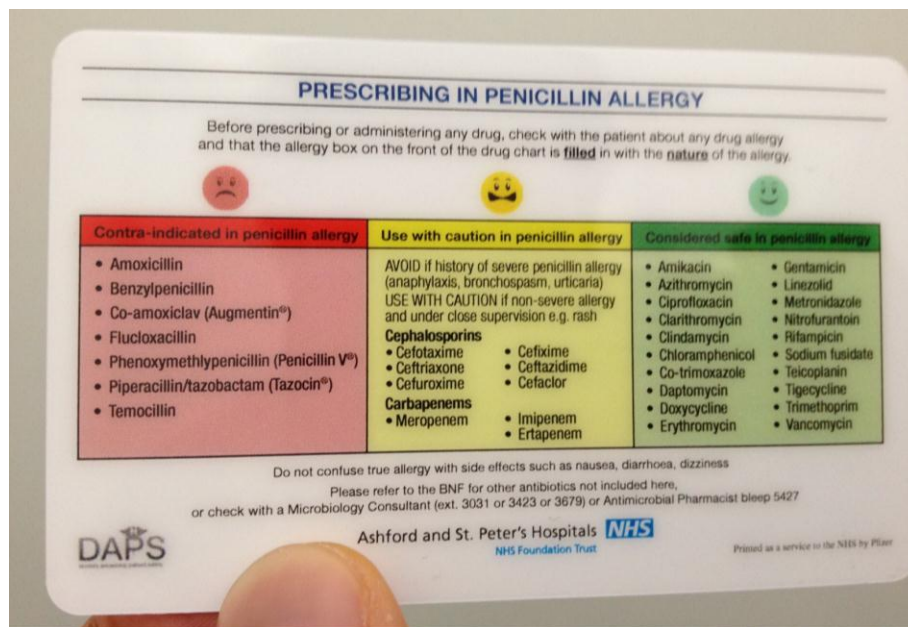


**Patient safety project: Antibiotic prescribing in patients with Penicillin allergy**  
**Dr Safina Gaid & Kayur Patel**

There have been a number of reported incidents of patients receiving a drug they have a documented allergy to, particularly penicillin-containing antibiotics. Upon further investigation, we found there to be no clear and easy-to-use reference available with the Trust, with regard to safe antibiotic use in patients with a documented penicillin allergy.

Our audit of foundation doctors showed they were only able to correctly identify 80% of antibiotics, with respect to their safety in patients with a known penicillin allergy. This is a particular concern as foundation doctors do the majority of prescribing on the wards and presents a clear patient safety issue. 84% of doctors felt they would find a pocked sized reference card either very useful or useful.

We designed pocket cards that could be attached to trust ID badges, in addition to posters to be displayed around the ward, on drug trolleys and in doctor's offices. The red column lists antibiotics that are contra-indicated in patients with penicillin allergy. The yellow column shows antibiotics that can be used with caution, reminding healthcare professionals to increase the frequency of their observations. The green column lists antibiotics that are safe to use in this patient population.



Post-intervention, our results showed clear improvements in the proportion of antibiotics correctly identified by doctors to be contra-indicated or safe to use in penicillin allergy. We have introduced a sustainable intervention that will improve antibiotic prescribing by doctors, in addition to providing a quick reference guide for nurses at the point of drug administration. We hope this quality improvement project will lead to fewer clinical incidents related to antibiotic prescribing, resulting in safer clinical practice, with fewer complications and reduced length of hospital stay in some cases.