



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY  
PRESS RELEASE  
8 MAY 2019**

## **HSA SEIZED \$53,000 WORTH OF ILLEGAL CODEINE COUGH SYRUP, SLEEPING PILLS AND OTHER MEDICINES FROM GEYLANG APARTMENT**

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA), in collaboration with police officers from the Bedok Police Division, conducted an enforcement operation in Geylang on the morning of 8 May 2019. In total, more than 80 litres of illegally manufactured codeine cough syrup and 32,000 tablets of assorted medicines were seized. The seized tablets included sleeping pills such as midazolam, nitrazepam and diazepam, and other prescription medicines including codeine tablets. The total street value was approximately \$53,000. Please refer to [Annex A](#) for photographs.

2 Following feedback from the public on the illegal sale of codeine cough syrup at a coffeeshop in the vicinity of Lorong 20 Geylang, HSA conducted surveillance and established that the illegal products were stored in an apartment at Lorong 20 Geylang. Preliminary investigations revealed that the apartment was used to illegally manufacture and store the cough syrup and medicines. These products were intended for illegal sale in Geylang. During the operation, three suspects (two males and a female) aged between 20 and 28, were caught inside the apartment. The three suspects are currently assisting HSA with investigations for the manufacture and supply of illegal medicines.

3 Codeine cough syrups are used medically as a cough suppressant. They are classified as pharmacy-only-medicines and can only be supplied by a licensed pharmacist or a licensed medical practitioner. Ms Annie Tan, Director of the Enforcement Branch, HSA, said, “Cough syrup concoctions made in non-licensed facilities such as this Geylang apartment are dangerous and harmful to health because they are produced under poor manufacturing conditions with no proper quality controls. Consumers are advised to buy from licensed sources such as registered clinics and approved pharmacies.”

4 She added, “Through our close collaboration with the Police, we were able to successfully uncover and disrupt this illegal supply of codeine cough syrup, and prevent further harm to the public. HSA will continue to step up our efforts and work with the relevant agencies on raid operations in targeted areas to disrupt the illegal supply of such medicines.”

5 HSA takes a serious stand against illegal activities that would harm public health. Anyone caught importing, manufacturing and/or supplying of illegal health products is liable on conviction, to an imprisonment term for up to 2 years and/or fined up to \$50,000.

6 Members of the public are encouraged to report any illegal activity involving illegal cough syrup and medicines to the Enforcement Branch of HSA at Tel: 6866-3485 during office hours (Monday to Friday) or email: [hsa\\_is@hsa.gov.sg](mailto:hsa_is@hsa.gov.sg).

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### **About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)**

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services and Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. HSA is a multidisciplinary authority. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. As the national blood service, it is responsible for providing a safe and adequate blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit <http://www.hsa.gov.sg/>.

For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/HSASg](http://www.twitter.com/HSASg).

### **About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group**

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that drugs, innovative therapeutics, medical devices and health-related products are wisely regulated and meet appropriate safety, quality and efficacy standards. It contributes to the development of biomedical sciences in Singapore by administering a robust, scientific and responsive regulatory framework.

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Photo 1: Codeine cough syrup seized in HSA operation



Photo 2: Sleeping pills and other medicines seized in HSA operation



Photo 3: Canisters and bottles of codeine cough syrup found within the apartment

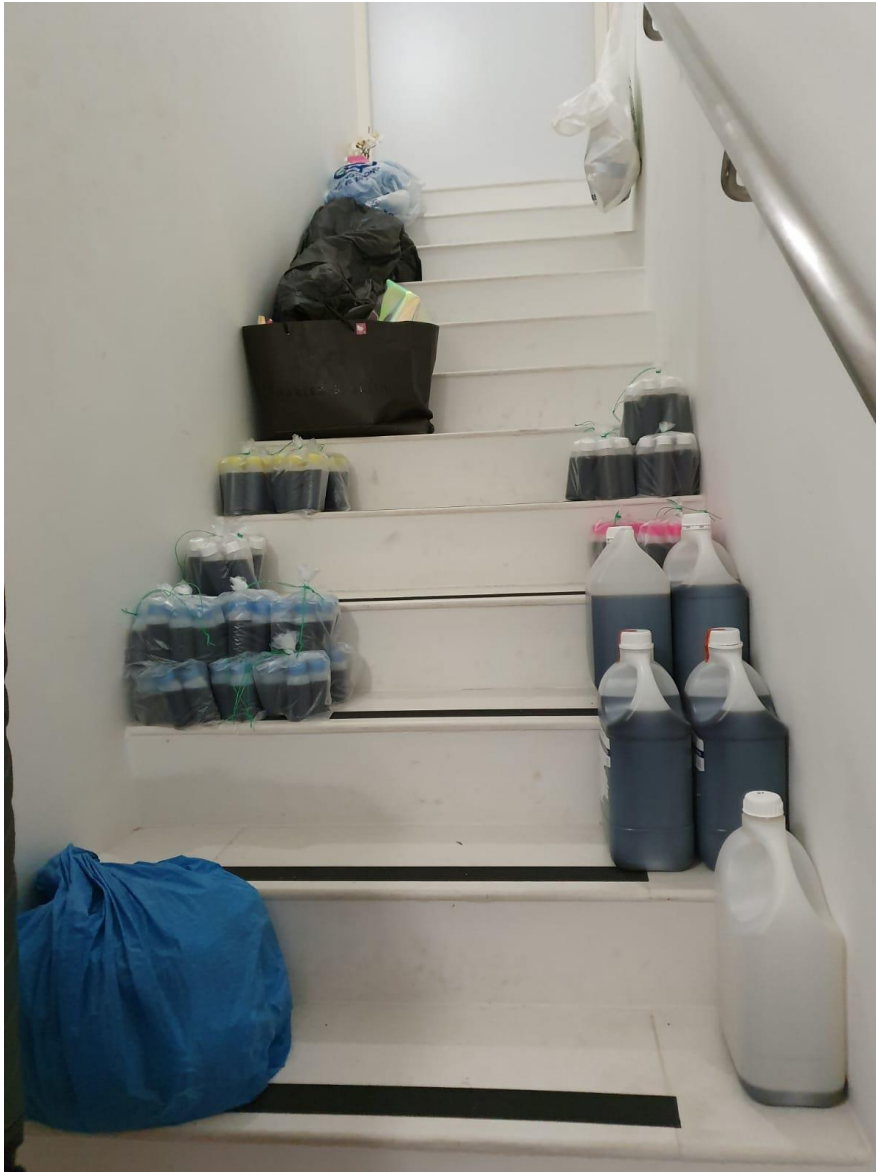




Photo 4: Medicines found within the apartment



Photo 5: Equipment used to make codeine cough syrup in the apartment

