



Drug Trend Bulletin - Issue 15

June 2017.

New legislation changes.

On the 31st May 2017, the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 will be updated to regulate the drugs shown in the table below.

Misuse of Drugs 1971 - Update 31st May 2017

U- 47700 (synthetic opiate)	Class A
12 methylphenidate synthetic stimulants N-Benzyl-ethylphenidate Ethynaphthidate Ethylphenidate Isopropylphenidate (IPP or IPPD) Methylnorphenate Methylnaphthidate (HDMP-28) Propylphenidate 3,4-Dichloroethylphenidate 3,4-Dichloromethylphenidate (3,4-DCMP) 4-Fluoroethylphenidate 4-Fluoromethylphenidate 4-Methylmethylphenidate	Class B
16 benzodiazepines Etizolam Diclazepam Flubromazepam Pyrazolam Deschloroetizolam Flubromazolam Nitrazolam Nifoxipam Clonazolam 4'-Chlorodiazepam Bromazolam Meclonazepam Adinazolam Metizolam 3-Hydroxyphenazepam Fonazepam	Class C

- Be aware that possession of these drugs from the 31st of May 2017 is an offence.

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Gabapentin.



There is a reported rise in both the use of gabapentin and the associated harms. Gabapentin is a prescription only medicine not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. It is assessed that much of the gabapentin sourced on the illicit drugs market is diverted from lawful prescription.

Gabapentin is a popular drug of choice within the prisons as well as in the community where the price is around £0.50 for a 200mg or 300mg capsule with a tray (blister pack) of 10 costing around £3-4.

Patterns of use would seem to be similar to that of diazepam and gabapentin is generally used with various combinations of other drugs with many users seeing it as 'just another downer', When taken this way reported effects are extreme drowsiness, relaxation, more talkative and increased confidence. Negative effects include poor co-ordination, increased vulnerability and an increased risk of overdose. Withdrawal effects can be significant and difficult to alleviate.

Synthetic cannabis.

Police Scotland has scientifically examined recoveries of all cannabis seizures over the last month and can report there is no significant prevalence of synthetic cannabis or 'Spice' within the mainstream Scottish drugs market. This is an on-going project and a final report will become available for dissemination in due course.

Commonly counterfeited diazepam tablet logo.

White tablets stamped with the MA and D10 logo are the most commonly counterfeit tablets in circulation. The tablets are being sold as diazepam and in some cases being referred to as 'blues' despite being white in colour. Laboratory analysis has confirmed the tablets normally contain etizolam which is now controlled under the Misuse of Drugs 1971 for both possession and supply.

It is anticipated that tablet content may change after the 31st of May when more drugs including etizolam become controlled. It is important to identify any market changes and to share that information with partner agencies.

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'WHITE TABLET WITH MA AND D10 LOGO NORMALLY CONTAINS ETIZOLAM'



Ecstasy dosage in tablets remains high.

Ecstasy tablets continue to be recovered containing high doses of MDMA (ecstasy). There is no guarantee what any tablet may contain. MDMA content of up to 250mg is becoming more common and the designs of the tablets are generally of the 'cut out' variety. The photograph shown below has been circulating on social media recently having been previously circulated widely in 2016. The image depicts pink coloured 'teddy bear' shaped pills. Other designs identified in circulation include small 'IKEA' pencils and oblong yellow and blue pills stamped with 'IKEA'. 'Darth Vader' shaped tablets along with pills shaped in the form of the 'Tesla' motor car badge are also in circulation. The 'Thunderdome' logo (shown below) is one of the more unusual recent seizures.

'TEDDY BEAR' ECSTASY TABLETS



'SKYPE LOGO ECSTASY TABLETS



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Green 'Rolex' logo ecstasy tablets re-appear.



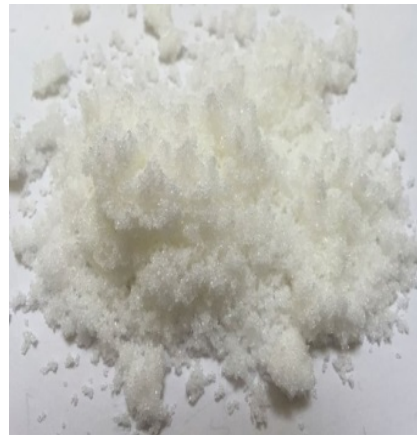
Green tablets replicating the 'Rolex' watch crown have been recovered in Scotland. It is highly likely they would be sold as ecstasy (MDMA) however scientific analysis results are not available at this time.

It is assessed the tablets may contain the controlled drugs PMA or PMMA which have been contributory factors in previous drug related deaths. This assessment is supported by reports on a number of 'open source' research sites on the Internet containing a clear warning these tablets should be avoided. A similar tablet but peach in colour is shown in the recently recovered ecstasy tablets photograph in this bulletin. The peach coloured tablet presumptively tested positive for MDMA.

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Fentanyl

There is increased reporting on the potential abuse and dangers of Fentanyl and Carfentanyl.



Fentanyl is a Class 'A' controlled drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. It has a legitimate medical use as an anaesthetic or for long-term pain management dispensed in the form of Fentanyl patches. It is active at an extremely small dose and is therefore a very potent and potentially dangerous drug.

On the illicit market Fentanyl is commonly used in a white powder form which makes it indistinguishable from a variety of other drugs in circulation. It can, however, come in various forms over and above the prescription patches, including tablet, powder and liquid and as such people can also swallow, snort, or inject Fentanyl. The illegal use of Fentanyl is most likely to be encountered within the heroin injecting cohort where it is mixed with or substituted for heroin itself.

Recently the National Crime Agency highlighted Fentanyl as a highly toxic synthetic opioid. Fentanyl has been implicated in recent deaths and is more prevalent in the USA and Canada. Some drug related death investigations in the UK have identified Fentanyl as a contributory factor including a small number in Scotland. There have been very few recoveries of Fentanyl on the illicit drugs market in Scotland. Intelligence provides that Fentanyl is mainly being sourced over the Internet or less commonly diverted from lawful prescription. There is no evidence to suggest Fentanyl is widely available on the illicit Scottish drug market or that it has become a widely used popular drug of choice.

Due to its high potency in very small amounts, Fentanyl carries associated risks for both users and those who may come into direct contact with the drug, Carfentanyl is an even stronger form of the drug which can be abused in a similar way. The threat, risk and harm from Fentanyl and Carfentanyl use or direct exposure to the drugs is assessed to be high and health and safety considerations should be one of the first considerations where possible.

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Heroin (diamorphine)

One of the most common street level deals of heroin is the 'tenner' (£10) bag. The average weight of a 'tenner bag' is commonly 100mg - 200mg. In the West Area of Scotland there has been a slight increase in bag weights which are now closer to 200mg. This trend has spread throughout the country, reports of heavier 'deals' are becoming more common.

The average 'street level' purity of heroin in Scotland is normally within a range of 10% - 20% and one of the most common adulterants is paracetamol and caffeine which is toasted brown to visually look like heroin.

Prison recovery - blotter art.

The image below shows two different types of blotter art recovered by the Scottish Prison Service within their estate.

The 'tabs' would normally be perceived to contain LSD. In this recovery they have been scientifically analysed and the 'emoticon' logo was found to contain LSD and the 'Yoda' logo contained 2C-I.



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Produced by:

Mr Kenny Simpson - Statement of Opinion Unit Coordinator

Police Scotland

Specialist Crime Division

Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism Unit

Telephone: Office 0141 800 4517 - Mobile 07775 854750

Email: kenny.simpson@scotland.pnn.police.uk