

How are LAMA inhalers used for people with severe asthma across Europe? Insights from SHARP clinicians

People living with **severe asthma** often need several medicines to control their symptoms and prevent flare-ups. One type of inhaled treatment, called **long-acting muscarinic antagonists (LAMAs)**, helps open the airways and can make breathing easier. Although studies have shown that LAMAs can improve quality of life and reduce asthma attacks, doctors across Europe use them in different ways.

To better understand these differences, the **SHARP network** – a European collaboration of asthma experts, researchers, and patients – carried out a **survey of 470 respiratory doctors** from 28 countries between 2023 and 2024. The survey explored when and why doctors prescribe LAMAs, what benefits they expect, and what challenges they face.

What the study found:

- Most doctors believe LAMAs can **improve quality of life, lung function, and reduce asthma attacks**.
- However, there are **large differences between countries**. Doctors in **Southern and Eastern Europe** were more likely to prescribe LAMAs and had greater confidence in their benefits than those in **Northern and Western Europe**.
- In some countries, such as **Latvia and Lithuania**, LAMAs are **not reimbursed**, limiting access for patients.
- Around half of the clinicians said they use LAMAs **before biologic medicines** or long-term **oral steroids**, which are stronger and often more expensive.
- Most doctors agreed that when asthma improves, **reducing oral steroids** should come before stopping LAMA treatment.
- Many preferred **“triple therapy” inhalers**, which combine three medicines in one device, making them easier to use and improving adherence.

Why this matters:

LAMAs are included in international asthma guidelines, but this study shows that their **use remains uneven across Europe**. Access, reimbursement, and differences in national recommendations all influence how they are prescribed.

What's next:

Clearer **international guidance** and better **education for healthcare professionals** could help ensure that people with severe asthma receive the most effective treatments. The SHARP network continues to bring together doctors, researchers, and patients to promote fair and consistent asthma care across Europe.