



DrugScope responds to proposals to limit flu medicines in crystal meth precautions

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Today DrugScope responded to news that the Department of Health is considering making some over-the-counter cold and flu remedies prescription-only, amid concern that the decongestant ingredients pseudoephedrine and ephedrine may be extracted to manufacture methylamphetamine or crystal meth.

Martin Barnes, chief executive of DrugScope, said:

"Tighter control on medicines which can be used to manufacture crystal meth would be a sensible precautionary measure and should be supported, although making medicines containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine available only on prescription is just one option.

"Pharmacists should be made fully aware of the potential for misuse of these medicines so they can alert the police about suspicious or bulk purchases. Also, manufacturers might need to consider whether these ingredients are essential to their products, or whether alternatives could be found.

"Currently, availability of crystal meth in the UK is still very limited and it is important not to be alarmist, while at the same time ensuring that accurate and up to date information is available to the public about the risks and harms associated with the drug.

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For more information please contact Ruth Goldsmith in the DrugScope Press Office on 020 7940 7517 (07736 895563 out of hours) or at press@drugscope.org.uk