

Questions Raised On Party Pill Research

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Chair of the Social Tonics Association of New Zealand (STANZ), Matt Bowden, today said he had grave concerns about the research upon which the decision to ban party pills in New Zealand was based.

“We know a research programme into party pills was put together, but very little of the research has been released, and we believe New Zealanders have a right to see it,” said Mr Bowden.

“We applaud the consultative evidence based approach being taken, but would like for the Ministry to release all the research into party pills so that we can see the findings for ourselves, or to postpone the final dates for consultation until the public have seen the research.” he said.

“We have heard from Auckland University that relatively few people who take party pills suffer negative consequences, yet other research presented to the EACD, which has not yet been publicly released, suggests that one trial in Wellington went wrong and had to be shut down early.

“This doesn’t sound right to us, and we want to know what happened in this trial. We want the Minister or the EACD to release the research upon which such a significant decision is being based, and other research which has been conducted, including into the effects of party pills on driving,” he said.

“There are strong rumours starting to circulate about the quality of this research – particularly the abandoned trial - and we believe New Zealanders have a right to see it for themselves as part of the consultation process.”

Over 20 million party pills have been consumed in New Zealand over the past six years with no incident of lasting negative effects. By any objective measure this is a proven low risk, safer than many everyday activities.

Along with requesting the release of all the research, Mr Bowden warned politicians to carefully think through the consequences of banning party pills.

Recent international media coverage, including here in New Zealand, has highlighted a move in many countries away from prohibition towards regulated supply, as a means to reduce drug related harm and crime.

“All around the world politicians are working out that prohibition causes a huge amount of problems, and actually solves none.

“Yet here in New Zealand we have politicians desperate to score political points through trying to outlaw party pills which are succeeding in keeping hundreds of thousands of kiwis away from dangerous illegal drugs,” said STANZ Chair Matt Bowden.

Mr Bowden said banning party pills would lead to a swing back to illegal drugs like P.

“Let’s be perfectly clear: people will go back to using more harmful drugs if party pills are banned, and people will die as a result.

“Party pills are saving lives in New Zealand. Each of the 20 million pills safely consumed in New Zealand represents an occasion where a person chose not to take illegal drugs.”

ENDS