

Press release: MHRA seizes more than 100 unreliable HIV home-testing kits

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is warning people to not use or buy Hightop HIV/AIDS Home Test Kit after seizing 114 potentially unreliable products from 2 UK based suppliers.

If you believe you have used a Hightop HIV/AIDS Home Test Kit you should seek a further HIV test at your local sexual health clinic or through your GP, because the self-test kits may be unreliable and provide false results.

All UK based stock of Hightop HIV/AIDS Home Test Kit have been seized by MHRA and all sales of the product into the UK market have been stopped by the manufacturer.

The HIV kits, manufactured by Qingdao Hightop Biotech Co Ltd, do not have a valid CE mark which means the product has not met a number of regulatory requirements concerning test performance, labelling and instructions for use for use. MHRA is investigating the issue with experts at Public Health England.

Always make sure the HIV test kit has a CE mark and is clearly intended for self-testing. Only approved HIV self-testing kits that have met the appropriate regulatory requirements concerning test performance, labelling and directions for use carry a CE mark.

Whether buying from the high street or online, only buy a self-test kit from a reputable source, such as an online pharmacy registered with MHRA. In the UK online pharmacies must be registered with MHRA and display the [European Common Logo](#) on every page of their website. Read our [#FakeMeds top tips](#) for more information on buying medicines and medical devices, including HIV home-testing kits, safely online.

You can find out more about where to buy HIV test kits at [HIV Aware](#).

Speak to your doctor if you have any concerns about your health or test results. Suspected faulty test kits can be reported via the [Yellow Card Scheme](#).

MHRA's Director of Devices, John Wilkinson, said:

People who buy a self-test kit online or from the high street should know what they are buying is safe and reliable. Make sure the kit has a CE mark and clearly states that it is intended for home self-testing. Don't use a test kit if it's damaged or the seal is broken.

If you are concerned you may have used an unreliable test kit, speak to your GP, sexual health clinic, pharmacist or other

healthcare professional.

We continue to encourage people to report any issues involving medical devices to MHRA via our [Yellow Card Scheme](#).

Cary James, Head of Health Promotion at Terrence Higgins Trust (THT), said:

Home self-test kits for HIV and STIs have many benefits, including letting people test in their own space, in their own time, on their terms. However we are extremely concerned to see unregulated produce on the market and urge anyone considering a test to only use those with a CE mark. Anyone taking a test without a CE mark risks their own health and that of others.

Dr Kirsty Foster, Consultant in STIs and Blood Borne Viruses at PHE, said:

HIV tests are free and testing through a sexual health clinic is strictly confidential. We would encourage anyone who thinks they may have been at risk of HIV to get tested as soon as possible, as early diagnosis and treatment are highly effective in helping people with HIV remain in good health long term and reduce the risk of passing the virus on.

[John Wilkinson discusses Hightop HIV/AIDS Home Test Kits](#)

Background

1. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK.
2. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgements to ensure that the benefits justify any risks. 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 Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD). The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency is an executive agency of the Department of Health.
3. HIV self-testing is when an individual performs an HIV test on themselves, in private, and gets an immediate result. This is not to be confused with Home Sampling which is where individuals order a self-sampling kit, take their own sample in the privacy of their own home and return it to a laboratory for testing and results management.
4. Since April 2014, it has been lawful to sell, and advertise for sale, CE-marked HIV self-testing kits in England, Scotland and Wales. To

receive approval for sale in the UK, HIV self-test kits must meet a number of requirements concerning test performance, labelling and directions for use.

5. [Terrence Higgins Trust](#) (THT) is the UK's largest HIV and sexual health charity
 6. THT Direct, 0808 802 1221, gives support, advice and information. Their advisers can provide emotional support if people are worried about their sexual health or have concerns about living with HIV. They can help people access services local to them across the UK, whether provided by THT or by someone else.
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Press release: Funfair rule changes will enable more competition

The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain – established to protect the interests of its travelling showmen members – represents around 90% of funfairs in the UK.

In December 2016, [the Competition and Markets Authority \(CMA\) alleged that the Guild's current rules break competition law](#) by limiting competition at fairs run by the Guild and between existing Guild fairs and potential rival fairs.

As a result, fairgoers were potentially missing out on improvements arising from greater competition, such as new rides and amusements, new fairs or different kinds of fairs in their local vicinity. It also made it difficult for local authorities to change or improve a fair.

The Guild has now offered to make changes to its rules (by way of legally binding commitments) to fix these problems.

