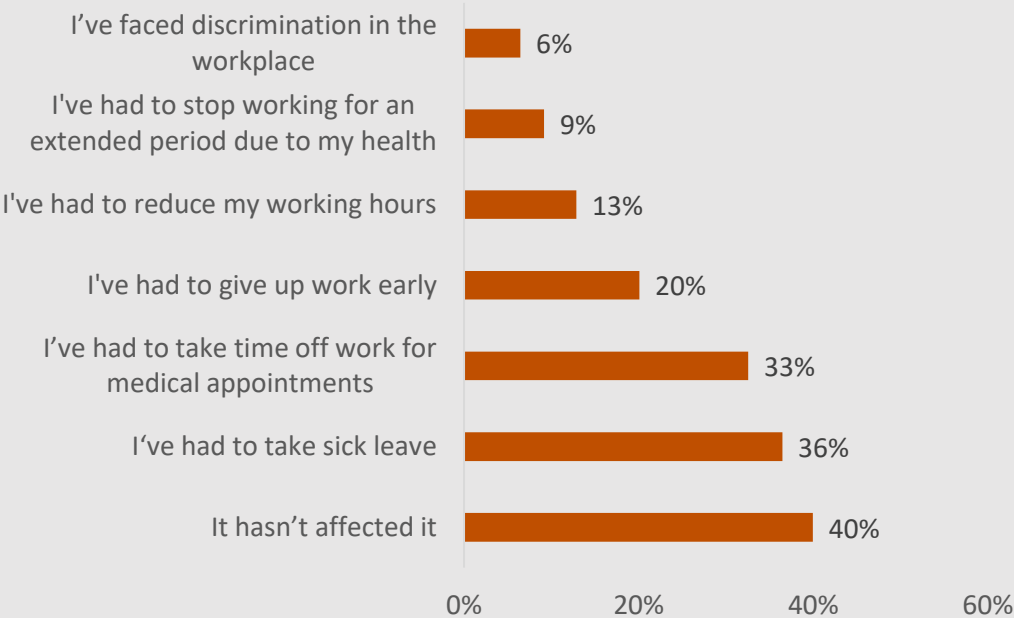
# 1 in 5 have given up work early due to lung ill-health

1 in 3 have had to take time off for appointments and sick leave

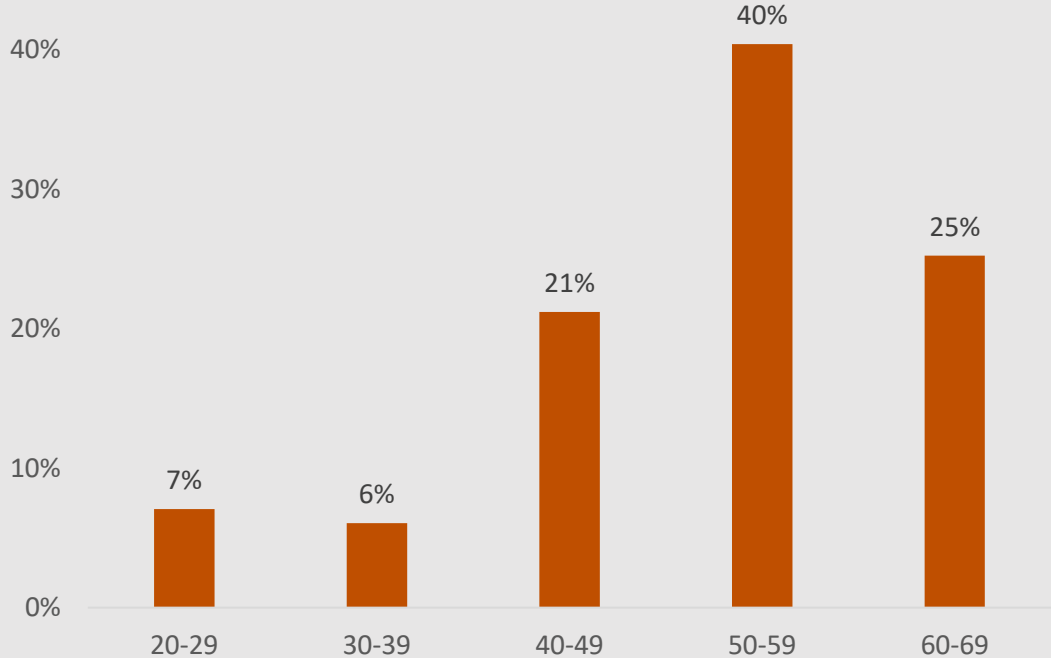
1 in 5 given up work in their 40s

2 in 5 given up work in their 50s

How has having asthma affected your working life?

