

Alcohol at work: what's the 'problem'?

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Recommended limits

UK Chief Medical Officers recommend that in order to keep the risks from alcohol low:

- ▶ Men should not regularly drink more than 3–4 units per day
- ▶ Women should not regularly drink more than 2–3 units per day

This is lower risk drinking



How people drink

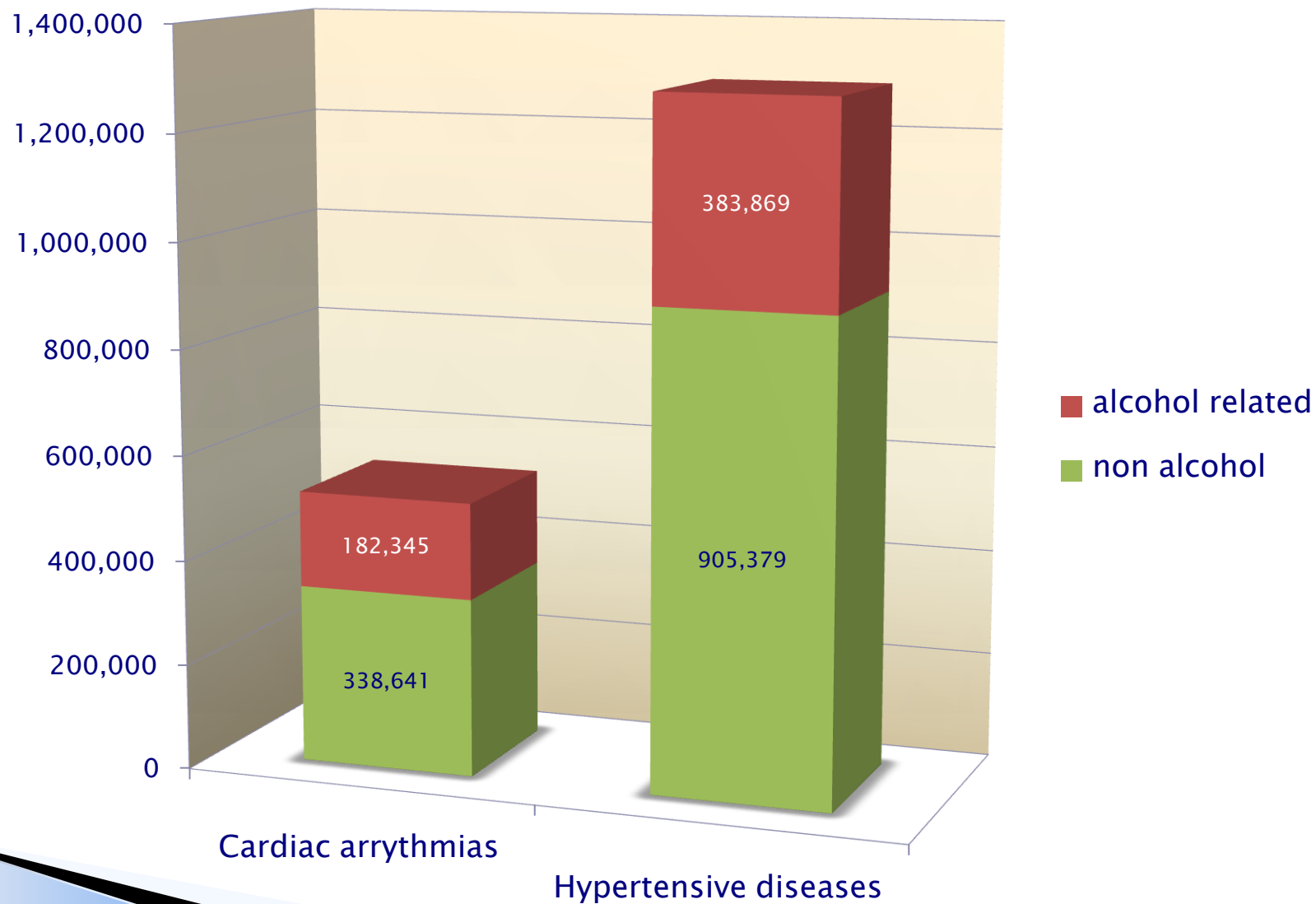


Safe. Sensible. Social. The next steps in the National Alcohol Strategy (DH, 2007) developed by DH analytical team, based on data from the GHS (ONS, 2006)

