



## Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

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Rt. Hon. Priti Patel MP  
Home Secretary  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2019

Dear Home Secretary,

### **RE: New ACMD self-commissioned workstreams**

I am pleased to update you on new self-commissioned workstreams for the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) for 2020.

- **Novel benzodiazepines:** This workstream will review the harms of emerging novel benzodiazepines that are not currently controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (MDA). These benzodiazepines have emerged since Etizolam and fifteen other benzodiazepines were controlled in May 2017. Building on the report published in 2016<sup>[1]</sup>, the ACMD expects to provide further advice on emerging novel benzodiazepines and their harms by mid-2020. The workstream will be led by the Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) Committee.
- **Monitoring of emerging NPS:** A new ACMD working group will be established to develop a systematic methodology for the monitoring of emerging NPS. In doing so it will provide an early warning function to the ACMD. The monitoring process will be developed in 2020, with its first meeting taking place in January 2020.
- **Young people and substance misuse treatment:** This is the first time the ACMD has examined the available data on young peoples' substance misuse

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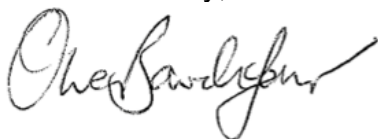
<sup>[1]</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/579352/ACMD\\_TCDO\\_Report\\_U47700\\_and\\_Etizolam\\_and\\_designer\\_benzodiazepines.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/579352/ACMD_TCDO_Report_U47700_and_Etizolam_and_designer_benzodiazepines.pdf)

across the UK. The report will aim to identify any trends in substance use, with a specific focus on the effectiveness and availability of support services for this group. This workstream will not cover prevention but will advise on effective interventions and treatments for this group. The ACMD expects to provide advice on young people by early 2021. The workstream will be led by the Recovery Committee.

- **Naloxone implementation:** ACMD will undertake a review of the evidence on both the implementation and impact of naloxone programmes in the UK and elsewhere since 2012. The ACMD expects to provide advice on naloxone implementation by the end of 2020. The workstream will be led by the Recovery Committee.
- **Chemsex:** A new ACMD working group will be established to review the evidence on substance use in the LGBT community, with a focus on 'chemsex' - a term used to describe sex between men occurring under the influence of drugs taken for the specific purpose of enhancing the sexual experience. The ACMD expects to provide advice on effective interventions for chemsex by early 2021.
- **Cognition enhancers:** A new ACMD working group will review the evidence on the misuse of ADHD medication and other drugs to enhance cognitive function, with a focus on the student population. The ACMD expects to provide advice on cognition enhancers by the end of 2020.
- **Scheduling decision making:** A new ACMD working group will establish a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the ACMD's scheduling recommendations under the Misuse of Drugs Regulations. This SOP will establish a systematic process for ensuring consistency in scheduling decisions. The ACMD expects to establish this SOP by early 2021.

The ACMD looks forward to receiving the Government's priorities to guide the 2020-2022 work programme.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Owen Bowden-Jones', written in a cursive style.

**Dr Owen Bowden-Jones**  
**Chair of ACMD**