



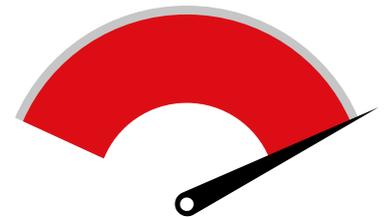
Security Alert

COVID-19 Illicit Drugs

The National Crime Agency has reported that since COVID-19 and the reduction in the manufacture of illicit drugs in countries such as China, the closure of borders and reduced movement of people/goods around the world, the supply of illicit drugs into the UK has reduced significantly and will continue to reduce further. The result of this is that street prices of illicit drugs are rising, and their quality is diminishing. In addition the illicit trade in prescription medication such as diazepam and pregabalin is increasing with reports that prices have already doubled.

The prognosis is that criminals will increasingly target healthcare premises to target a variety of controlled drugs and other medication in order to divert onto the black market. Drug users may suffer increased harm due to their drugs being cut with other substances with an impact on urgent care and other illicit drug related services.

To prevent the levels of theft that are likely to seriously affect operational effectiveness and the safety of all staff at this most critical time, organisations should urgently review their current security arrangements.



Status: Action Required

This Security Alert is designed to inform and protect organisations during the current COVID-19 emergency.

To arrange an urgent Security Risk Assessment or request further assistance, please contact: Jonathan Gladwin, Director of Security; or your Local Security Management Specialist.



How to protect your organisation:

- Develop systems and processes, including governance arrangements, storage, stock checks, transportation and destruction/disposal of drugs.
- Adhere to record keeping, risk assessment and reporting controlled drug-related incidents for the organisation.
- Ensure the safety of health professionals who are involved in prescribing, obtaining and supplying, administering and handling controlled drugs.
- Health professionals must monitor drug use, including governance and systems for reporting concerns and incidents.
- Community Workers must increase individual awareness of the likelihood that items are increasingly valuable, to an assailant and to remove temptation and/or secure desirable drugs and substances.
- Enforce strict controls of FP10's Prescription Pads and immediately report any discrepancies to the Police and CCG.
- Ensure that medicine management policies are strictly adhered to.
- Urgently upgrade, support and continuously review security provision in order to assure both employees and the public.
- Increase the security presence and the issuing of appropriate PPE to frontline security personnel when appropriate.
- Review, and also consider, increasing access controls where necessary.
- Pharmacies/Dispensaries should refer to:

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-post-registration/standards-for-medicines-management/>

For further discussion and support, including fraud awareness training services, contact:

Jonathan Gladwin, Director of Fraud & Security ■ Email: covidfraud@tiaa.co.uk

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