

MHRA disrupts second manufacturing facility suspected to be involved in the manufacture of illegal weight loss medicines in latest blow to criminal network

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Officers from the MHRA's Criminal Enforcement Unit (CEU) have raided two separate premises as part of an ongoing investigation into an organised criminal network involved in the manufacture and sale of unlicensed weight loss medicines.

Officers from the Criminal Enforcement Unit (CEU) of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have raided two separate premises in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire as part of an ongoing investigation into an organised criminal network involved in the manufacture and sale of unlicensed weight loss medicines.

During the operation, MHRA officers, supported by Lincolnshire Police, Immigration Enforcement and Lincolnshire Trading Standards, seized almost 2,000 doses of unauthorised weight loss medicines awaiting dispatch to customers, alongside manufacturing equipment, suspected pharmaceutical ingredients, packaging, and commercial vehicles.

The two premises searched, a farm near Sleaford and a residential address in Grantham, are believed to have been used for the manufacture and distribution of unlicensed weight loss medicines, including retatrutide and tirzepatide, as well as peptide products.

The operation follows a landmark raid in October 2025, in which CEU officers dismantled the UK's first illicit weight loss medicine manufacturing facility in Northampton, believed to be the largest single seizure of trafficked weight loss medicines ever recorded by a law enforcement agency worldwide.

Dr Zubir Ahmed, Health Innovation and Patient Safety Minister, said:

“This week’s raids have taken dangerous, unregulated products off our streets. These medicines are made with no regard for safety and pose serious risks. We will not allow criminals to profit by exploiting people looking for help with their weight.

“Do not buy weight-loss medicines from unregulated sources. Safe, effective, licensed treatments can make a real difference for those who need them - but they must come from a registered pharmacy, with a valid prescription.

“We are also investing £25 million in better weight loss support programmes and referrals to weight loss jabs from GPs - where clinically appropriate - as part of our shift from sickness to prevention.”

Andy Morling, Head of the MHRA's Criminal Enforcement Unit, said:

“The message from today to those illegally trading in medicines could not be clearer: we are coming for you. Our raid in October was just the start. Every illegal product and every piece of manufacturing equipment we seize disrupts these criminal networks and brings us closer to

dismantling them entirely. We will stop at nothing to protect the public and hold criminals to account for the harm they are knowingly doing.

“I’m grateful to our partners in Lincolnshire Police, Immigration Enforcement and Lincolnshire Trading Standards for their support to today’s operation.

DI Samuel Ward, of Lincolnshire Police’s Intelligence Development Unit said:

“This operation demonstrates the power of intelligence and multiagency work. Lincolnshire Police was proud to play its part in supporting the MHRA, alongside our partners at Trading Standards and Immigration Enforcement, to identify, plan, and execute a warrant has caused a serious disruption to a group profiting from unregulated weight loss drugs.

“The production and sale of counterfeit weight-loss drugs is incredibly dangerous. These substances are unregulated and pose a real risk to anyone who uses them. Criminal groups exploiting vulnerable people for profit have no place in our communities, and we will continue to work relentlessly with our partners to dismantle these operations and keep the public safe.”

The MHRA’s #FakeMeds website offers helpful guidance and advice for staying safe when buying medicines online.

Anyone who suspects they are having a side effect from a medicine is encouraged to talk to their doctor, pharmacist or nurse and report it directly to the MHRA Yellow Card scheme.

Notes to editors

- The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK by ensuring they work and are acceptably safe. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgements to ensure that the benefits justify any risks.
- The Criminal Enforcement Unit (CEU) is the MHRA’s in-house law enforcement function, leading the Agency’s response to medicines crime. Its strategic mission is to protect the public, maintain confidence in regulation and uphold the rule of law by preventing offending where it can, disrupting offending where it cannot, and bringing offenders to justice where it should. It uses the full range of its powers and capabilities, including intelligence analysis, online disruption, covert techniques, and asset recovery to tackle criminal threats to the UK public, working closely with the police and law enforcement agencies in the UK and overseas.
- The MHRA’s Accredited Financial Investigators are authorised by the National Crime Agency under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA). They support investigations by tracing, freezing, and confiscating assets linked to crime, including money laundering and the illegal supply of medicines. Their work includes seizing cash, valuable items, and freezing bank accounts or cryptocurrency suspected of criminal origins. The Home Office’s Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme (ARIS) allows a proportion of the proceeds of crime recovered under POCA, to be redistributed to agencies involved in the asset recovery process.
- The MHRA is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care.
- For media enquiries, please contact the newscentre@mhra.gov.uk, or call on 020 3080 7651.

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