

# Primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of long-term benzodiazepine receptor agonists use in Belgium: a policy delphi

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## INTRODUCTION

Long-term benzodiazepine receptor agonists (BZRAs) use



Both short and long term side effects



Develop targeted strategies aimed at preventing long-term BZRA use, focusing on primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention approaches

## METHOD

Online policy delphi with an expert panel (n= 111) on 27 policy recommendations.

Assessment of each recommendations in terms of feasibility, support, importance, necessary conditions and prioritisation.



## RESULTS

27 recommendations divided into primary, secondary and tertiary prevention

- Consensus level (high, moderate, low, or none)
- Direction indicating whether participants were in favor (+) or against (-) the recommendation

Some recommendations stand out due to either a high or low level of consensus and the direction of consensus. These specific recommendations are presented in the table.

HIGH LEVEL OF CONSENSUS			LOW LEVEL OF CONSENSUS		
Direction of consensus (in favour / against)	The name of the recommendation	Tier of prevention	Direction of consensus (in favour / against)	The name of the recommendation	Tier of prevention
In favour	Implement an <b>awareness raising campaign</b> among the <b>general public</b> on tapering off BZRA.	Primary prevention	Against	<b>Increase the price</b> per BZRA package.	Secondary prevention
In favour	Implement an <b>awareness raising campaign</b> for <b>patients</b> on the <b>challenges of withdrawing</b> BZRA from multiple medications.	Primary prevention	In favour	Provide <b>higher remuneration</b> for prescribers for long <b>follow up</b> consultations dedicated to BZRA.	Secondary prevention
In favour	Implementing an <b>awareness raising campaign</b> for <b>professionals</b> on the <b>challenges of withdrawing</b> from multiple medications.	Primary prevention	In favour	Encourage prescribers to <b>add the indication</b> for substance use disorders next to insomnia/anxiety to <b>patient records</b> when use exceeds guidelines.	Tertiary prevention
In favour	Provide <b>information</b> by the prescriber to the patient regarding the risks of dependency of BZRA at <b>first use</b> .	Secondary prevention	In favour	Establish an <b>agreement between the prescriber, the pharmacist and the patient</b> to keep the same prescriber and pharmacist throughout treatment.	Tertiary prevention
In favour	Implement a <b>training course</b> on difficult tapering-off processes related to BZRA for professionals.	Tertiary prevention	In favour	Develop a ' <b>Benzo-buddy</b> ' system	Tertiary prevention

## DISCUSSION

In Belgium, new strategies have recently been introduced.

However, this study underscores the complexity of addressing long-term BZRA use and calls for a **coordinated multi-faceted approach** across levels of preventions

