

ACMD

Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

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Norman Baker MP
Minister for Crime Prevention
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22 July 2014

Dear Minister

I am writing to you in response to your correspondence dated 6th March 2014, in which you requested the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to provide advice in relation to the existing prescription exemptions for temazepam. I would firstly like to thank you for updating the Advisory Council on the Government's response to tramadol scheduling. Temazepam is currently exempted from the rules on prescription writing for controlled drugs under regulation 15 of the Misuse of the Drugs Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The ACMD has carefully considered the Home Office's proposal to remove the current exemptions applicable to temazepam prescriptions, to bring it in line with other Schedule 3 drugs, and has noted the responses to the consultation exercise. The Advisory Council welcomes the continued monitoring of temazepam prescriptions, particularly in the public sector.

The ACMD's view is that temazepam no longer needs to be treated differently from other Schedule 3 drugs. The available evidence is indicative of a reducing level of prescribing and the majority of these prescriptions being computer generated.

The ACMD recommends the removal of current exemptions for temazepam under the 2001 Regulations, as proposed by the Home Office. This will mean Schedule 3 drugs having the same requirements under the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The ACMD would suggest that your Officials continue to work with the respondents to the consultation in the implementation of the Government's proposal. For instance, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society expressed their concerns around the prescribing of temazepam in secondary care settings, where computer generated prescriptions is not the norm.

I look forward to updating you on progress of the Advisory Council's wider work, including our inquiry on the diversion and illicit supply of medicines.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Les Iversen', written in a cursive style.

Professor Les Iversen CBE