

Crucial medicines protected for coronavirus (COVID-19) patients

The parallel export ban will help ensure there is an uninterrupted supply of medicines for NHS hospitals treating coronavirus patients.

The new restrictions cover crucial medicines such as:

- adrenaline
- insulin
- paracetamol
- morphine

Parallel exporting is when companies buy medicines meant for UK patients and sell on for a higher price in another country, potentially causing or aggravating supply problems.

All medicines on the list are in high demand across Europe as health systems come under increasing pressure from coronavirus (COVID-19).

The restrictions are a standard measure to manage potential medicine shortages and protects UK patients by ensuring the NHS has the treatments to continue providing world-class care.

Companies that parallel export a medicine on the ban list may face tough enforcement action from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and risk having their trading licence revoked for serious breaches.

The Department of Health and Social Care has existing, well-established processes to deal with and resolve medicines shortages. The medicine supply chain is complex and highly regulated, so problems can arise for a variety of reasons, including manufacturing issues or problems with raw ingredients.

Health minister Lord Bethell said:

Our brilliant NHS staff are going above and beyond to provide world-class care to patients with coronavirus and we are supporting them in every way we can.

We are today banning the parallel export of more than 80 crucial medicines to protect patients in the UK and help ensure they can always get the treatments they need.