GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Chief Medical Officer Warns Against Unregulated Weight Loss Injections

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The Ministry of Health and Social Development is warning residents against importing for personal use, purchasing or using unregulated weight loss injections and peptides being advertised and distributed through social media and other informal channels in the Virgin Islands.

The warning follows reports of products being offered in the territory through closed WhatsApp groups and Facebook pages, as well as injections being imported through courier services for personal use or resale

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ronald Georges cautioned that these products may pose serious health risks, particularly when obtained without medical supervision or through unverified suppliers.

“Weight-loss injections must be obtained through legitimate medical and pharmacy channels. Products bought on social media or sent through a courier can cause serious harm,” Dr. Georges stated.

The Chief Medical Officer explained that while certain weight management medications may be appropriate for some individuals, their use must be guided by a registered medical practitioner following a proper medical assessment.

Products obtained through unregulated channels may contain unknown ingredients, incorrect dosages or harmful contaminants. Improper storage and unsafe injection practices can also increase the risk of serious complications.

Potential health consequences include severe nausea, vomiting, dehydration, allergic reactions, pancreatitis, liver and or kidney injury and infections. In some cases, complications may require hospitalisation.

The Ministry is reminding the public that the sale, distribution or administration of unregulated injectable products through unlawful channels is prohibited. Persons involved in these activities may be subject to investigation and enforcement action.

Residents are strongly advised not to purchase, share or administer weight loss injections obtained through social media sellers, informal distributors or other unverified sources.

Persons who have already obtained these products should refrain from taking further doses until they have consulted a registered medical practitioner or pharmacist.

Immediate medical attention should be sought if persons experience severe abdominal pain, persistent vomiting, fainting, breathing difficulties, facial swelling, fever or signs of infection following an injection.

The Ministry is also encouraging residents to report suspected unlawful advertising, sale, distribution or administration of these products to the Chief of Drugs and Pharmaceuticals, Mrs. Gracia Wheatley-Smith, at **(284) 468-9850** or **grwheatley-smith@gov.vg**.

Where possible, reports should include photographs of products, screenshots of advertisements, seller information and relevant purchase or delivery details.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to protecting public health and ensuring that medicines and pharmaceutical products are obtained and used through safe, lawful and appropriately regulated channels.

For Additional Information Contact:

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