**Discontinuation of benzodiazepines**

Following the recent clinical research article on the discontinuation of benzodiazepines, I would like to encourage my colleagues. I have been working in a deprived area of Derby with relatively high levels of illegal drug use. Two and a half years ago the practice was prescribing benzodiazepines and Z-drugs at a level of 6% of the practice population (6,500 patients). We discovered that some of these medications were entering the street market.

We initiated a firm protocol, called patients in for reductions, and discussed with our psychiatry colleagues the more difficult cases. With regular audit and review we have managed to reduce the regular burden of these drugs to 0.7% of our practice population and can expect to reduce that further to 0.15%. As you can imagine this has taken a lot of effort and involved some difficult consultations and threatening behaviour, but the burden has been reduced not only for our patients but also for the wider community with no additional funding.

Naomi Walmsley,
GP, Derby.
E-mail: naomidale@doctors.org.uk

**REFERENCE**


DOI: 10.3399/bjgp16X684517