



Identifying and addressing health inequalities in asthma care

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Socioeconomic factors are also important to consider in the diagnosis and assessment of asthma and prejudice referral to specialist care <https://bit.ly/2UvzNPZ>

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In this issue of the *European Respiratory Journal*, HÅKANSSON *et al.* [1] describe the existence of inequalities affecting asthma care in the Danish healthcare system, demonstrating the persistence of the inverse care law of health first described by HART [2] 50 years ago. This states that resources and opportunities to receive care are concentrated most in those areas that need them least. Their findings are striking because of the widespread perceptions that Scandinavian-style tax and spend systems generate high investment in social support, healthcare and wellbeing, and yet significant health inequalities still exist here. Whilst increasing levels of disease severity should prompt more referrals to specialist care, HÅKANSSON *et al.* [1] show that referral for expert asthma support still happens far too infrequently, and that the chances of referral are affected by four main domains of age, gender, employment status and educational attainment, as well as proximity to major centres of care, confirming that even when financial barriers to care are minimised, inverse care persists [3].