RESPIRATORY DISEASES AND MENTAL ILLNESSES FACT SHEET

- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a leading cause of disability and death, affecting approximately 11.4 million people in the United States and millions more across the world.

- Twenty percent of patients with asthma and COPD suffer from major depression and/or anxiety (generalized anxiety, panic and phobia), a prevalence rate that is substantively greater than that in the general population.

- Depression and anxiety are associated with worsening of consumer/patient-reported respiratory symptoms and decreased lung function.

- Panic disorder, panic attacks, general anxiety disorders (GAD) and phobias appear to be the anxiety disorders most strongly associated with asthma.

- Depression makes it more difficult to adhere to treatment regimens for patients with respiratory disease.

- Research studies report increased cigarette smoking among individuals with COPD who also have anxiety disorders. Smoking is particularly problematic in youth with asthma, leading to higher symptom burden and treatment resistance.

- Depression has been found to hinder life-style adaptations that are necessary for increasing survival rates and optimizing the quality of life for individuals suffering with respiratory disease.

- Studies suggest that psychopharmacological and/or psychosocial interventions might improve asthma control.