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## Kaiser Permanente's Computerized Pharmacy Alert System Increases Medication Safety for Elderly Patients

*Kaiser Permanente, Colorado*

**Keywords:** care coordination, care team, communication, Colorado, computerized pharmacy alert system, electronic medical record, health information technology, health care quality, kp healthconnect, Kaiser Permanente, medication management, integrated care, safety, treatment

When an elderly patient is prescribed a potentially inappropriate medication, Kaiser Colorado's computerized alert system notifies the pharmacist who contacts the prescribing physician to review the order. This system reduced the risk of dispensing potentially inappropriate medication by 16 percent among their elderly patients.

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***Kaiser Permanente: Bridging the Quality Divide with Integrated Practice, Group Accountability, and Health Information Technology***

By Douglas McCarthy, Kimberly Mueller, and Jennifer Wrenn, Issues Research, Inc.

[http://www.commonwealthfund.org/~media/Files/Publications/Case%20Study/2009/Jun/1278\\_McCarthy\\_Kaiser\\_case\\_study\\_624\\_update.pdf](http://www.commonwealthfund.org/~media/Files/Publications/Case%20Study/2009/Jun/1278_McCarthy_Kaiser_case_study_624_update.pdf)

***“Improving Medication Safety.*** The Colorado region developed a computerized pharmacy alert system that reduced the relative risk of dispensing potentially inappropriate medication by 16 percent among elderly patients. When an elderly patient is prescribed a potentially inappropriate medication, the system notifies a pharmacist, who contacts the physician by phone or e-mail to review the order using a standard questionnaire and to recommend changes when warranted. For patients taking anticoagulation medication, a telephonic, clinical pharmacist-managed anticoagulation service reduced the risk of therapy-related complications by 39 percent compared with usual care.”

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