

Google is pulling addiction treatment center ads worldwide

As addiction rates for illicit drugs has skyrocketed in the United States, many turned to Google to try and find places where they can find help – only to run into new issues. An entire industry has emerged online to advertise addiction treatment centers through the search engine, sometimes using deceptive tactics. Now, *TechCrunch* is reporting that Google is putting its global rehab advertising efforts on hold.

Last year, a *Verge* report examined some companies used Google to take advantage of the its business listings to deceive addicts looking for care. Following that report, Google pulled ads against a number of rehab-related terms.

Last week, London's *Sunday Times* reported (via *TechCrunch*) that Google profited from similar lead generation companies in the UK, paying the search giant "as much as £200 each time someone accesses their website with a single click on the advertised link at the top of a Google search page." As it had in the US, Google pulled ads in the UK following the report, saying in a statement that it was extending the US suspension to the UK while it consults with experts.

Now, Google has opted to extend that suspension further, pulling ads globally, according to a statement provided to *TechCrunch*:

This is a complex issue with varying degrees of regulation in different countries, which is why we've decided to suspend ads in the entire addiction treatment center category globally while we consult with experts to find a better way to connect people with the treatment they need.

The Verge has reached out to Google for comment, and we'll update this post if we hear back.

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/1/13/16887898/google-adwords-pulled-rehab-addition-center-global>