

News release

Wednesday November 16, 2011
For immediate release

The dangers of drinking highlighted in city

People living in Leicester are being urged to think about the amount they drink and take responsibility for their own drinking as part of a campaign this month.

Drinking above the recommended limits of alcohol can cause serious health conditions including raised blood pressure, liver problems, heart attack and stroke but in the short term can cause memory loss, skin complaints and insomnia.

The awareness week runs until Sunday November 20 and covers a number of issues including health, violence, addiction and education.

A host of activities are being organised by the Safer Leicester Partnership during this week, supported by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PCT Cluster, the Drugs and Alcohol Action Team and Leicestershire Constabulary.

It has been estimated that alcohol related hospital admissions costs the NHS more than £10 million a year.

Priti Raichura, public health principal speaking on behalf of the cluster, said: "People in Leicester need to be aware of how much alcohol they are drinking. Many people are not aware of what a unit is, or how many units they should be drinking. Drinking over the recommended limits for a sustained period can cause serious side effects including high blood pressure, liver disease and heart disease. In the short term, drinking alcohol excessively can cause insomnia, lack of concentration and skin problems."

The Chief Medical Officer's guidelines on lower-risk drinking recommend men do not drink more than 3-4 units daily (drinking about two pints or two cans of normal-strength lager or beer on a regular basis) and women do not drink more than 2-3 units daily (regularly drinking about a large glass of wine or three single measures of spirits).

If you are worried that you, a friend or family are drinking too much, you can contact your GP or practice nurse for non judgmental support and information. There are also a number of websites giving advice and support, including <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/alcohol> or locally you can contact the substance misuse support team on 0300 303 5000.

To check if you are drinking within the safer limits log onto <http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Alcoholcalculator.aspx>.

ENDS

For interviews or more information please contact media officer Liz Thomas on 0116 295 7677 or liz.thomas@leicestercity.nhs.uk or senior media officer Caroline Higgs on 0116 295 7663 or caroline.higgs@lcr.nhs.uk.

Notes to editor:

In October 2010 NHS Leicester City and NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland joined forces to form a 'cluster', in line with the requirements of the Department of Health. Although we share one Cluster Board and our staff work across the city and county boundaries, we have not legally merged, and retain our separate statutory duties. Together we serve a population of more than a million people. Cluster formation is an interim stage in the reform of the NHS, involving on-going transfer of most local commissioning functions to GP-led clinical commissioning groups, in line with the Health and Social Care Bill, now before Parliament and the House of Lords.

Drink Units

Wine – standard 175ml glass: 12% **2.1 units**
Wine – large 250ml glass: 12% **3 units**
Wine – 750ml bottle: 13.5% **10 units**
Beer/lager – pint: 4% **2.3 units**
Beer/lager – pint: 5.2% **3 units**
Strong cider – 440ml can: 9% **4 units**
Strong cider – litre: 9% **9 units**
Alcopops – 275ml bottle: 5% **1.4 units**
Spirits (e.g. vodka/gin) – 25ml single: 40% **1 unit**
Spirits (e.g. vodka/gin) – 50ml double: 40% **2 units**

The Safer Leicester Partnership (SLP) is made up of a number of different agencies, such as Leicester City Council, Leicestershire Constabulary, Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service, Leicestershire & Rutland Probation Board and Leicester City NHS and also includes partners from the private and the voluntary sector, such as the local Chamber of Commerce sector and victim and witness support services. The Partnership is committed to protecting communities from harm regardless of ethnicity, sexuality, gender, disability, religion or age.