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Minister should use the solution to hand – STANZ

“The Government’s decision to ban BZP was expected. What is surprising is the Government’s failure to protect the public by using the remedy to hand,” the Social Tonics Association of New Zealand said today.

STANZ Chairperson Matt Bowden said the Government did not need to legislate to deal with the dangers of unregulated party pills and could act much sooner.

“The question the Government should be asking itself is how to minimise harm and the right answer is not prohibition. P is prohibited and look at the problems there.

“The right answer is regulation and the Associate Health Minister Jim Anderton already has the power under the Misuse of Drugs Act to regulate. Further, he has draft regulations which he can draw upon.

“STANZ prepared a comprehensive regulatory regime and Code of Good Manufacturing Practice back in February and has sent it to the Minister for his consideration.

“He could have both in place within a matter of weeks whereas new legislation is likely to take at least six months,” Matt Bowden said.

The restrictions in the Act now were absolutely minimal, being confined to an age restriction of 18, a ban on advertising in the mainstream media and a ban on retailers, manufacturers or distributors from offering restricted substances free of charge or as a gift, prize or promotion.

STANZ was proposing to supplement this with a further 26 regulations. They include:

- A tablet must contain no more than 200 milligrams of BZP and a package no more than 600 milligrams;
- BZP raw material must be 99 per cent pure;
- Restrictions around the sorts of retail outlets that can sell BZP;
- BZP products cannot be sold within 250 metres of a school, recreational centre or playground;

- Any advertising must be limited to places where restricted substances are sold and where entry is available only to persons over 18 and must not be visible from the street; and
- Health warnings, including the importance of drinking plenty of water, not mixing with alcohol and not exceeding the maximum recommended dose, must be featured on the packaging.

The draft regulations and the code are available on STANZ website:

www.stanz.org.nz

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