



Department for Transport

DRUG DRIVE PARTNER PACK

AM I FIT TO DRIVE?

A new drug driving law comes into force
on **2 March 2015**

Enter





WHY IS THIS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE?

- The new drug driving law that comes into force on 2 March 2015 will make it easier for the police to tackle those who drive after taking illegal drugs or abuse medicinal drugs.
- The existing offence is driving while impaired (performance affected) by drugs and the police have to prove that the drug has caused this impairment.
- Under the new offence the police need only obtain a blood sample and show that certain drugs are present above specified limits in the sample.
- Some people use the drugs included in the new offence legitimately following the advice of a healthcare professional and we need to reassure them that they will be able to drive without fear of being prosecuted.



WHY PARTNER WITH US?

- This is a great opportunity for you and your organisation to be part of something big, and more importantly, worthwhile.
- Your staff will be better prepared and ready to support your customers when this new drug driving law comes into force.
- We can offer you free materials to support the campaign. This could include guidance for your pharmacy teams and advice for your patients either online or within your pharmacy.



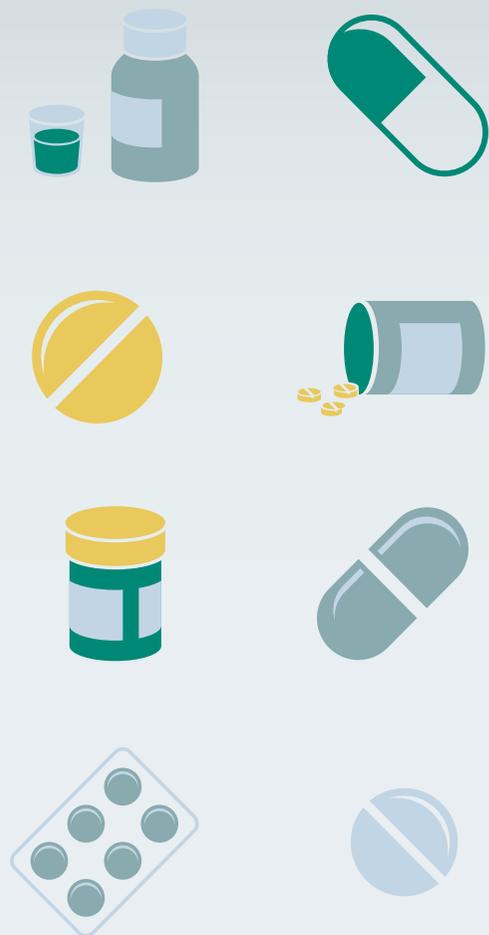
INTRODUCING THE POLICY

The new offence is of driving with certain controlled drugs in the body, including some prescription drugs, above specified limits. The new rules will make it an offence, like drink-driving, to be driving while over the specified limits for each of the 16 specified drugs.

- Mobile screening devices will detect cannabis and cocaine only, with further devices being made available to police in due course. However, if evidence of impairment is found the 'impairment' offence will still apply. If a blood test reveals any specified drug above the specified limit the new offence (section 5A) could then be applied without the need to present evidence of impairment to a court.
- The limits for the vast majority of the 8 medicinal drugs included in the new offence are above the normal doses.



- Unlike the existing 'impairment' offence patients who are able to drive safely will have a medical defence if they take a medicine included in the new offence and were above the specified limit but followed the advice either from a healthcare professional or printed in an accompanying leaflet.
- Patients who take legitimately supplied medicines should keep evidence with them to speed up any investigation into the medical defence and reduce the inconvenience to the patient in case the police stop them.



MEDICINAL DRUGS INCLUDED IN THE NEW OFFENCE

Following advice from a panel of medical and scientific experts the 8 drugs most associated with medical uses included in the new offence and set at a level where a road safety risk arises are:

- Clonazepam, Diazepam, Flunitrazepam, Lorazepam, Oxazepam, and Temazepam
- Methadone and morphine are also included as the opiate/opioid based medication will metabolise (chemically change) and could show a positive blood result.
- Amphetamine and other substances such as selegiline, which can metabolise into amphetamine and are sometimes used for medicinal purposes, is also intended to be included with a limit set above normal doses if parliament can pass a separate amphetamine regulation in time for the commencement of the new offence.



WE ESTIMATE THAT AROUND 19 MILLION PRESCRIPTIONS A YEAR ARE ISSUED FOR THE DRUGS THAT ARE INCLUDED IN THE NEW OFFENCE

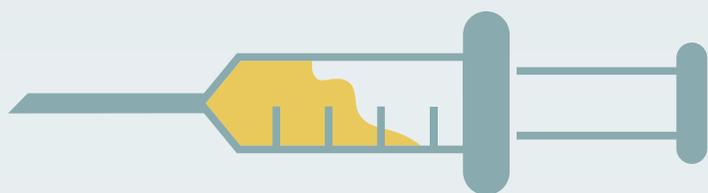
- The majority of those taking medicines in accordance with the advice of a healthcare professional and/or printed in the accompany leaflet are unlikely to be above the specified limit and therefore will not be affected.
- We must provide information to healthcare professionals who prescribe and supply these medicines.
- We need to explain that some medicines can metabolise into one of these drugs and others, such as the opioids will metabolise into morphine.
- Some of these users will be safe to drive and providing accurate information will protect their quality of life.
- They should carry evidence of their prescription when they drive.
- The pharmacist, as well as doctors, can play a very important role by telling their patients about the medicines they are taking.

