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Call for BZP ban misses the point.

A suggestion from some Canterbury health workers that BZP-based party pills should be banned would create many problems and solve none, according to drug policy advocate Matt Bowden.

Mr Bowden said while he shared some of the group's concerns, he believed a greater degree of regulation would most effectively address the problem.

"Twenty million BZP-based products have been sold in New Zealand over the last five years, with no lasting negative effects.

"There have been hundreds of millions of party pills sold across the world and there has not been a single death anywhere attributed to BZP," he said.

"There is a clear demand for these products as safer alternatives to dangerous illegal drugs and we need to be very mindful as to what taking these products off the market would mean."

Mr Bowden said senior police officers have noted that the greater the availability of legal party pills, the lower the use of ecstasy.

"Removing a safer alternative from the market could lead to much greater use of dangerous illegal drugs, and would see BZP become another uncontrolled black market product for exploitation by organized criminals.

"New Zealand's Expert Advisory Committee on Drugs has thoroughly investigated BZP and found no grounds for banning them. We have successfully regulated BZP to 18 year olds and above earlier this year, and I believe further regulation can address the problems identified in this report," said Mr Bowden.

"Banning BZP would lead to much more of the kinds of problems we are seeing now. The prohibition of alcohol in the United States is a very good example. If we were consistent in our approach to prohibiting risk we would ban many sports before looking at party pills."

Mr Bowden called on Government to regulate dosage limits on party pills and warnings on labels.

"In areas where voluntary regulations around labeling and dosage are adhered to, problems with BZP are at a minimum, but in areas where rogue traders ignore sensible dosage limits and labeling requirements, or where retailers give poor advice to consumers, problems are higher.

"This, unfortunately, is the case in and around Christchurch. Further sensible regulation will fix these problems."

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