

# Drones to deliver Viagra and Pill to your doorstep

**Mark Bridge** Technology Correspondent

You live in the back of beyond and wake up needing a morning-after pill on the Saturday of a bank holiday weekend. Or you need Viagra *tonight*. Soon a drone will buzz it to you "discreetly", a pharmacy claims.

MedExpress says it has conducted a drug delivery flight in Kent and is plan-

ning to dispatch medicines and contraceptives by air nationwide once regulators approve the technology.

Dwayne D'Souza, the pharmacy's London-based founder, said he was unashamedly "piggybacking" on work by Amazon, the online retailer, which aims to make drone deliveries a reality by the mid-2020s. Amazon made its first drone delivery near Cambridge last

year, and MedExpress has now delivered a morning-after pill to a woman in Broadstairs, Kent, using a quadcopter drone carrying a medical storage box.

In both trials, the flights involved only short distances, of 700m and 500m, respectively. The companies intend to use drones that could fly at up to 50mph over ten miles.

Mr D'Souza said that drone deliver-

ies would involve the same online consultations and similar discretion, and the main advantage would be speed.

Neal Patel, spokesman for the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, was sceptical of the idea. "For now, it feels like a solution looking for a problem. A lot of work has gone into making sure that even people in the remotest areas have access to medication when they need it."

Times 31.8.17