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# New multi-drug test earns praise as first step in personal diagnosis

**Ali Bracken**

A NEW multi-drug test is proving popular with Irish employers who suspect staff are working under the influence of cannabis and cocaine as well as with parents who are concerned their children are using drugs.

Other personal health screening tests available in the new range sold through pharmacies include a spiked-drink detector test, as well as tests for cholesterol, menopause and the sexually transmitted infection (STI) chlamydia.

"The SelfCheck range is new

to the Irish market and is proving a runaway success," claimed Andrea Leahy of Lark Solutions, distributors of the Pasante products in Ireland. "The cholesterol test is the most popular but all the others are also big sellers. The multi-drug test is being purchased by people concerned about family members while many companies are using them to randomly test employees for safety reasons. We expect schools here will follow the trend in the UK and buy them to test students eventually. People concerned about driving under the influence of

drugs are also using the test to make sure they are fit to drive."

Other products in the range include tests for blood glucose levels, prostate health and urine infections. "These tests are not a substitute for a doctor," said Leahy. "They're an incentive for people to look after their health and act as an indicator so that if anything shows up, people can then seek medical advice." All the products are priced between €7.48 and €22.49 and the cholesterol and stomach ulcer tests are the only two blood-based tests. The drink-spike detector tests are recommended to be

brought on a night out and used if someone is suspicious that their drink may have been interfered with. "But of course, no-one should drink something if they're concerned it's been spiked," said Leahy.

The Association of General Practitioners (AGP) welcomed the introduction of such products but cautioned users on their accuracy. "As preliminary screening tests, we would welcome them. But people should be aware that there can be variations in results and they are not as accurate as laboratory tests available," said the AGP's James Stacey.