



DASS: Drug & Alcohol Support Service

New information regarding substances;

- **Drug Alert:** there are several reports of small, round, blue pills (which can stain the mouth and fingers), and may have “10” or “DAN 5620” on them, being sold as diazepam, a benzodiazepine. However in one case they have actually been found to be ‘flubromazolam’ (Class C controlled drug), a more potent benzodiazepine not licensed as a medicine. Benzodiazepines available in the UK are increasingly counterfeit (also known as ‘street’) rather than diverted medicines, and the benzodiazepines (and other drugs) contained in them and their dosage vary between samples.
- Potent benzodiazepines can have sedative effects, but users can also present as being in a ‘psychotic’ state. Unexpected and dangerous side effects have been reported including hospitalisations and deaths.
- Using high-strength benzodiazepines can result in an unintended overdose especially if taken with opioids such as heroin, methadone and buprenorphine or with gabapentinoids such as pregabalin and gabapentin; or alcohol.
- Pregabalin use (illicitly) has also been reported as increasing; prescribed to treat neuropathic pain, interacts with the Central nervous system can have effects such as sedation, dizziness, gait instability, and feeling intoxicated. Often prescribed alongside opioid pain relief medication and/or antidepressants which can result in increased risk of overdose, causes increased risk of sedation.
- Drugs and alcohol with a respiratory depressant effect may be especially dangerous in conjunction with coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.
- Amphetamine use has been reported as increasing amongst young people
- It has also been reported that 'spice' a synthetic form of cannabis and a new psychoactive substance is also on the increase. Use can result in hallucinations, increased rapid heart rate; psychosis is reported as a feature when using these substances. Some of these have in the past been known to contain opiate type chemicals, potentially leading to dependency and subsequent withdrawals. It is not the same as using cannabis despite being marketed by some as such. Cost is around £10 per gram.

Support and advice:

- As always, if you know or hear of any specific concerns always report via the CPI form. We know that some of our young people are still dealing/running and being exploited during this lockdown.
- If you have concerns regarding any of the young people you work with please do
- not hesitate to get in contact. We are able to offer guidance and advice to professionals and parents in responding to concerns of substance misuse. We continue to accept referrals and can make contact with young people where there are concerns of substance misuse, to provide a confidential service.
- Young people, parents or professionals can contact DASS on dass@secure.portsmouthcc.gov.uk or call/text 07951497898 or 07557753131.