Specific changes proposed by the Guild include measures:

- opening up access to Guild-run fairs for non-member showmen
- enabling access to Guild-run fairs for the showmen (both members and non-members) who are best placed to provide an attractive service to fairgoers
- allowing landowners (often local authorities) to change or improve a fair by replacing poorly performing fair organisers and amusement operators
- reducing restrictions on rival fairs opening close to Guild fairs
- making the rules of the Guild more transparent by publishing them online
- making conditions for membership of the Guild expressly based on

objective criteria

The CMA's provisional view is that the proposed rule changes, once implemented, would address its competition concerns. It is now inviting comments from those who are likely to be affected. If accepted by the CMA, the commitments will become legally binding on the Guild and the CMA would bring its investigation to an end.

The CMA has also written a [letter](#) to members of the Guild and published a short [summary](#) and [video](#) to help explain what the proposed changes will mean for showmen.

Ann Pope, CMA Senior Director – Antitrust, said:

We welcome the Guild's offer to make changes to its rules and are now consulting on whether others agree that they meet our competition concerns.

We believe that the current restrictions hinder change and innovation in funfairs.

The new rules will enable more competition in travelling fairs potentially giving the millions of fairgoers who attend them every year access to new rides and to different fairs in their local area.

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For more information on the CMA see our [homepage](#) or follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Sign up to our [email alerts](#) to receive updates on Competition Act 1998 and civil cartels cases.
2. Further details about how to respond to the consultation are set out in the [notice of the proposed commitments](#), which the CMA has issued today. Further details about the CMA's investigation can be found on the [case page](#). Comments on the proposed commitments should be received by no later than Tuesday 3 October 2017.
3. The Chapter I prohibition in the Competition Act 1998 (the Act) prohibits anti-competitive agreements and concerted practices between undertakings (for example, businesses) and decisions by associations of undertakings which may affect trade within the UK or a part of it and which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition within the UK or a part of it, unless they are excluded or exempt in accordance with the Act.
4. In December 2015, the CMA launched a formal investigation in respect of certain rules of the Guild, having established that there were

reasonable grounds for suspecting that the Chapter I prohibition had been infringed. In December 2016, the CMA issued a Statement of Objections to the Guild, setting out its provisional view that certain of the Guild's rules infringed the Chapter I prohibition.

5. Where the CMA has begun an investigation under the Act but has not made an infringement decision, it may accept commitments to take such action (or to refrain from taking such action) as it considers appropriate for the purposes of addressing the competition concerns it has identified. If the CMA proposes to accept the commitments offered, the CMA must consult those who are likely to be affected by them, giving them an opportunity to give the CMA their views. The CMA must then take any such views into account before making a final decision on whether to accept the commitments. Formal acceptance of commitments would result in the CMA terminating its investigation and not proceeding to an infringement decision.
6. [The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain](#) describes its purpose as being "to protect the interests of its members – travelling showmen who gain their livelihoods by attending funfairs".
7. The [Guild has stated](#) that "Virtually all travelling Funfairs – some 200 per week between Easter and Bonfire night – are operated by members of the Showmen's Guild". Some fairs in the UK attract over half a million fairgoers. It is estimated that the Guild has around 2,000 members that are active in putting on fairs.
8. The Guild's proposed commitments have been offered by those members representing the Guild (having taken soundings of the wider membership of the Guild) on the basis that, if the CMA were to accept them, then in accordance with the Guild's rules, the Guild's membership would be asked to implement them by a vote at the annual general meeting of the Guild's Central Council to take place no later than 31 January 2018. In the event that the membership of the Guild fails to vote in favour of the rule changes proposed under the commitments and therefore to implement the Guild's proposed commitments by 31 January 2018, then the CMA reserves the right to reopen its investigation.
9. Enquiries should be directed to rebecca.cassar@cma.gsi.gov.uk or 020 3738 6633.

[Press release: Major A27 Arundel](#)

bypass plans go on show today

Three options for upgrading the road are being put forward, valued between £135m and £260m, including two proposed new routes for the A27 to the south of the town and one proposal widening the A27 mostly along its existing route. Each would create a new dual carriageway to join up the two existing sections of dual-carriageway either side of Arundel to reduce journey times, improve reliability and make the road safer.

Options for upgrading the A27 at Arundel

A public consultation on the proposals starts today and runs until 16 October. Highways England is holding eight information exhibitions at venues across Arundel and Littlehampton so that people can examine the proposals and put any questions directly to project team.

Highways England programme manager Valerie Stephens said:

The single carriageway A27 through Arundel has been a missing link in the road network for decades. Now, major improvements are finally within reach. People's input will be vital in finding the right way forward, and I encourage anyone with an interest in the A27 to get involved – whether they're commuters, or live nearby, depend on it for business or to keep in touch with friends and family or use it to access one of the many leisure destinations along the south coast.

