

Press release: Organised crime update: Dangerous Diazepam diversion down by 73%



The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has issued a February update into the diversion of medicines from the legal supply chain into the criminal market. Recent figures into bulk orders of diverted medicines between January 2016 compared to March 2017 figures show:

- trading of Diazepam is down by 73%
- trading of Nitrazepam is down by 30%
- trading of top strength Temazepam is down by 18%
- trading of Zolpidem is down by 18%.

The update into the diversion of medicines from the legal supply chain into the criminal market also revealed as of February 2019:

- 32 investigations have been initiated
- 86 suspects have been either arrested or interviewed under caution and there have been criminal convictions
- 13 wholesale dealers have had their licenses discontinued or terminated and the General Pharmaceutical Council have suspended 8 pharmacists.

In 2016, MHRA launched a major investigation into the diversion of medicines from the legal supply chain, estimated to be worth up to £200m. MHRA investigators have been tirelessly working to identify those responsible and reduce the diversion of medicines ever since.

Alastair Jeffrey, MHRA Head of Enforcement said:

Selling medicines outside of the supply chain is a serious criminal offence and the latest figures and the reduction in diversion shows our determination to protect public health.

The expansion of our operation shows we will continue to track down and prosecute those recklessly endangering public safety by illegally selling prescription medicines.

Those involved have no concern about your health and are making money from vulnerable people.

Please speak to a GP or healthcare professional if you have any questions or concerns about prescription only medicines.

Visit <http://www.gov.uk/fakemedes> for tips on buying medicines safely online and how to avoid unscrupulous sites. You may also provide information anonymously through [Crimestoppers](#)

[Diversion of Meds video](#)

Published 12 February 2019