

Singapore seizes counterfeit products worth \$14,660

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Singapore: The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) in Singapore seized close to 13,000 units of products, including tablets, capsules and strips, amounting to an estimated value of about \$14,660 (S\$18,000). The raid was part of a global internet-based enforcement operation targeted at the illegal online sale of unregistered, counterfeit and adulterated health products from September 25 to October 2, 2012.

Ten individuals are under investigation for the illegal sale of these products, which include medicines such as oral contraceptives, weight-loss products and medical devices such as contact lenses, condoms and pregnancy test strips.

This is the fifth year that HSA is taking part in this operation, known as Operation Pangea. The largest global internet-based action of its kind, Operation Pangea involves 100 countries and 193 participating agencies. It is coordinated by INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Permanent Forum of International Pharmaceutical Crime (PFIPC), the Heads of Medicines Agencies Working Group of Enforcement Officers (HMA WGEO), the pharmaceutical industry and the electronic payments industry.

During the Operation, HSA intensified its checks on suspicious local websites offering medicines and health products, on top of its ongoing internet surveillance activities. These illegal products, comprising unregistered medicinal products and medical devices, were sold over platforms ranging from discussion forums, web blogs, auction sites, online classified advertisements and company websites.

A total of 38 internet websites were screened to see whether there were any contraventions under the Medicines Act, Poisons Act and Health Products Act. Of these, 15 sites were found to be selling illegal health products. Follow-up regulatory actions were taken against these illegal online sellers.