Arundel has a special environment and a unique cultural heritage and, while building any new road will have an impact, we are committed to delivering the improvements responsibly and have developed our proposals with the environment very much in mind. Again, people's ideas about how we can protect and enhance the environment are very welcome indeed.

Funding for the scheme comes from the Department for Transport's £15 billion Roads Investment Strategy that is improving journeys, cutting congestion and boosting the economy. The project is one of three major improvements for the A27 being taken forward by Highways England, including upgrades between Worthing and Lancing and to the East of Lewes.

The three options are:

Option 1

A new dual-carriageway from Crossbush junction, passing to the south west of Arundel railway station, re-joining the existing A27 east of Ford Road, which will be widened to a dual carriageway. This option also includes improvements at Crossbush junction, new bridges over the railway line and the River Arun

and a new pedestrian/cycle path from Crossbush junction.

Option 3

A new dual-carriageway from Crossbush junction, south of the current A27, rejoining the A27 at a new junction near Havenwood Park. This option also includes improvements at Crossbush junction, new bridges over the railway line and the River Arun and a new pedestrian/cycle path between Crossbush junction and Yapton Lane.

Option 5A

A new dual-carriageway following the same route as option 3 between Crossbush junction and Ford Road. From Ford Road the route continues west passing between the South Downs National Park and Binsted Woods, re-joining the existing A27 at a new junction near Yapton Lane. This option also includes improvements at Crossbush junction, new bridges over the railway line and the River Arun and a new pedestrian/cycle path between Crossbush junction and Yapton Lane.

All responses to the consultation will be carefully considered before an announcement is made on a preferred route this winter. Subject to a successful outcome, construction could start as early as 2021 and take around two years to complete.

Details on the proposals and feedback forms will be available online from today until 11:45pm on 16 October 2017 on the [scheme pages](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Press release: Oil and gas regulators host public drop-in event](#)

Agencies that regulate Third Energy's oil and gas activities are hosting a drop-in event in Kirby Misperton to explain how they are working together to protect the community and the environment.

The Environment Agency, Health and Safety Executive, Oil and Gas Authority, Public Health England and Ryedale Borough Council are hosting the event at

Kirby Misperton Village Hall on Thursday 7 September.

These agencies work together to assess the impacts of the oil and gas industry, to oversee industry operations, and to ensure that any exploration and development, including fracking, is done in a way that does not put people or the environment at risk of harm.

The drop-in session will give local people a chance to talk to agency staff on a one-to-one basis to find out about agencies' roles and to hear more about the plans that have been put in place since permissions have been granted, along with what will be done in the coming months to regulate site activities.

Everyone is welcome to attend at any time between 2pm and 7pm.

[Press release: Minister Field visits China for trade, security & human rights talks](#)

Mark Field, the FCO minister for Asia and the Pacific, will arrive in Beijing today (Tuesday 22 August) for high level talks on regional security, trade and investment, human rights and the illegal wildlife trade.

He will become the first UK minister to visit China since the general election in June 2017 and will meet China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Vice Foreign Minister Wang Chao and Assistant Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou.

The minister will also meet representatives of organisations involved in combating the illegal wildlife trade, ahead of the Illegal Wildlife Trade conference being held in London in March 2018.

Beijing will be the first stop in a ten day visit to Asia, which will include meetings in Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore.

Mark Field, minister for Asia and the Pacific, said:

China is a key global player and an essential partner for the UK in many areas, not least trade and investment and foreign policy. This has been particularly clear in recent weeks as we worked closely with China and other United Nations partners to respond to the threat North Korea poses to regional stability and security. We exported £16.7 billion worth of goods and services to China in 2016 and that figure will continue to grow as we strengthen links between our countries.

I look forward to discussions on these issues in Beijing, and harnessing the UK-China Global Partnership to tackle issues of global concern such as the illegal wildlife trade.

Notes to editors

1. Mark Field MP was appointed as minister for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in June 2017.
2. China has the world's second largest economy (contributing 15% of global GDP) and the UK remains one of the top destinations for Chinese investment. The UK's total exports to China have grown by almost 68% between 2010 and 2016. £16.7bn worth of goods and services was exported in 2016.
3. Over half a million Chinese visitors applied for visas to come to the UK for tourism and study last year. There are currently over 155,000 students from China, Hong Kong and Macau studying in the UK.
4. The UK is committed to tackling the illegal wildlife trade, including for ivory. The London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade in early 2014 brought together the international community, including representatives from the Chinese Government, to strengthen cooperation. China has since increased its enforcement and publicly destroyed over six tonnes of seized ivory.

Further information