

WEDI NOS

The logo consists of the text 'WEDI' stacked above 'NOS' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A red ECG line starts at the bottom left, crosses the 'W' in 'WEDI', and continues horizontally across the 'I' in 'WEDI' and the 'N' in 'NOS'. A white silhouette of a person stands on the horizontal line of the ECG, positioned between the 'I' and 'N'. A grey shadow is cast to the right of the person and the horizontal line.

Collecting • Testing • Informing



November 2022

- 380 samples analysed (43 CJS, 337 community submissions)
 - 80 substances identified
 - Samples received from across UK
 - 16 services
 - Including: Health, Substance Misuse Services, Mental Health, Housing and Homelessness and Welsh Prisons
 - Alongside samples submitted anonymously by individuals

Sex / age profile of sample providers



- Sex (where listed n=330 of 337 community samples)
 - Male: 77% (n= 255)
 - Female:23% (n=75)
- Age
 - Range: 14 to 70yrs (Median: 34yrs)
 - Male age range: 14 to 70yrs (Median: 35yrs)
 - Female age range: 15 to 58yrs (Median: 33yrs)

Community Submissions

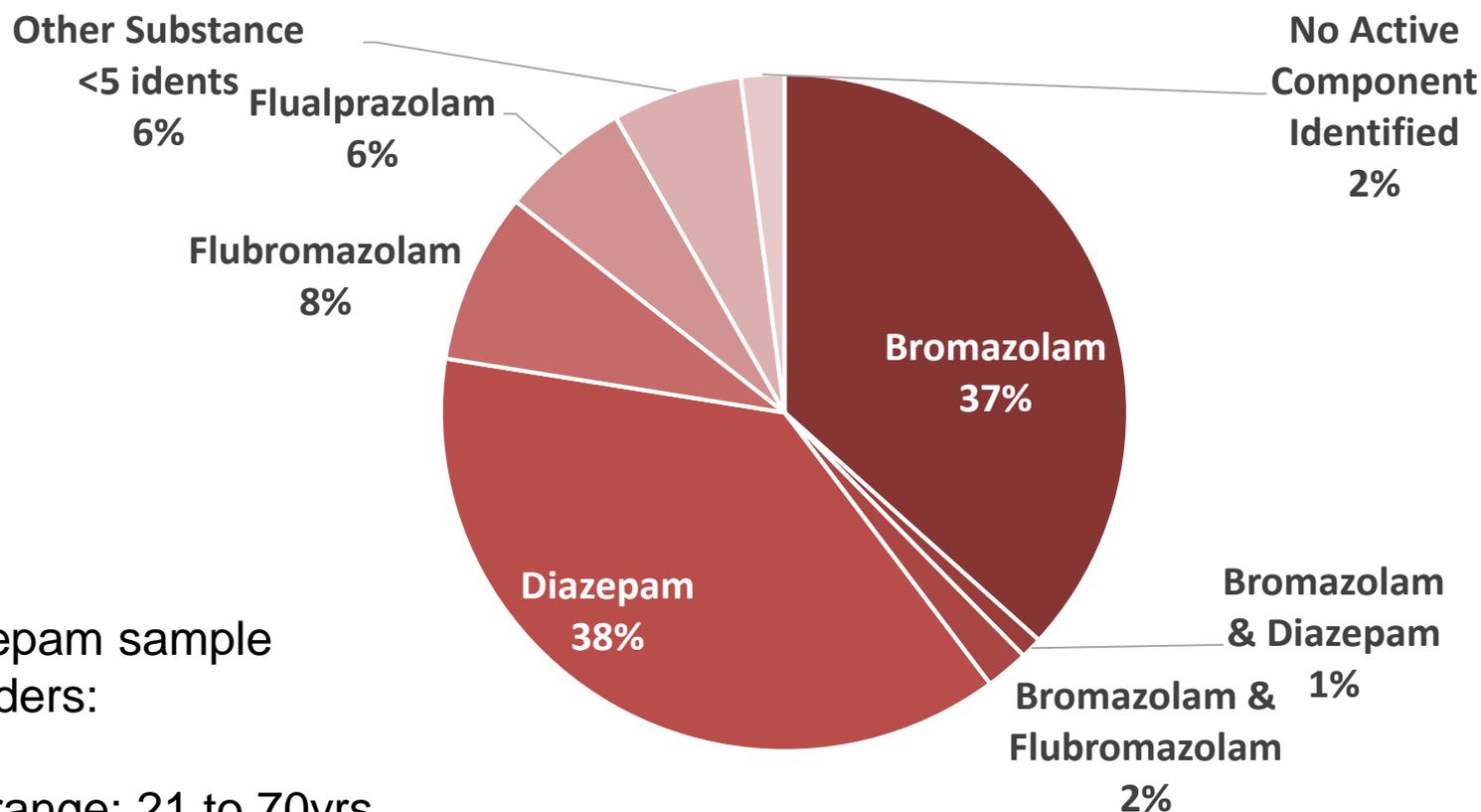
No.	Community purchase intent	Community post analysis
1	Diazepam	Bromazolam
2	MDMA	MDMA
3	Alprazolam	Diazepam
4	Cocaine	Cocaine
5	Unknown	Ketamine
6	Ketamine	Caffeine
7	Cannabis	Tetrahydrocannabinol
8	THC	Flubromazolam
9	2C-B	Norcocaine
10	Amphetamine	Flualprazolam

