

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

July 2016

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the new alcohol guidelines.

I believe that it is important to ensure that guidelines on alcohol consumption are founded on the best science to help people at all stages of life and allow people to make informed choices about their drinking. I'm also aware that different national governments have different guidelines and this causes some confusion

At the request of the UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs), a group of experts was asked to evaluate evidence about the levels and types of health harm that alcohol can cause. They have produced some recommendations about how health risks can be limited from drinking alcohol.

The UK CMOs considered and accepted the advice of the expert group and have recently held a public consultation on the following three recommendations: a weekly guideline on regular drinking, advice on single episodes of drinking, a guideline on pregnancy and drinking. The consultation closed in April 2016 and the Government will publish a response in due course.

It is essential to raise awareness of the costs of harmful drinking and dependent use of alcohol. That is why the Government is committed to making every contact count with patients, and encourage health professionals to discuss a person's drinking habits across all health interventions, including when signing up to a new GP practice. A dedicated alcohol risk assessment has been included as part of our free NHS Health Checks for 40 to 74 year olds so people can get advice and information to help them cut down if they need to.

Once again, many thanks for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY