



# WHEN THE AIR CHANGES:

**A manifesto for asthma,  
respiratory allergy, and a new  
model for collective action**

# MANIFESTO FOR ASTHMA, RESPIRATORY ALLERGY, AND A NEW MODEL FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

## When the air changes

*Asthma and respiratory allergies affect more than 260 million people worldwide (1), a figure that continues to grow at an alarming and sustained rate, especially among children. This global impact is amplified by pollution, climate change, social inequalities, lifestyle, and lack of access to early diagnosis and appropriate treatment.*

### A collective need

The Spanish Association of People Affected by Asthma and Respiratory Allergies (Asma y Alergia España) was created from the union of three regional organizations—Asmabi, Sevilla Respira, and AsmaMadrid—with the aim of joining forces and working together nationally and internationally to address the challenge of asthma and respiratory allergies.

In Spain, an estimated **3 million people live with asthma and respiratory allergies (2)**, facing daily difficulties ranging from late diagnosis and unequal access to treatment to a lack of understanding and social awareness. The prevalence of childhood asthma ranges from **10% to 14%** depending on the geographical area (3), and 5% in adults (2). In addition, it is estimated that around 25% of children and 40% of adults worldwide suffer from allergic rhinitis (4). This reality calls for an urgent, structured, coordinated, and ambitious response.

*The creation of the association marks a new direction towards better healthcare, focusing on the growing urgency of asthma and respiratory allergies.*

This manifesto was created to **highlight this silenced urgency and open a new chapter**: a more strategic, collaborative model of patient advocacy that is connected to society as a whole. It is a different way of addressing a **global challenge** that requires local responses with real impact. At Asma y Alergia España, we are promoting this manifesto by aligning our voice with the global movement that is calling for action against these diseases.

## Because when the air changes, we must be prepared

## This manifesto is an invitation

*To join forces, transform, and collectively build a new response model*

This manifesto is not a list of demands. It is an **open proposal**. An invitation to all individuals, organizations, and institutions that want to be part of a necessary, urgent, and possible transformation.

Signing it means sharing the vision that another model is viable: one that prioritizes prevention, ensures access, drives innovation, **recognizes evidence**, and **respects the essential role of patient organizations** as agents of change.

With this manifesto, we are launching a **collective process**. A living network that connects experiences, amplifies good practices, drives concrete changes in public policy, and generates lasting alliances.

**Asma y Alergia España** was created to support this vision. Not as a closed structure, but as an open, strategic platform aligned with the challenges of the present. A meeting point from which to change the air, together.



## How was this manifesto created?

*An independent, strategic process aligned with the global agenda*

This manifesto has been promoted by **Asma y Alergia España (AAE)** in collaboration with professionals and organizations committed to a new model for collective action.

It is based on:

- **Proven scientific evidence** on the growth and impact of asthma and respiratory allergic diseases.
- The review of international strategic documents, such as the **Political Declaration on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCD) and Mental Health**, agreed upon within the framework of the United Nations on September 25, 2025 (5).
- **The experience accumulated** by patient, medical, and scientific organizations that have been calling for real change for years.
- An approach aligned with the principles of **One Health, equity, prevention, and meaningful patient participation**.

This manifesto is not a closed document, but an open platform that will be updated with new voices, data, and collaborations.

# 7 commitments to drive change

7 strategic commitments to transform the response to asthma and respiratory allergies based on evidence, participation, and shared responsibility.



## 1. Recognize asthma and respiratory allergies as an urgent public health priority.

Integrating them into national and international health agendas. Their growing impact on quality of life, health equity, and the sustainability of systems requires improving epidemiological surveillance and promoting campaigns that highlight their social, economic, and environmental burden.



## 2. Strengthen prevention and early diagnosis, especially in childhood.

Work to develop effective public programs, especially in vulnerable populations that can benefit from early medical care. Acting early improves quality of life and reduces human, health, and economic costs.



## 3. Ensure equitable access throughout the country to treatment and specialized, personalized care.

Break down territorial and structural inequalities in medical care and implement a multidisciplinary, patient-centered care system.



## 4. Promote research, policy change, and innovation in respiratory and environmental health.

Build models of patient-driven clinical research and innovation, with a special focus on environmental and social influences, incorporating digital health and the use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and *real-world data*.



## 5. Incorporate patient advocates\* and patient organizations into regulatory policies and processes.

Integrate patients into the design, monitoring, and evaluation of public policies and regulations. The system cannot be transformed without those who live with these conditions.



## 6. Link respiratory health and sustainability.

Accept and work on One Health models. Climate change, pollution, animal health, globalization, cities and housing, and transportation must be part of the new working ecosystem.



## 7. Build international networks for collaboration and impact.

Foster global alliances between patient organizations, professionals, institutions, and companies committed to change.

*Think globally, breathe locally:* transformation requires scale and alliances.

\*Patient advocate: a patient or professional who works in patient organizations representing, managing, and defending the rights of their members.

## The silenced emergency

*Asthma and respiratory allergies: a growing epidemic still without a proportional response*

Asthma and respiratory allergies are growing steadily in all regions of the world. According to the **Global Asthma Report**, it is estimated that **more than 260 million people currently live with asthma (6)**, although this figure could be significantly higher if underdiagnosis were taken into account. In Spain, **more than 25% of the population lives with some form of allergic disease**. The WHO estimates that by 2050, half of the world's population will be affected by allergies and asthma, mainly due to lifestyle changes and climate change (7).

**One in ten children suffers from asthma (8)**, a disease that compromises their health, limits their quality of life, and places a significant burden on families and education, and healthcare systems.

In Spain, the figures are particularly worrying. **Asthma is underdiagnosed by nearly 50% (9)** due to unrecognized symptoms or lack of follow-up in primary care. In addition, there is a high level of undertreatment: it is estimated that at least **50% of asthmatics do not comply correctly with their maintenance treatment (10)**, which leads to a higher risk of exacerbations and hospitalizations.

Despite the data, these diseases **still do not feature prominently** on health, political, and environmental agendas. **Their impact is not limited to respiratory health**: they affect quality of life, the educational, social, and work environment, and generate **profound inequalities** in access to diagnosis, specialized care, appropriate treatments, and personalized follow-up.

The current context, marked by climate change, biodiversity loss, air pollution, globalization, and lifestyle changes, exacerbates the burden of asthma and respiratory allergies. As **The Lancet Countdown 2023** warns, **these factors constitute a structural and irreversible threat to global public health (11)**.

**260**  
million live  
with asthma

**50%**  
of asthma cases are  
underdiagnosed

**1 in 10**  
children suffer  
from asthma

Recognizing this global urgency and  
acting locally is the only option for  
change

## New leadership in an old system

### *A professional, connected, and transformative model of advocacy*

For decades, the role of patients has been limited to being passive recipients within fragmented healthcare systems. Today, that vision is ineffective and obsolete. A growing number of patient advocates are taking on a key role in transforming the system, contributing knowledge, strategy, connections, and credibility to change the way asthma and respiratory allergies are prevented, understood, and treated (12).

Our approach involves working with healthcare professionals, researchers, universities, schools, companies, and administrations at the regional, national, and international levels, and recognizing patient organizations as legitimate actors capable of generating solutions, influencing public policy, driving innovation, and designing fairer and more sustainable models of care.

In this model, **digital health**, technological literacy, artificial intelligence, and the ethical use of clinical and real-world data are essential pillars, along with interoperability between systems, to achieve person-centered care (13).

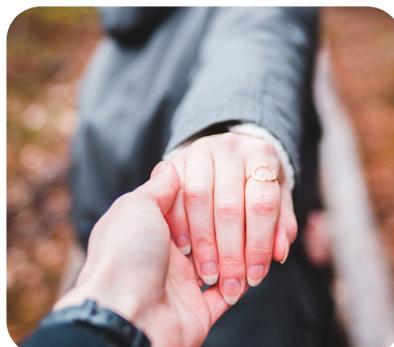
Talking about new leadership is not just about representation, but also about strategy, alliances, knowledge, and connections. It is about building bridges to break down silos, promote comprehensive care, and collectively transform a structural public health problem.

## Think globally, act locally

### *Connecting agendas, realities, and solutions in the face of a global respiratory emergency*

Chronic respiratory diseases are a global health challenge that requires international cooperation and coordinated action (14). It is essential to share data, experiences, regulatory frameworks, and innovative solutions. But only by acting locally can real impact be achieved (with concrete policies, multidisciplinary alliances, and care adapted to each context). **Spain, like many other countries around the world, faces serious shortcomings in awareness, prevention, diagnosis, and care for these chronic diseases.**

The **"think globally, act locally"** approach guides this manifesto and is aligned with the WHO/UN process for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) (15), which promotes global frameworks and their translation into coordinated local responses. This commitment is reflected in its connection to the **Political Declaration on NCDs and Mental Health**, debated on September 25, 2025, at the United Nations General Assembly (16), reinforcing the need for coordinated, courageous, and evidence-based local responses.



## What does signing this manifesto entail?

*For individuals and organizations: a realistic and transformative call to action*

### **Signing this manifesto is not just a symbolic gesture.**

It means joining a shared vision: to transform the approach to asthma and respiratory allergies through evidence, innovation, equity, and patient leadership.

Signing implies:

**Publicly supporting** the seven strategic commitments.

**Reinforcing the role** of patient organizations as legitimate allies for change.

**Connecting with an international network** that works locally.

For organizations and companies: **the opportunity to collaborate on projects, campaigns, or events promoted by AAE.**

Think globally, **breathe locally**

[www.asmayalergia.org](http://www.asmayalergia.org)

*All signatories will appear (with their consent) in the corresponding section of the website and in future institutional communications.*

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