Dear Colleague

Subject: National Dementia and Antipsychotic Prescribing Audit – GP practice data extract

In 2008 the Department of Health commissioned an independent review of the prescribing of antipsychotic drugs for people with dementia. The review was initiated following concerns about the over-prescription of antipsychotic drugs for people with dementia that were highlighted in a number of reports by the Alzheimer's Society and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Dementia.

The resulting Report, written by Professor Sube Banerjee: The use of antipsychotic medication for people with dementia: Time for action was published in November 2009. The report highlighted the need to ensure that antipsychotic drugs are only prescribed to people with dementia when appropriate, which is in line with NICE/SCIE guideline on supporting people with dementia and their carers (National Clinical Practice Guideline Number 42). It is estimated that around 180,000 people with dementia are currently prescribed these drugs, of whom only 36,000 derive any benefit.

In 2010 The Department of Health commissioned The NHS Information Centre to carry out an audit to generate data on the use of antipsychotic medication for people with dementia in each primary care trust in England.

The National Dementia and Antipsychotic Prescribing (DAP) audit aims to gather information from primary care to establish a national picture of prescribing antipsychotic medication in people with dementia. The results of the audit will be published within a National Summary report in the summer of 2012 providing analysis at national and PCT level. Participating practices will also receive individual feedback reports providing the audit results at a local level. This audit has been endorsed and is supported by the Royal College of General Practitioners.

The audit will use an automated data extract to reduce the burden of participation on your practice using Apollo Medical Services. Practices that would like to use Apollo should check whether the practice clinical system has the Apollo software already installed using the link on the audit website. If Apollo is installed and active at your practice and you wish to participate, no further action is required. If you would like to use Apollo but do not have Apollo installed or Apollo is inactive please email Apollo Medical Systems on support@apollo-medical.com.
The automated extracts will take place between **10th February 2012 and 8th March 2012**.

**GPs that do not wish to take part in the automated extract for the audit should inform us by e-mail at dementiaaudit@ic.nhs.uk by 6th February 2012.** Please include your practice code in the e-mail and use the subject title ‘DAP Practice opt-out’.

Where the automated extract software is not compatible with your clinical system manual queries will be available to download from the audit website. For details on how to download the manual queries and upload extracted data please visit the website at [www.ic.nhs.uk/services/dementiaaudit](http://www.ic.nhs.uk/services/dementiaaudit).

The National Dementia and Antipsychotic Prescribing Audit is supported by the National Clinical Director for Dementia, Alistair Burns and the Royal College of General Practitioners. In addition, the DAP has approval from the National Information Governance Board (NIGB) Ethics and Confidentiality Committee (ECC), formerly PIAG, to collect the data required to conduct the audit.

A patient and carer information leaflet and poster has also been developed to provide clear information to patients and carers about the audit and the use of patient data. Copies of the leaflet and poster can be downloaded from the audit website at [www.ic.nhs.uk/services/dementiaaudit](http://www.ic.nhs.uk/services/dementiaaudit).

We wish to reassure you that no identifiable data will be released to anyone outside the DAP. If you have any queries or require further information please contact the audit team at dementiaaudit@ic.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Henderson
Head of Clinical Audit Support Unit

Professor Alistair Burns
National Clinical Director for Dementia

NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care
Further Information

What is the National Dementia and Antipsychotic Prescribing Audit?

In 2010 The Department of Health commissioned The NHS Information Centre to carry out an audit to generate data on the use of antipsychotic medication for people with dementia in each primary care trust in England.

The audit aims to collect information about the level of prescribing of antipsychotic medication so we can see, at a macro level but in greater detail than ever before, the numbers of prescriptions that are being filled.

Why participate in the audit?

The Operating Framework for the NHS in England 2011/12 makes clear that NHS organisations and providers ensure they make progress on the National Dementia Strategy, covering the four priority areas as set out in the implementation plan -published in September 2010 - which includes reduced use of antipsychotic medication. The audit will provide national and individual practice feedback on this clinically important area.

What data items will be collected?

The audit will focus on a data extract from participating GP practices in England to provide a picture of antipsychotic prescribing trends, using date of prescription where possible to show trends over a number of years, for people with dementia.

The data items to be extracted include:

- NHS Number
- Patient Date of Birth
- Patient sex
- Patient postcode
- GP practice code
- Diagnosis code
- Diagnosis date
- Prescribed drug (from the specified drug list)
- Prescribed drug start date
- Prescribed drug end date

The DAP has approval from the National Information Governance Board (NIGB) Ethics and Confidentiality Committee (ECC), formerly PIAG, to collect the data required to conduct the audit without explicit patient consent.

How will the data be collected?

The automated extract software is designed to extract the data required to conduct the audit remotely from the practice clinical system, which is then transferred electronically, in a secure manner, to the audit.

The data is transferred in such a way that it can not be viewed by unauthorised persons and access is strictly controlled. Only the audit team will have access to data.
Data Security

The NHS IC is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998 for the purposes of the audit. All data processing is carried out on secure servers. We also work within the following legislative and standard frameworks;

NHS Information Governance Standards
The NHS Code of Practice
Caldicott Principles
Freedom of Information Act 2001
BS7799/ISO17799 Information Security Management
UK Statistics Authority: Code of Practice for Official Statistics
ONS: Review of the Dissemination of Health Statistics: Confidentiality Guidance
NHS IC’s Confidentiality Code of Conduct
The NHS IC’s Information Security Policy

The audit will only use the minimum data required in order to conduct the audit analysis. A unique identifier (NHS number) will be used to ensure that data are cleaned, validated, triangulated and linked appropriately.

Can we still take part in the audit if we do not have Apollo?

Yes. For practices that do not wish to use the Apollo software, you will need to run a MIQUEST query instead and load the data manually. Your PCT may have someone who can help you with this. If not you can download the queries from the DAP web pages. For guidance on how to do this, please contact the project team at dementiaaudit@ic.nhs.uk.

What if I have a question that is not answered here?

If you require extra information or clarification please visit the audit website at www.ic.nhs.uk/services/dementiaaudit alternatively contact the National Dementia and Antipsychotic Prescribing Audit Team on dementiaaudit@ic.nhs.uk or 0845 300 6016.
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We are pleased to enclose a copy of a letter that has been issued to GP practices in your area, providing information on the automated data collection for the National Dementia and Antipsychotic Prescribing. For the majority of practices, this uses the software developed by Apollo Medical Systems.

Those practices that do not use the Apollo extract can still participate by the use of MIQUEST queries. These are available from the audit web pages. If you would like details of those practices not included in the Apollo extract or further information on how to participate please contact us at dementiaaudit@ic.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

Julie Henderson
Head of the Clinical Audit Support Unit