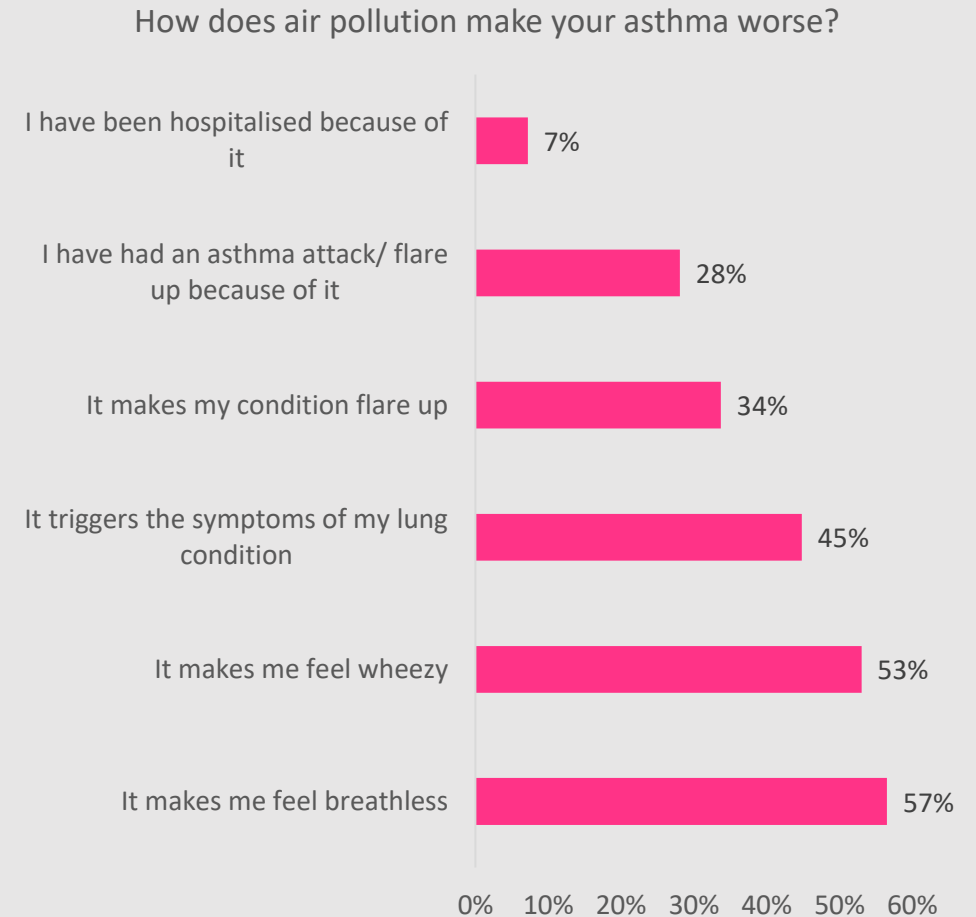


Age at medical retirement



# Half of respondents feel breathless and wheezy as a result of air pollution

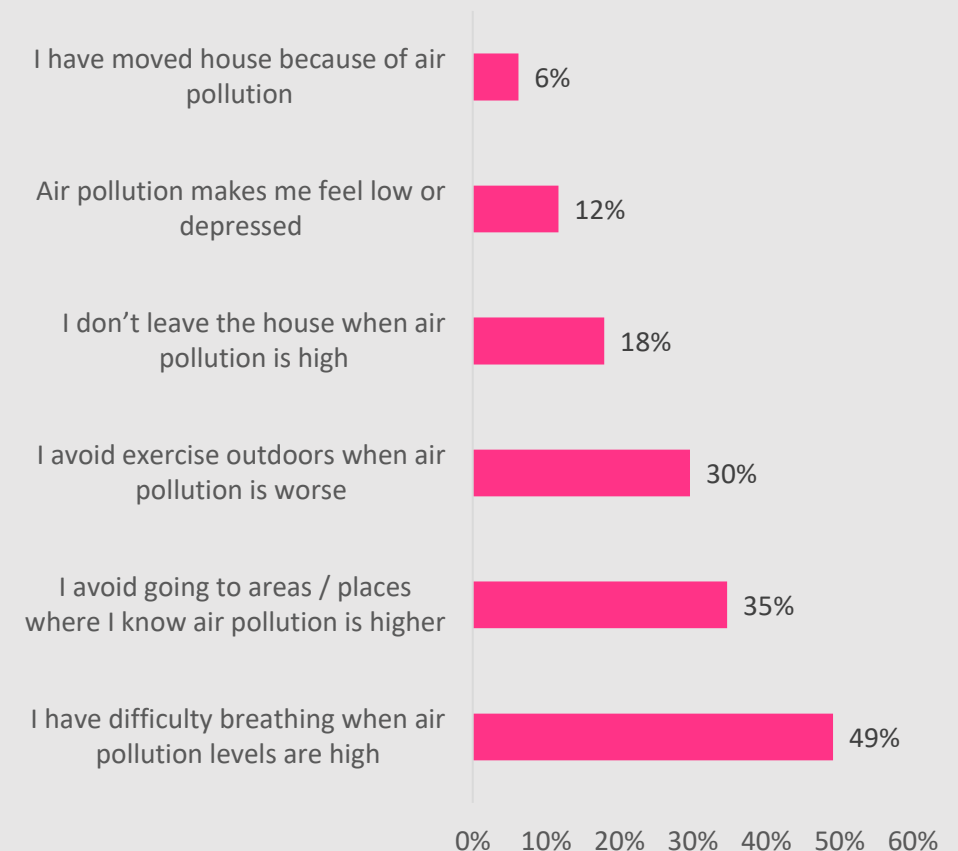
- 6 in 7 (85%) find air pollution is detrimental to their health or asthma
- 7 in 10 (70%) know that air pollution can trigger your asthma while 5 in 10 (54%) say it is a trigger for them personally
- However only 1 in 8 (12%) receive air pollution alerts
- 3 in 4 (74%) support clean air zones in cities
- Half of respondents (50%) are most concerned about road transport as a source of air pollution while 3 in 10 (30%) chose industrial and commercial pollution



# Respondents struggle to breathe when air pollution levels are high

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- 7 in 10 (70%) know that air pollution can trigger your asthma while 5 in 10 (54%) say it is a trigger for them personally
- However only 1 in 8 (12%) receive air pollution alerts
- 3 in 4 (74%) support clean air zones in cities
- Half of respondents (50%) are most concerned about road transport as a source of air pollution while 3 in 10 (30%) chose industrial and commercial pollution

How does air pollution impact your daily life?



# Our asks of Welsh Government

- **Develop a Respiratory Disease Improvement Plan to implement the new quality statement.** Continue funding a national clinical lead and provide the clinical network with a budget to fund national projects and services.
