Author's response to reviews

**Title:** Potentially inappropriate prescribing among older people in three neighboring regions: a comparative study.

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**Author's response to reviews:**

Irene Pala  
Editor: BMC Geriatrics

January 21st 2014

Dear Dr Pala  
Re: Submission of a research article

Enclosed is our paper entitled “Potentially inappropriate prescribing among older people in three neighbouring regions: a comparative study.” Please consider this manuscript as a research article in BMC Geriatrics

The aim of this study was to estimate the prevalence of potentially inappropriate prescribing (PIP), among older people, in the United Kingdom (UK) using the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD) and to compare UK PIP prevalence with that reported in neighbouring regions, Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic of Ireland (ROI). Following the application of 52 indicators from the Screening Tool of Older Persons potentially inappropriate Prescriptions (STOPP), we showed that PIP, in the UK, was prevalent and strongly associated with polypharmacy. When compared to NI and ROI, the overall PIP prevalence for the UK was lower. Although the most common instances of PIP across the three regions were similar, some notable differences were found such as the prevalence of potentially inappropriate benzodiazepine prescribing, which was higher in NI and ROI compared to the UK.
PIP is an issue of increasing global concern, particularly among older people in primary care, and so our study will be of particular interest to your readers as this is the largest study to date to investigate PIP, in the UK, and the first to date to compare PIP in neighbouring regions of the UK and Ireland with different healthcare systems. The differences in PIP prevalence and in specific instances of PIP, across regions, may reflect region-specific regulatory measures and may provide insight into possible strategies for reducing PIP and the challenges of doing so in different countries with varying healthcare systems.

This article has not been previously submitted or reviewed elsewhere. It was given as an oral presentation at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society conference in Birmingham, UK, on September 8th 2013. The authors do not have any financial or other contractual agreements that may cause conflicts of interest. This manuscript has been read and approved by all authors and they accept responsibility for the manuscript content.

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We look forward to your review and welcome any additional queries about this manuscript.

Yours sincerely,  
Dr Marie Bradley