Benzodiazepines

- 13 Benzodiazepines identified
 - Bromazolam (1 purchase intent / 63 identifications)
 - Diazepam (97 purchase intent / 39 identifications)
 - Flubromazolam (0 purchase intent / 12 identifications)
 - Flualprazolam (0 purchase intent / 11 identifications)
 - Alprazolam (29 purchase intent / 9 identifications)
 - Clonazepam
 - Etizolam
 - Desalkyligidazepam
 - Deschloroetizolam
 - Clobromazolam
 - Flubromazepam
 - Lorazepam
 - Methylclonazepam

**Purchase intent and
identifications <10**

Contents of samples submitted as Diazepam: Nov 2022



Diazepam sample providers:

Age range: 21 to 70yrs
Median: 35yrs

Strange and Unusual

Purchased as a tetrahydrocannabinol vape liquid, submitted from Waterloo, Winchester. Profiled following analysis as containing two nitazenes, synthetic opioids; a benzodiazepine; a gabapentinoid and nicotine

W029473

Date Received: 16 Nov 2022

Postcode: PO7 -

Purchase Intent: THC vape liquid

Package Label: Not Stated

Sample Colour: Colourless

Sample Form: Liquid

Consumption Method: Not Stated

Self-Reported Effects: Euphoria, Relaxed, Nausea, Vomiting, Agitation, Insomnia, Depression, Erectile dysfunction

Sample Upon Analysis (Major): Metonitazene, Pregabalin, Bromazolam

Sample Upon Analysis (Minor): Nicotine, Protonitazene



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With the exception of nicotine, all the substances profiled in this sample are central nervous system depressants.

These effects are potentially more severe when co-ingested as poly-drug use CNS depressants and alcohol. Further information on nitazenes follows.

2-benzyl benzimidazole (‘nitazene’)



Nitazenes were originally developed in the 1950s as analgesics. Found to have potent analgesic effects, the clinical development of nitazenes was abandoned due to the increased risks of adverse events.¹ Currently, there are no drugs of this class approved as human or veterinary medicines.²

Animal studies have shown a wide range in potency for this group of substances, that may also vary depending on the route of administration. When administered to mice subcutaneously, potency ranged from 1 (equal to morphine) for flunitazene to 1000 for etonitazene.²

The rank order of potency of a series of nitazenes was reported to be etonitazene >= isotonitazene > protonitazene >= metonitazene > butonitazene >= etodesnitazene >> 5-aminoisotonitazene = flunitazene > metodesnitazene [Blanckaert et al., 2020; Vandeputte et al., 2021]²

¹ World Health Organisation, Metonitazene - critical review report - unedited version; Technical document; 7 September 2021

² ACMD report – A review of the evidence on the use and harms of 2-benzyl benzimidazole ('nitazene') and piperidine benzimidazolone ('bromphine-like') opioids; July 2022

2-benzyl benzimidazole (‘nitazene’) continued...



Legal Control

Etonitazene and clonitazene are listed as Class A drugs in the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

All other 2-benzyl benzimidazole opioids, as psychoactive substances, import, supply, possession with the intent to supply and possession in a custodial institution are all offences under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 ¹

Naloxone

There is a lack of evidence relating to the use of naloxone for specifically treating nitazene overdoses. However, there is evidence of its use reversing life-threatening respiratory depression and coma caused by subcutaneous metonitazene [Bromig, 1958].

****Multiple doses of naloxone may be required****

¹ ACMD report – A review of the evidence on the use and harms of 2-benzyl benzimidazole (‘nitazene’) and piperidine benzimidazolone (‘bromorphine-like’) opioids; July 2022