

### **INFORMATION SHEET ON NOVEL STREET BENZODIAZEPINES – April 2018**

#### Alprazolam

- Alprazolam is rarely prescribed in the UK. Almost all positive results in urine and oral fluid will be the result of “street” Xanax.
- Alprazolam is a short-acting antidepressant and anxiolytic agent.
- Blood levels peak 1-2 hours after the dose.
- 20% of the dose is excreted unchanged in the urine within 72 hours.
- Half-life is 6-27 hours and duration of detectability is 2-3 days in oral fluid and urine.
- Alprazolam is 10 times more potent than diazepam
- Alprazolam was present in 24/997 (2.4%) of drug-related-deaths in Scotland in 2016.

#### Etizolam

- Etizolam is not available on prescription in the UK. All positive results will be due to “street” etizolam.
- Etizolam is a thienotrizolodiazepine and has similar actions to benzodiazepines.
- Etizolam is rapidly absorbed and peak levels are 1-2 hours after the dose.
- Half-life is around 3-4 hours and duration of detectability is around 48 hours in both urine and oral fluid
- Etizolam is 6 times more potent than diazepam.
- Etizolam was found in 225/997 (23%) of drug-related-deaths in Scotland in 2016.

#### Diclazepam

- Diclazepam is not approved for medical use. All positive results will be due to “street” diclazepam.
- Diclazepam metabolises to delorazepam and subsequently to lorazepam.
- Diclazepam is a longer acting benzodiazepine with a half life of around 42 hours.
- Duration of detectability is around 7 days in urine and oral fluid.
- Diclazepam was found in 75/997 (7.5%) of drug-related-deaths in Scotland in 2016.

#### Delorazepam

- Delorazepam is not available in the UK. All positive results will be due to either “street” delorazepam or as an active metabolite of diclazepam.
- Delorazepam is rapidly absorbed and peak plasma levels are reached within 1-2 hours.
- Delorazepam has a long half life of 80-115 hours.
- Duration of detectability is around 7 days.
- Delorazepam is metabolised to active lorazepam.
- Delorazepam is 10 times more potent than diazepam.
- Delorazepam was found in 21/997 (2.1%) of drug-related-deaths in Scotland in 2016.

#### General comments

- Street drugs are not subject to quality control on content or purity. It is, therefore, impossible to assess the amount that has been taken of any non-prescription drug bought on the streets.
- The threshold levels for these drugs will be 1µg/L in oral fluid and 5µg/L in urine.