- **Restart quality assured diagnostic tests in primary care to ensure easy and timely access to diagnostics** locally, so everyone with suspected asthma gets the timely and accurate diagnosis they deserve. This must include improving access to current diagnostic tests (including FeNO testing and spirometry).
- **Ensure health boards are following the new All Wales asthma guidance**, reducing the number of people with asthma who are prescribed reliever inhalers without any preventer therapies, so that reliever inhalers are no longer over-relied upon.
- **Support the long-term funding and roll out of the Astmahub and Astmahub for Parents apps** to anyone who is able to use the technology. Use behavioural insight to identify the barriers to people with asthma using the apps, increase the usage and the benefit to people's health.
- **Provide adequate resources** so that healthcare professionals can provide effective person-centred asthma reviews, with follow-up as required
- **Prescribe the right inhaler medication and device for each individual patient.** This should be chosen appropriate to the patient's lifestyle, disease severity and preference while also minimises the effect on the environment.



**ASTHMA+**  
**LUNG UK**

**THANK YOU**

The logo for Asthma+ Lung UK features a stylized cross shape composed of four overlapping rectangular blocks. The top and bottom blocks are a vibrant magenta, while the left and right blocks are a deep, textured purple. The text 'ASTHMA+' is positioned on the top block, and 'LUNG UK' is on the right block, both in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

**ASTHMA+**  
**LUNG UK**

**ANY  
QUESTIONS?**