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Ad Alert

The Copy Advice team

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No: 782

Date: 04 July 2023

Category: General

Sent to: Direct Marketing, Magazine, National/Regional Press

ADVERTISING PRESCRIPTION-ONLY WEIGHT LOSS TREATMENTS

Action: Prescription-only medicines (POMs) should not be advertised to the public. Saxenda, Ozempic (injectables) and Rybelsus (oral), often marketed as “Skinny Jabs” or “Skinny Pills” are POMs. Please consult Copy Advice before accepting ads for what you suspect might be prescription-only medicines

This Alert should be read in conjunction with [Ad Alert 768: ADVERTISING OF BOTOX AND OTHER PRESCRIPTION-ONLY MEDICINES](#), which provides further detail about POMs and advertising more generally.

This is a reissue of an Ad Alert first issued in 2021.

The CAP Compliance team is concerned by the appearance of ads that offer, refer to or allude to prescription-only medicines (POMs). We have observed an increase in the advertisement of prescription-only weight loss treatments, often referred to in shorthand as “skinny jabs”, “skinny pens” and “skinny pills”, typically branded versions of semaglutide and liraglutide. Common brands include Saxenda, Ozempic (injectables) and Rybelsus (oral).

Rule 12.12 of the CAP Code states: “prescription-only medicines or prescription-only medical treatments may not be advertised to the public”.

Furthermore, some ads for these POMs have (1) made claims that people can lose specific amounts of weight within a certain time, which is prohibited under the ad rules, (2) included testimonial claims of weight loss which are not compatible with good medical and nutritional practice, and (3) promoted weight loss to people who are not overweight and in ways that exploit people’s insecurities about body image, breaking social responsibility rules.

We would be grateful for your cooperation to ensure that ads for POMs are not placed.

Please consult the CAP Copy Advice team if you are unsure about ads or the Code’s requirements.