

Researchers validate new drug use consequences test for primary care

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Researchers from the Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) and Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH) have conducted a study on a modified version of the Short Inventory of Problems (SIP) to help promote early intervention and treatment for patients with drug use in primary care. The findings, which validate this modified version of the SIP in a primary care setting, will appear online in the *American Journal on Addictions* in the March issue.

The SIP, originally designed to measure the health and social consequences of alcohol use, was adapted to create the SIP-Drug Use (SIP-DU) to assess the consequences of drug use. The SIP-DU is intended to be used by [primary care physicians](#) who can identify and intervene with drug users years before they have [medical complications](#) or seek treatment.

In the study, 106 patients from a primary care clinic at Boston Medical Center were assessed using questions from the SIP-DU. The results suggest that the SIP-DU is a valid measure of drug use consequences and compares favorably to other SIP versions. In addition, the study indicates that the SIP-DU is a brief and time-efficient [screening method](#) that could be useful in a primary care setting.

"The SIP-DU is important because there is currently a lack of validated substance use instruments available for use in primary care; most have been developed and used in [specialty care](#) settings," said lead author, Donald Allensworth-Davies, PhD, MSc, research manager of the Data

Coordinating Center at BUSPH. "In the current climate of [health reform](#) and efforts to integrate substance use and medical care, tools like this are greatly needed."

According to the researchers, the purpose of this study was to validate a version of the SIP that can be used in a primary care setting for drug use consequences. When a patient is identified as using drugs, it is important to know whether they have any consequences so that any advice, counseling or referral to help the patient can be done appropriately. The researchers have used this tool in an innovative program that integrates medical, mental health and addiction care in a [primary care](#) setting.

Provided by Boston University Medical Center

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