

# A General Practitioners Perspective on Penicillin Allergy

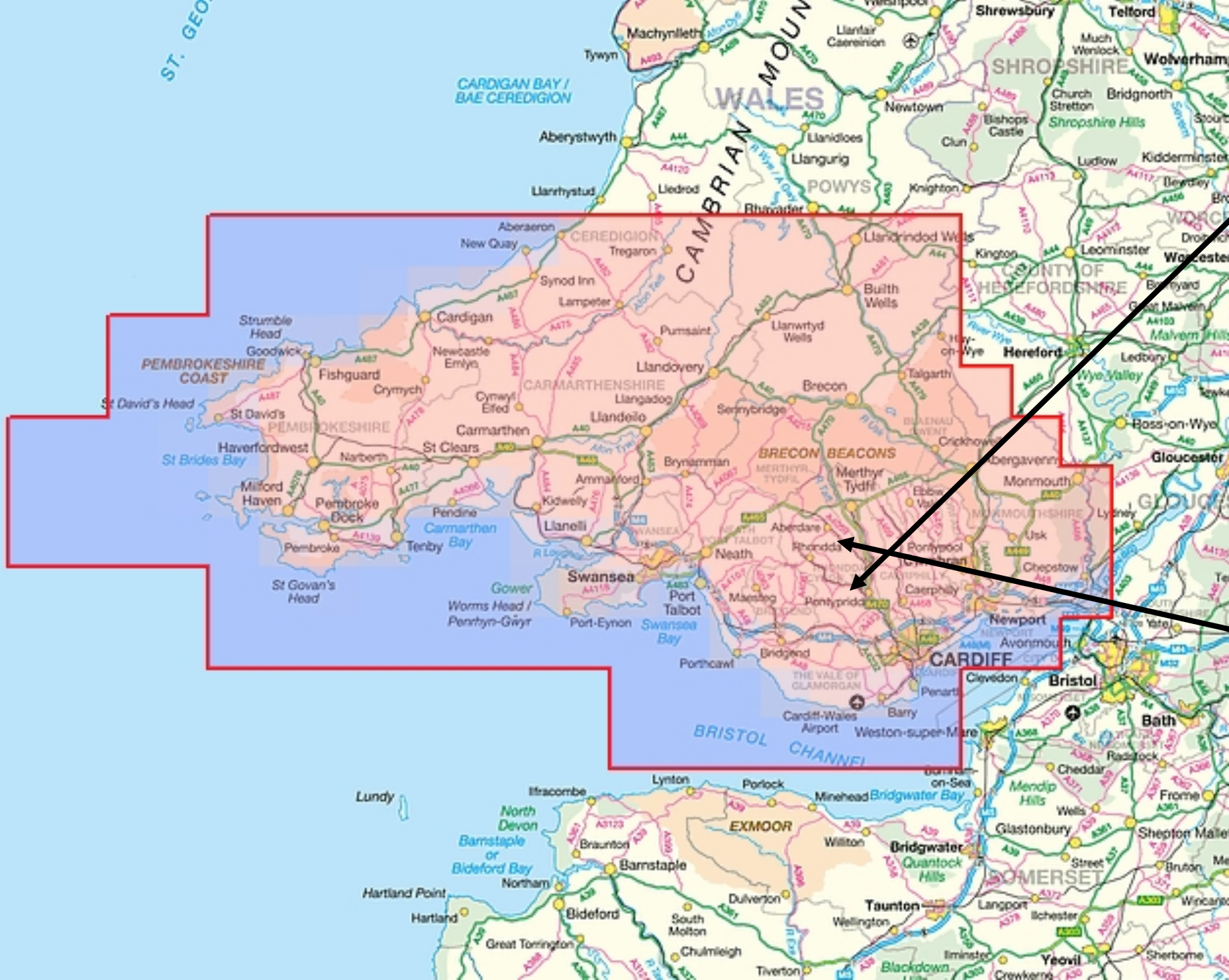
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Documenting Penicillin Allergy: The Impact of Inconsistency

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## Abstract

### Background

Allergy documentation is frequently inconsistent and incomplete. The impact of this variability on subsequent treatment is not well described.

### Objective

To determine how allergy documentation affects subsequent antibiotic choice.

### Design

Retrospective, cohort study.

## OPEN ACCESS

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# In our Practice

5500 patients

263 with a record of penicillin allergy

Around 5% prevalence

# Problem 1

Penicillin allergy is often poorly recorded

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Penicillin allergy is often poorly recorded

The screenshot shows a software interface for adding a drug allergy. The title bar reads "Drug Allergy and Intolerance - Add". The interface includes several input fields and buttons. A red circle highlights the "Notes" button. A red rectangle highlights the "Drug:" and "Read Term for Reaction:" text boxes, which are currently empty. Another red rectangle highlights the "Reaction Type:", "Severity:", and "Certainty:" dropdown menus. The "Reaction Type:" dropdown is set to "Allergy".

**Drug Allergy and Intolerance - Add**

Buttons: Notes, Recall, OK, Cancel, Help

Date of Recording: 27 March 2012  
Clinician: Venus, Dr Fiona  
 In Practice  
Read Term for Allergy: 14L..00 H/O: drug allergy

Drug: [Empty]  
Read Term for Reaction: [Empty]

Reaction Type: Allergy  
Severity: [Empty]  
Certainty: [Empty]

# Problem 2

Once recorded, the allergy label is rarely challenged



# Problem 3

Patients with a penicillin allergy record, tend to have allergies/intolerances to other antibiotics too

Mrs Jones 63 years old

Coronary artery disease

AF

Type 2 diabetes

She drinks around 5-6  
cans of cider a day

Metformin

Ramipril

Nitrates

Bisoprolol

Atorvastatin

Amlodipine

Warfarin

# Mrs Jones 63 years old

## **Mrs Jones says:**

penicillin allergy was years ago and her mum told her she almost died, she came out in red blotches, couldn't breathe, and was taken to hospital, but in the car, not 999, and didn't stay overnight.

## **Her GP record says:**

17/03/2000 – Amoxicillin 500mg caps – “Non-specific viral rash” – “mod”

Mr Davies 73 years old

Obese – BMI 40

Coronary artery disease

OA hips and knees

Depression

Opiates

Ramipril

Nitrates

Bisoprolol

Atorvastatin

Citalopram

Mrs Williams 56 years old

AF

Breast cancer 5 years ago  
→ mastectomy

COPD (FEV1/FVC = 55%)

Coronary Artery Disease

Depression

Fibromyalgia

IBS.....

Mrs Williams 56 years old

AF

Breast cancer 5 years ago  
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COPD (FEV1/FVC = 55%)

Coronary Artery Disease

Depression

Fibromyalgia

IBS.....

Warfarin

Bisoprolol

Nitrates

Ramipril

Sertraline

Amitriptyline

Mebeverine

Colpermin

Tamoxifen

Spiriva

Seretide

# Mrs Williams 56 years old

- Amoxicillin – “SOB and chest pain with wheeze”
- Doxycycline - “red rash all over – hot – felt faint – called 999 and taken to A&E and told drug allergy”
- Clarithromycin – severe vomiting – “wouldn’t give that to my dog”
- Cefalexin “face swollen, couldn’t swallow”

# Thank you



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