

WS 10: Beyond nitazenes? Orphines and the changing new synthetic opioid landscape

Audience Knowledge: Intermediate

Workshop Chairs

Marthe Vandeputte

PhD

Marthe.vandeputte@ugent.be

Ghent University

Postdoctoral Researcher

Sara Walton

MSFT

Sara.walton@cfsre.org

Center for Forensic Science Research and Education (CFSRE)

Forensic Toxicologist

Abstract

In recent years, the new synthetic opioid (NSO) market has been dominated by a rapid rise in nitazene analogs. However, this trend is shifting substantially following the introduction of a comprehensive generic legislation in China on July 1st, 2025, targeting the 2-benzylbenzimidazole scaffold shared by nitazene opioids. Reflecting a significant milestone in global regulatory harmonization, this change is expected to reshape the NSO landscape, and early signals of this transition are already emerging. This workshop will explore these evolving trends across different parts of the world, including the appearance of various orphine analogs and semi-synthetic opioids such as mitragynine analogs. Bringing together up-to-date insights from law enforcement, public health and early warning experts, forensic toxicologists, and pharmacological research, the session aims to provide a forward-looking perspective to support preparedness and foster a coordinated, multidisciplinary response to current and future challenges.

Speakers

Luli Akinfiresoye

PhD

Luli.R.Akinfiresoye@dea.gov

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

Pharmacologist

Christophe Stove

PhD

Christophe.stove@ugent.be

Ghent University

Associate Professor

Michael Evans-Brown

PhD

Michael.Evans-Brown@euda.europa.eu

European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA)

Principal programme manager - Risk assessment and risk communication

Jennifer Schumann

PhD

Jennifer.schumann@vifm.org

Monash University / Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine (VIFM)

Associate Professor / Head of the Drug Intelligence Unit

Rebecca Wood

MSc

Rebecca.wood38@nhs.net

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust

Clinical Scientist (Toxicology)

Sara Walton

MSFT

Sara.walton@cfsre.org

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Workshop Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker
01:30 PM - 01:35 PM	Welcome and introduction	Vandeputte & Walton
01:35 PM - 02:00 PM	Beyond fentanyl: DEA's regulatory response to synthetic and semi-synthetic opioids	Akinfiresoye
02:00 PM - 02:30 PM	Nitazenes: a 'structural' problem?	Stove
02:30 PM - 03:00 PM	Monitoring the emergence and spread of orphine opioids in the European drug market through the EU Early Warning System: situation, risks, responses	Evans-Brown
03:00 PM - 03:30 PM	Emerging synthetic opioids in Oceania: surveillance, signals and preparedness	Schumann
03:30 PM - 04:00 PM	Coffee break	N/A
04:00 PM - 04:30 PM	NSOs: a UK perspective	Wood
04:30 PM - 05:00 PM	Analytical characterization and U.S. trends of 'new-age' synthetic opioids: beyond nitazenes	Walton
05:00 PM - 05:30 PM	Where chemistry meets potency: in vitro structure-activity relationships of emerging synthetic opioids	Vandeputte