

New tool to support safer GP prescribing

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A new computer tool to help reduce the risk of commonly made drug prescribing errors has been launched by a primary care research team and the PRIMIS business unit at The University of Nottingham.

The PINCER Query Library Tool has been developed after a clinical trial showed that an innovative pharmacist-led computer-based prescription checking and GP feedback system led to significantly fewer prescribing errors than traditional computerised feedback alone.

The PRIMIS unit within the Division of Primary Care specialises in [health informatics](#) and training and has been working with the PINCER trial research team to develop the tool based on the results of the trial.

The PINCER study involved at-risk patients in 72 [general practices](#) taking the drugs that are most commonly and consistently associated with medication errors. The general practices were randomly allocated to receive either computerised feedback on patients at risk, or computerised feedback with support from a pharmacist to correct any errors detected. When followed up six months later the general practices receiving [pharmacist](#) support had significantly fewer prescribing errors.

The new PINCER tool is an extension of the PRIMIS CHART Query Library and is now available free to all GP practices in England. CHART helps GPs improve patient care by analysing the data held on their clinical computer systems. GP practices access the library through membership of the PRIMIS Hub scheme.

Professor of [Primary Health Care](#), Tony Avery, in the University's School of Community Health Sciences, said:

"The PINCER Query Library makes it easy to avoid some of the common medication errors and this is a topic that will attract increasing national audit interest over the next couple of years. By subscribing to this tool, GP practices will demonstrate their commitment to the safety of patients, as well as helping GPs themselves in their audit requirements for revalidation."

More information: [\(11\)61817-5/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lan...)

Provided by University of Nottingham

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