HIPS/22/18 - Chronic Pain Identification Through Using Electronic Records (C-PICTURE). Development And Validation Of An Algorithm To Identify People With Chronic Pain Through Primary Care-Based Records.

We believe 2 in 5 people living in the UK could be living with pain severe enough to limit their daily activities. In Scotland, about 6% of adults have severe chronic pain. But these numbers are based on research estimates and cannot show the true number of people who live with chronic pain. Without knowing how widespread chronic pain is in Scotland, it is difficult to plan for health and social care services. We need to better understand the challenges people with chronic pain face to remain in work or take part in meaningful social activities.

Nearly everyone in Scotland has a unique NHS number attached to their health records. We have developed a computer programme, called an algorithm, that can automatically search GP records to identify people with chronic pain. We would like to test it and make sure we are not missing anyone who may have unmet need due to their chronic pain. To do this, we will use information from medical records, patient surveys, and in-depth interviews to see how well the algorithm matches with the other information. With patient partners, we will work to further improve it, so it better identifies people living with chronic pain.

Our enhanced algorithm will revolutionise how we identify, treat, manage, and research chronic pain in Scotland. We will finally be able to have more precise local and national numbers. This information can be used by policy makers and researchers, to quickly identify who needs services and where they are needed.