**19 MILLION
PRESCRIPTIONS
A YEAR**





THE TESTING LIMIT



HAS BEEN SET
VERY LOW

ILLEGAL DRUGS INCLUDED IN THE NEW OFFENCE

The testing limit for the 8 drugs included that are more associated with illegal use such as cannabis and cocaine, has been set very low so even small doses are likely to test positive.

Some illegal drugs have very limited medicinal uses but these are rare and they would not usually be obtained from a pharmacist. Examples of use amongst those deemed fit to drive include:

- Ketamine which is very occasionally used in pain management clinics for chronic pain relief, and
- Sativex a cannabis based medicine a multiple sclerosis sufferer is sometimes prescribed to reduce spasticity.



OUR COMMUNICATIONS PLANS

Two distinct strands:

- Illegal drug driving
- Medicinal drugs – ‘Am I fit to drive?’



COMMUNICATIONS PLANS ILLEGAL DRUG DRIVING

To deter those that take drugs from driving by increasing their belief that they will be caught, convicted and get a significant penalty for a drug drive conviction.

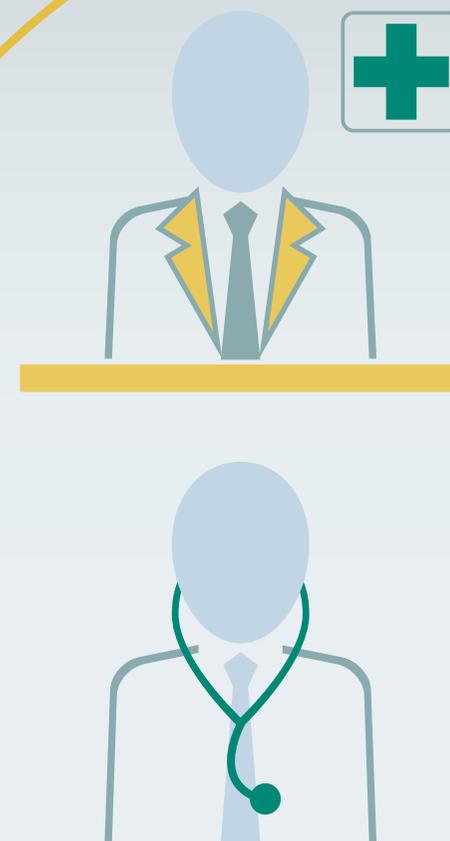
Inform and raise the public’s awareness about the changes to legislation by using:

- PR
- radio spots and partnerships
- digital – film content, online advertising, blogger/ vlogger engagement
- social media engagement, and
- washroom adverts in pubs and clubs.



KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- Certain medicines may affect your ability to drive.
- It will remain an offence to drive while your ability is impaired by drugs and, if in doubt, you should not drive.
- A new offence of driving with certain controlled drugs, including some prescription drugs and a number of over the counter medicines, above specified limits will come into force on 2 March 2015.
- The new law provides a medical defence if your ability to drive is not impaired and you are taking a medicine in accordance with the advice of a healthcare professional and/or the information in accompanying patient information leaflet.
- Ask a member of the pharmacy team or your doctor (GP) for more information.
- Always follow the advice of a healthcare professional and read the accompanying leaflet when you take your medicine.
- New information is starting to appear on the label and in the accompanying patient information leaflet of those medicines covered in the new regulations and for other similar medicines which may also be picked up in testing for the new offence.





CREATIVE/CONTENT

On request Department for Transport can supply:

- video
- guidance for healthcare professionals
- consumer leaflet, stickers, shelf displays and posters (creative well received in past and approved by BMA/MPA/MHRA)
- online web banners and web copy, and
- media opportunities.

TIMINGS AND REGIONS

- We already offer guidance to help GPs and pharmacists prepare patients and raise awareness of the changes.
- Partnership activity is planned for February and March 2015, to reassure and raise awareness alongside the THINK! Activity.
- Further partner support in 2015/16 would also be welcomed to keep the message fresh and act as a reminder.
- We will introduce the new offence in England and Wales only on 2 March 2015. It will be introduced in Scotland at a later date to be confirmed by the Scottish Government.

INTRODUCED IN
ENGLAND AND WALES
ON 2 MARCH 2015



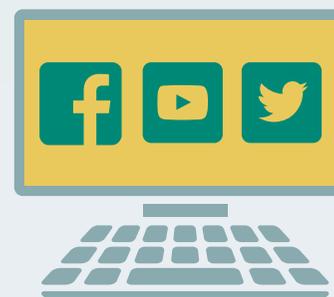


WHO ELSE ARE WE TALKING TO

- The Medicines Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) who have asked pharmaceutical companies to make changes to patient information leaflets and packaging.
- British National Formulary.
- GP bulletins.
- Patient support groups.
- Medical and pharmacy professional and trade bodies.

HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER

1. Briefing your pharmacy team.
2. Digital activity – video/banner displays / web copy / social media.
3. In store activity – stickers / leaflets / posters.





CONTACT US:

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