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HANGOVER CURE FOR LONDONERS AT ALCOHOL SUMMIT

Almost 250,000 indulging in risky drinking - costing the capital £294m. pa Londoners are spending £4.6 billion a year in the city's 9,000 bars - and are losing an astounding 1.68 million working days as a result of alcohol-related absence and sickness. The tab picked up by local businesses is a staggering £294 million a year

Alcohol is also a factor in 47% of violent crimes - accounting for around 75,000 violent incidents every year - while more than half of all peak-time A&E admissions are also alcohol-related.

That's the grim background to a special alcohol summit called by Alcohol Concern on Tuesday July 6th (details below) - to be attended by politicians, policy-makers, police and health professionals.

The event will see Alcohol Concern unveil a new toolkit - designed to help councils develop alcohol strategies tackling a range of problems in their areas. The health, community safety and licensing implications of alcohol misuse are covered by the toolkit - as is its impact on treatment services, housing, regeneration, workforces, children and young people.

Means of cutting the crime and disorder, social exclusion and ill health caused by alcohol misuse will also be high on the agenda at the summit.

Alcohol Concern Chief Executive Eric Appleby, who will be speaking at the event, explains: "The Government's National Alcohol Strategy was a clear call for action, but will only lead to change if there is commitment to this at a local level. The new toolkit we are launching today will help tune local authorities into best practice so that they are better placed to tackle alcohol problems in their areas."

He adds: "At the heart of future success will be the ability to forge effective partnerships between a range of local bodies - including councils, health and education authorities and local communities. The summit will highlight the good work taking place in London and elsewhere - so that this can be shared among everyone with an interest in tackling alcohol misuse."

Other statistics for the London area reveal that:

- Almost a quarter of a million people are drinking at harmful

levels

- 1 in 10 people who admit to drinking heavily live in London
- 29% of people killed in fires between 1996-2000 had been drinking

ends

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Note: The London summit on July 6th (at the Glaziers Hall, London Bridge, SE1) - is a closed session - but interviews can be arranged via the press contacts above.