Title: Overprescribing of Quinolones – is this Our Achilles Heel? An audit of current prescribing trends in primary care

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Introduction: Quinolones are potent antibiotics, which can be very effective when used in appropriate circumstances, such as prostatitis, pyelonephritis and epididymitis[1]. However, severe side effects such as QT prolongation, tendon rupture and antibiotic associated diarrhoea have been linked to their use[2]. These side effects were widely publicized in a report by the European Medicines Agency[3] in 2018, which advocates limiting their use, to ensure they are used appropriately.
Aims: To assess the frequency of quinolone prescribing in a busy general practice, and to determine whether all of these prescriptions were appropriate.
Method: Using the information system "Helix", a report was generated, detailing all quinolones prescribed to patients from November 2017 - November 2019. The patients files were then reviewed to identify the clinical indication for the prescription, and classified into "appropriate or inappropriate" based on the most recent NICE guidelines[1].
Results: A total of 296 quinolones were prescribed in this two year time period (232 oral and 64 topical). Of the oral drugs, 85 of these prescriptions (Approx 36%) were deemed to be appropriate, with 64% being inappropriate. The most common listed indications were "cystitis" (83 prescriptions), "Respiratory infection" (39 prescriptions), and "Skin infections" (15 prescriptions) all of which are inappropriate.
Two patients developed "leg pains", but there were no other adverse effects reported.
Conclusion: Based on these findings, it is evident that quinolones are being over-prescribed for mild/moderate infections in the community. This highlights the importance of updating practice policies, in line with the most recent guidelines.

Biography
Aoife Doolan graduated from the Royal College of Surgeons in June 2019, and is currently completing an internship in Beaumont Hospital, having spent 3 months working in General Practice. Special interests include General Practice, Microbiology and Public health.

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