



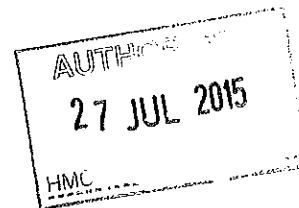
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15 JUL 2015



## INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF SAMUEL DUCKWORTH – REGULATION 28 REPORT

Thank you for your letter of 20 October 2014 to the Health Secretary about the tragic death of Samuel Duckworth from the combined toxic effects of diazepam, codeine and alcohol. Your letter was transferred to my Department on 26 June 2015, the department of health apologise for this delay. I am replying as the Minister for Policing, Crime and Criminal Justice and Victims with responsibility for drug policy.

This is clearly a very tragic case and I am grateful to you for raising this issue with me. I note your request for action concerning the supply and importation of prescription only medicines by use of the internet

The Government and law enforcement agencies take the issue of unlawful advertising and sales of drugs on the internet very seriously, and we continue to work with internet providers to ensure that they comply with the law. This can include closure of UK-based websites where they are found to be committing offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Online purchasing remains a relatively small overall element of drug supply: the 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales shows that just 1% of adults who used drugs in the last 12 months sourced them from the internet.

The National Crime Agency (NCA), the police and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency routinely monitor controlled drugs and medicines being offered for sale on the internet and take action with industry partners to close websites trading illegally in these substances. Where it has been identified, or where there is reasonable suspicion to suggest, that controlled drugs or medicines containing controlled drugs are being sold on websites, law enforcement agencies have the relevant powers under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 to act against suppliers of controlled drugs, whether on controlled drug charges or on suspicion of wider drug-related offences.

Considerable illegal activity takes place on the internet outside of UK jurisdiction. The UK continues to work with international partners to develop an effective response to the supply of controlled drugs and to react swiftly to emerging threats. In order to tackle illegally trading websites identified overseas, we are building strong partnerships with international partners. There is also ongoing work with the EU and other international regulatory agencies to ensure that, wherever possible, offending websites are amended to comply with the law.

*Regards*  
*Mike*

**Rt Hon Mike Penning MP**