Counterfeit weight loss pens worth £2 million seized by MHRA and West Midlands Police

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Fake weight loss medicines worth approximately £2 million were seized last night in a raid executed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and West Midlands Police.

On October 14, over 12,000 fake retatrutide and tirzepatide pens were seized along with packaging for around 30,000 more products. The raid took place at an industrial unit in Birmingham.

Tim Duffield, Head Intelligence at the MHRA's Criminal Enforcement Unit said,

> We are tackling the organised criminal gangs whose illegal trade in unauthorised medicines puts people at risk of serious harm.
>
> Our officers seized around £2 million worth of fake weight loss medicines from a filthy warehouse on an industrial estate. These products have not been assessed for safety, quality or effectiveness, and there is no guarantee of what they contain or whether they have been contaminated with harmful substances.
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> Retatrutide has not been authorised for use in the UK. Products being sold as retatrutide outside legitimate clinical trials are being supplied illegally and could pose serious risks to public health.
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> We urge people to avoid buying weight-loss medicines from unregulated sources. Anyone considering GLP-1 treatment should speak to a healthcare professional and only obtain medicines from a registered pharmacy against a valid prescription.

October's raid is the latest in a series of MHRA operations that has removed tens of thousands of doses of unauthorised GLP-1 weight loss medicines from circulation:

- In May 2026, two people were arrested following a raid on a country estate believed to have been used to manufacture, assemble and distribute unlicensed weight-loss medicines. Around 12,000 doses were recovered, together with packaging materials and suspected pharmaceutical substances
- In February 2026, around 2,000 doses of unauthorised weight-loss medicines awaiting dispatch were seized, alongside manufacturing equipment, suspected pharmaceutical ingredients, packaging and commercial vehicles.
- In October 2025, the MHRA dismantled the first illicit weight-loss medicine production facility discovered in the UK, seizing 5,000 unauthorised retatrutide and tirzepatide pens, thousands of empty pens and raw chemical ingredients. Together, the finished products and ingredients represented the potential for tens of thousands of doses.

The MHRA #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 are encouraged to talk to their doctor, pharmacist or nurse and report it directly to the MHRA Yellow Card scheme.

Notes to editors

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. The MHRA is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care.
4. For media enquiries, please contact the newscentre@mhra.gov.uk, or call on 020 3080 7651.

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/counterfeit-weight-loss-pens-worth-2-million-seized-by-mhra-and-west-mids-police