



Respiratory disease in the United Kingdom



INTERNATIONAL
RESPIRATORY
COALITION

The International Respiratory Coalition (IRC) was founded to tackle one of global health's most overlooked challenges: the burden of respiratory disease.

We bring together national coalitions of health professionals, patient advocates and policymakers to develop and implement national respiratory health strategies that address prevention, treatment and care.

The ultimate goal is to reduce respiratory disease-related mortality by a third globally by 2030, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The United Kingdom's respiratory coalition, called The Taskforce for Lung Health, is a collaboration of over 50 experts in lung health, including people with lived experience, health care professionals, charities, professional bodies and industry partners all working to improve lung health in England. Its mission is to prevent more people from developing lung disease and to transform the care of people living with respiratory conditions.

The Taskforce is calling on the UK Government to produce a Modern Service Framework (MSF) for respiratory care that sets out the most effective, evidence-based interventions to improve outcomes, reduce emergency admissions, and tackle deep-rooted inequalities. Further detail is in the Taskforce's Case for Change.

14.2
million
people living with
respiratory
diseases

Societal economic cost by disease:


Asthma
£12.2 billion


COPD
£31.8 billion


Lung cancer
£31.7 billion

134
thousand
deaths from
respiratory
diseases

2.7
million
healthy life years
lost to respiratory
diseases


Lower respiratory
tract infections
£16.3 billion


Mesothelioma
£1.8 billion


Tuberculosis
£265.9 million

£108.7
billion
societal
economic cost
of respiratory
diseases


Interstitial lung
disease
£6.2 billion


COVID-19
€8.2 billion


Pulmonary arterial
hypertension
£126.4 million

The IRC is made possible with the contributions of various stakeholders: IRC leadership is provided by the European Respiratory Society and European Lung Foundation; Additional stakeholders include: the IRC National Coalitions and the Global Allergy and Airways Patient Platform; Funding support is provided by AstraZeneca, Chiesi Group, GSK, MSD, Sanofi and Regeneron.

Data taken from IRC Lung Facts <https://international-respiratory-coalition.org/lung-facts/>

Published:
September 2026