

For immediate release

6 May 2011

Call time on your drinking

Drinkers in Leicester are set to benefit from an innovative campaign aimed at reducing levels of alcohol consumption in the city.

Many people in the city associate alcohol with a *normal* social life, but not everyone knows exactly what alcohol can do to your body and how little you have to drink on a regular basis for it to cause serious health risks.

NHS Leicester City has teamed up with local pharmacists to work on a pilot campaign in Braunstone, Eyres Monsell and New Parks called 'call time on your drinking, before life calls time on you'. The campaign aims to challenge and encourage people to cut down their drinking whilst making small changes to their habits so they don't have to give up their social life.

City pharmacists will be handing out advice to residents on how to cut back their drinking whilst highlighting the dangers of excessive drinking. Pharmacists will also be encouraging residents to make changes to their drinking habits by providing a follow up service which monitors how people have got on changing their ways.

Dr Sumina Azam, acting consultant in public health at NHS Leicester City, said: "Most people enjoy a night out, a few drinks with friends after work or an afternoon in the pub during the warmer weather. Many people associate drinking with their social life and they feel that if they don't drink their night out or afternoon at the pub won't be 'as good'.

"We are encouraging drinkers to take a sensible approach to alcohol, to alternate alcoholic drinks with soft drinks, pace your drinks or get your mates on board and enjoy an alcohol-free night out once in a while.

“If you drink more than the recommended limits you are at increased risk of developing a serious medical condition such as liver damage or heart disease at some point during your lifetime. Alcohol is related to 60 different medical conditions in total. This campaign aims to highlight the dangers of regularly drinking large amounts of alcohol whilst providing people with ways to change their drinking habits for good.”

The campaign highlights four areas of social drinking; units of alcohol in popular drinks; the psychological, social and financial benefits of reducing the amount of alcohol you drink and tips on cutting back as well as keeping your social life.

Many of us don't realise how easy it is to exceed the recommended limits on a night out. Women are advised not to drink more than two to three units in one day and men are advised to stick to three or four. One pint of John Smiths *or* a standard glass of wine (175ml) equates to 2.3 units on its own.

To find out everything you need to know about cutting back on alcohol while keeping your social life log onto www.calltimeondrink.co.uk

ENDS

For interviews or more information please contact county media officer Caroline Higgs on 0116 295 7663 or caroline.higgs@lcr.nhs.uk or city media officer Liz Thomas on 0116 295 4123 or liz.thomas@leicestercity.nhs.uk

Notes to Editor

NHS Leicester City is the operating name for Leicester City Primary Care Trust.

Pharmacies offering advice and support to residents:-

Lloyds Pharmacy
Unit 3, Swinford Avenue
Glen Parva
Leicester
LE2 9RW

Co-op Pharmacy
97 Southfields Drive
Leicester
LE2 6QT

Interpharm
521 Saffron Lane
Leicester
LE2 6UG

Co-op Pharmacy
311 Aikman Avenue
New Parks Estate
Leicester
LE3 9PW

Hockley Farm Chemist
39 Hockley Farm Road
Leicester
LE3 1HN

Merridale Pharmacy
5 Fullhurst Avenue
Leicester
LE3 1BL

Co-op Pharmacy
26-28 The Exchange
Sturdee Road
Eyres Monsell
Leicester
LE2 9BA