

Adam Mosseri
Instagram CEO
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United States

Claire Murdoch
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30 April 2021

Dear Mr Mosseri,

We are writing regarding the unlicensed and dangerous drug, Apetamin, which is promoted on your platform and could result in serious harm to any individual who takes it.

This substance is consumed as a supplement, to foster a specific body image and shape, deemed to be desirable by some high profile influencers, and predominately targeted at younger women and girls.

As you will be aware the UK medicines regulator the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) made clear that Apetamin is an “unauthorised medicine which should not be sold, supplied or advertised without a licence” and that “taking unauthorised medicines can have serious health consequences.”

The product has been promoted by accounts and influencers across your platform, and a quick search on Instagram brings up dozens of profiles still selling and advertising the product, viewed by potentially millions of other users. We would be happy to share these examples with you to support their removal.

On behalf of NHS patients, staff and people experiencing body dysmorphic disorder and other mental health conditions, as well as their families, we are concerned about both the physical and mental health impacts of the promotion of this drug and strongly urge you to demonstrate a duty of care for your customers, and clamp down now on this dangerous content.

An Instagram spokesperson recently said on this matter that “buying and selling non-medical or prescription drugs is strictly against our policies and we have removed the accounts brought to our attention”.

Unfortunately, many accounts are still active, and when such activity was reported – in line with Instagram advice – no action was taken, with a customer service response from your platform claiming that the commercial sale of Apetamin through Instagram accounts did not breach your community guidelines.

As such, we are requesting that you provide us with an urgent update on the action you are taking to shut down any accounts and content on Instagram that promotes or attempts to sell Apetamin.

Specifically, we would welcome a swift response from you, to confirm:

1. That any content actively selling or otherwise promoting Apetamin will be removed;
2. That accounts set up solely to promote Apetamin, will be blocked;
3. How many such accounts or posts have been removed in line with Instagram's recent statement that "buying and selling non-medical or prescription drugs is strictly against our policies;".
4. Whether you agree that permitting the sale of supplements such as Apetamin, whose purpose is primarily to encourage impressionable, often younger, women and girls to achieve an unobtainable and biologically unsafe body shape and type, is at odds with Instagram's community guidelines that: "We do not allow glorification or encouragement of self-injury, including eating disorders" And if you do not agree, please outline why?
5. That any shortcomings in Instagram community guidelines, which have allowed this content and the accounts promoting them, to go unchallenged, will now be tightened;
6. What steps Instagram currently takes to protect users from content likely, or with the potential to, trigger or exacerbate body dysmorphic disorder, eating disorders and other conditions;
7. What further steps Instagram will now take to protect the health and wellbeing of its users;
8. Whether Instagram supports a recommendation from Sir Simon Stevens, NHS chief executive, that social media firms could contribute more financially to the provision of young people's mental health services, that are increasingly called on to support people whose health problems are linked to damaging online content;
9. That you will agree to meet with us to explore what more can be done, working together, to make your platform safer;
10. That you will support us in reaching out to and encouraging other social media platforms to take equally tough action in this space.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Claire Murdoch
National Mental Health Director
NHSE&I



Professor Stephen Powis
National Medical Director
NHSE&I



Kitty Wallace
Head of Operations
Body Dysmorphic
Disorder Foundation