

Press release: Court finds vitamin scam a bitter pill to swallow

Greenlife Wellness Limited and Naturecare Wellness Limited made false and misleading claims in persuading elderly and vulnerable customers to purchase grossly overpriced health supplements. The companies, both based in London, have now been shut down following an investigation by the Insolvency Service.

The two companies purchased data lists containing details of UK-based individuals over the age of 65 with health concerns over arthritis and joint pain. They then used third party call centres in India, some operated by the same common directors of the two companies, to make unsolicited calls to the individuals to try to sell them a range of health supplements.

The investigation found the companies' customers were subjected to lengthy telesales calls during which the callers gave the impression they were calling on behalf of UK medical bodies and that they were healthcare professionals promoting an official healthcare campaign.

Some customers were found to have paid several hundreds of pounds a month in separate transactions spread over several years. In one case, an 81-year old customer had paid over £19,000 for supplements over a 4 year period.

Customers were called repeatedly, some despite being registered on the Telephone Preference Service or being ex-directory, and falsely told that their details had been obtained from their GP or medical centre.

Customers were also pressurised into purchasing supplements despite being concerned that they those supplements may adversely affect medication they were already being prescribed.

Other customers felt pressured into purchasing more supplements than they wanted as sales agents were persistent and demanding.

Between January 2013 and August 2017 the companies generated a combined turnover of around £2,000,000 from the sale of health supplements.

Commenting on the case, Irshard Mohammed, Senior Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

The sales methods used by the companies were manipulative, misleading and wholly unfair.

These winding-up proceedings show that the Insolvency Service will use the full weight of its powers to take action against companies that operate in such an unscrupulous way.

Sales representatives acting on behalf of the companies:

- made claims about the health benefits and qualities of the supplements which have no medical basis
- implied that they had medical experience when they had none
- implied that they were calling on behalf of genuine medical bodies when they were not
- claimed to be conducting an official healthcare campaign, when that was not found to be the case

The petitions to wind-up both Greenlife Wellness Limited and Naturecare Wellness Limited were presented under s124A Insolvency Act 1986 on 20 July 2017. The companies were wound up on 18 October 2017 and the Official Receiver has been appointed as liquidator. ## Notes to Editors

Greenlife Wellness Limited – company registration number 08281856 – was incorporated on 6 November 2012. The company's registered office is at New Bridge Street House, 30-34 New Bridge Street, London EC4V 6BJ. This address situated the company accountant's office.

Naturecare Wellness Limited – company registration number 09251111 – was incorporated on 6 October 2014 under the name Goldstar Wellness Limited before changing its name on 8 October 2014 to Naturecare Wellness Limited. The company's registered office is at New Bridge Street House, 30-34 New Bridge Street, London EC4V 6BJ. This address situated the company accountant's office.

The winding-up orders were made by Mr Registrar Jones on 18 October 2017, with Lucy Wilson-Barnes appearing for the Secretary of State and no one on behalf of the companies.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Further information about live company investigations is available [here](#)

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and

to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies. The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

By virtue of the appointment of the Official Receiver all public enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 2nd Floor, 4 Abbey Orchard Street, London SW1P 2HT. Email: piu.south@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: