

Son of pharmacy owner sentenced for dealing wholesale medicines

David Ihenagwa, 40, of Edmonton, north London was convicted for offences of supplying class B and class C controlled drugs, using his mother's east London pharmacy as a criminal enterprise. He pleaded guilty to 1 charge of supplying class B drugs and 4 charges of supplying class C drugs from September 2015 to April 2016.

MHRA officers seized 13,440 Codeine Phosphate tablets from an address in Stoke-on-Trent on 8 June 2016. These were traced back to the pharmacy where Ihenagwa worked. The MHRA discovered that Ihenagwa purchased the tablets from a licensed wholesale dealer in Surrey and operated the criminal enterprise from his mother's pharmacy business in east London where he worked as company secretary.

MHRA investigations showed that Ihenagwa regularly purchased far larger quantities of controlled drugs than would normally be dispensed from a high street pharmacy. Further investigations revealed that Ihenagwa had sold medicines on at least 23 separate occasions to a criminal group. Typically, the drugs would be collected by the gang, by the van load, from the pharmacy where Ihenagwa worked and shipped around the country.

Ihenagwa was charged with supplying Codeine Phosphate, a class B drug and 4 charges of supplying Diazepam, Zopiclone, Lorazepam, and Tramadol, all class C drugs. All the drugs are prescription-only medicines. Proceedings to confiscate the proceeds of Ihenagwa's criminal activity are now underway.

Mark Jackson, MHRA Head of Enforcement said:

"It is a serious criminal offence to sell controlled drugs which are also prescription only medicines without a prescription.

"We work relentlessly with regulatory and law enforcement colleagues to identify and prosecute those involved.

"Those who sell medicines illegally are exploiting vulnerable people and have no regard for their health. Prescription-only medicines are potent and should only be taken under medical supervision."

Ends

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Notes to Editor

1. [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency](#) is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK by ensuring they work and are acceptably safe. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgements to ensure that the benefits justify any risks.
2. MHRA is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control \(NIBSC\)](#) and the [Clinical Practice Research Datalink \(CPRD\)](#). MHRA is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care.