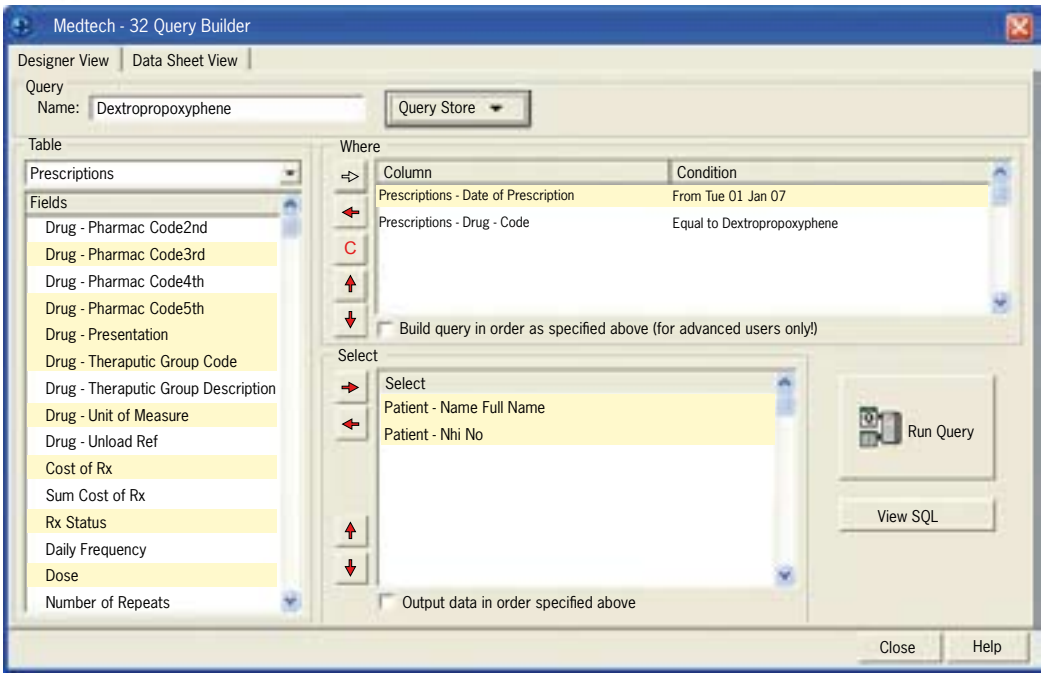
Ten Minute Audit

Identifying your patients on dextropropoxyphene

There has long been concern over the safety and efficacy of combination products containing dextropropoxyphene and paracetamol.

There is no evidence that this combination has any more analgesic benefit than paracetamol alone. In addition, it is particularly dangerous in overdose as it causes respiratory depression and cardiac arrhythmias and relatively few tablets constitute a toxic dose.



Left If you are using MedTech you simply complete the query builder form as shown Select items from the box on the left and transfer them to the appropriate box on the right of the screen.

The combination is especially unsuitable for elderly people as it causes sedation, dizziness and can increase the risk of falls. (See pain article page 14 and snippet page 43)

In 2005, following a review of the safety and efficacy of dextropropoxyphene/paracetamol combination products, the UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) decided to withdraw them from the UK market. In April 2006 the New Zealand datasheets for Capadex and Paradex were updated to contain more restricted dosing information.

While dextropropoxyphene products are still available in New Zealand, it may be a good time to check the suitability of these products for your patients. These products are now on the intensive medicines monitoring programme (IMMP). Follow the instructions to identify your patients for review.