



Drug Trend Bulletin

May 2023

BROMAZOLAM

This interim Drug Trend Bulletin is published to highlight a current or potentially significant drug related issue that may affect our local communities and prisons.

BROMAZOLAM

Bromazolam became a Class 'C' drug under the terms of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 on 31st May 2017. It is a depressant drug and is a short acting benzodiazepine which is typically used to treat anxiety and panic disorders. Bromazolam was first synthesised in 1976 but never marketed for use.

It is not a well-researched drug and therefore little is known about its effects. It is not approved for medical use in any country.

Although mostly found in tablet form, recent intelligence has suggested Bromazolam being smuggled into Prisons throughout Scotland, and predominantly Bowhouse Prison (HMP Kilmarnock) in a white/pink powder form.

On 4th May 2023 an incident occurred within HMP Kilmarnock reporting 13 prisoners (and one recently released from HMP Bowhouse) had suffered a suspected overdose. The symptoms included excessive vomiting of dark/black liquid, black tongue, unresponsive and one male had suffered a partial collapse of his right lung. Subsequently 3 had been transferred to Crosshouse Hospital and remain incubated within ICU.

As patients have been slowly removed from ventilation most have no verbal communication and appear to be suffering from short term memory loss.

Toxicology results from NHS have shown positive for Benzodiazepines and a recovery from HMP Kilmarnock has been rapidly assessed by the SPA laboratory and found to contain Bromazolam. (Image below).

It is assessed that Bromazolam has a similar potency to other Benzodiazepine type drugs, such as Clonazolam, however it is unclear how its potency compares to that of Etizolam. Etizolam is still the most prevalent active ingredient contained within "Street Diazepam" tablets.

For comparison, the active ingredient contained within an Etizolam tablet is approximately 0.0008grams (0.8mg). The complete tablet will be made up of both active ingredient and excipients.

Should a person consume 0.1 grams of raw Etizolam powder, then they would be consuming 125 times the dose contained within a tablet. This would obviously cause adverse effects.

This comparison can also be made within the active ingredient contained within Bromazolam tablets, as opposed to raw powder.

Drug Trend Bulletin



URGENT TREATMENT SHOULD BE OBTAINED BY ANYONE EXPERIENCING HEALTH ISSUES FROM CONSUMING DRUGS.