

[Corporate report: FCO sustainability report 2017 to 2018](#)

This report sets out sustainability performance for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office over the period 2016 to 2017. It covers emissions, waste, water, biodiversity, and sustainable IT, procurement and construction.

[Press release: Blood pressure and heart medication recalled from Pharmacies](#)

Pharmacies in the UK are being advised to recall all batches of valsartan containing medicines made by Dexcel Pharma Ltd and Accord Healthcare (previously known as Actavis Group) as a precaution, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) has warned today. This follows an urgent investigation in to medicines containing valsartan used to treat high blood pressure and heart conditions.

A recall is underway across Europe following recent and emerging information that an impurity has been identified as part of the manufacturing process in a valsartan active substance manufactured at one facility based in China. This facility has supplied the manufacturers with the valsartan active substance. The impurity (N-nitrosodimethylamine), which may have carcinogenic potential, is a result of a change in the manufacturing process. This active substance is used in a number of medicines marketed in Europe.

The European Medicines Agency and other EU regulators are working together to investigate the extent of the issue and any possible impact for patients.

If you are taking any of the affected valsartan products, it is vital that you do not stop taking your medication but you should get in touch with a doctor or healthcare professional as soon as possible. Alternative valsartan containing products, that are unaffected by this issue, are available in the UK.

Patient safety is our top priority and we will provide further updates as the investigation progresses.

Dr Sam Atkinson, MHRA's Director of the Inspection, Enforcement and Standards Division said:

People taking valsartan medication affected by this recall are advised to not stop taking their medication, but to speak to their doctor or healthcare professional who can advise on alternative treatment.

We continue to undertake an urgent review of all these products that may pose a low risk to public health.

We will communicate the outcome of our investigations and ensure that any other affected products are recalled.

Our highest priority is to ensure that the medicines you take are safe.

If you are concerned, please speak to your GP, pharmacist or other healthcare professional.

We strongly encourage anyone taking Valsartan medicines to report any suspected side effects, to us via our [Yellow Card Scheme](#).

Notes to Editor

1. MHRA is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgments to ensure that the benefits justify any risks. MHRA is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control \(NIBSC\)](#) and the [Clinical Practice Research Datalink \(CPRD\)](#). The Agency is an executive agency of the Department of Health. www.mhra.gov.uk
2. [Link to Yellow Card Scheme](#)
3. [MHRA Drug Alerts](<https://www.gov.uk/drug-device-alerts>)

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Office hours are Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm. For real-time updates including the latest press releases and news statements, see our Twitter channel at <https://www.twitter.com/mhrapress>

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[Press release: 'Critical asset' for predicting flooding in York being built](#)

Anyone who frequently travels on the A59 between York and Harrogate is likely to have noticed a construction site at Skipbridge, Green Hammerton.

Taking place under the bridge, the Environment Agency is building a new channel to enable river flow meter readings to be taken.

Project manager Oliver Wilson said:

This is one of the Environment Agency's critical assets for our flood warning service and for managing water resource available for abstraction.

Having an early warning that the Ouse could overtop in York means we can act early to prevent flooding by closing flood gates in the city.

The project involves building a concrete lined channel under the width of the River Nidd.

But building structures in a river channel is no easy feat, so a cofferdam has been built.

One half of the river is dammed off to create a dry working area to enable construction on that side, before the other side is dammed and the new channel structure can be completed.

The construction under the river enables an ultrasonic device attached under the bridge to measure the exact flow of water coming down the Nidd, which joins the Ouse about a mile downstream at Nun Monkton.

There was an existing concrete channel built a number of years ago but due to the design and flow dynamics it created in the river the bed got silted up, causing incorrect flow readings and it not working as an effective gauge station.

The new channel is designed to make sure sediment passes through it and flow readings are accurate.

Mr Wilson added:

Lower river levels have enabled us to make really good progress and we expect the gauge station to be fully functioning this winter.

North Yorkshire County Council's Highways Department has carried out work on the bridge and road earlier this year and Northern Powergrid also recently installed an electricity line across the bridge.