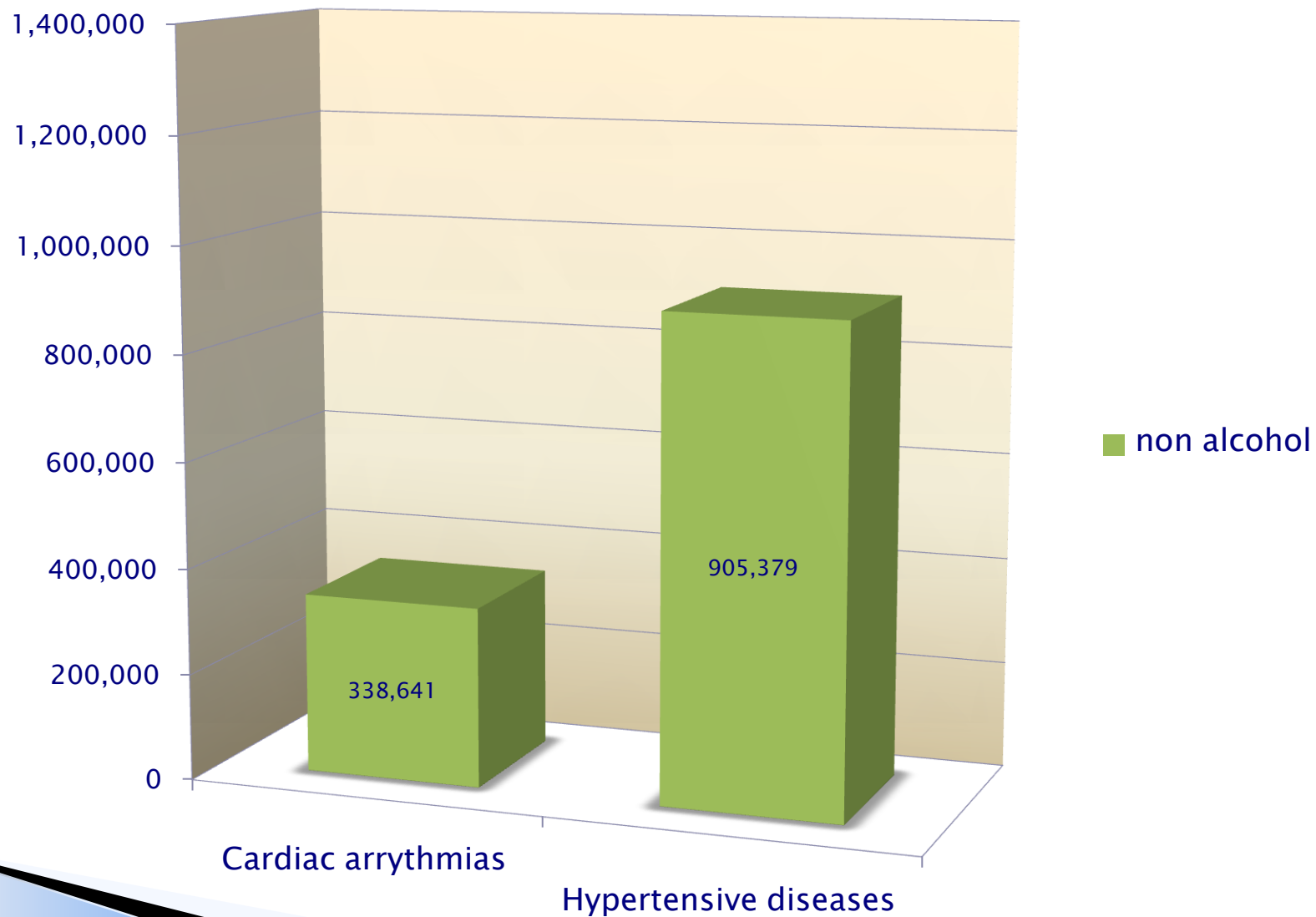
Alcohol-related ill health

Conditions	% cases where alcohol is contributory	
	M	F
Oesophageal varices	77%	67%
Liver cirrhosis	77%	67%
Epilepsy and status epilepticus	56%	64%
Gastro-oesophageal laceration-haemorrhage syndrome	47%	47%
Malignant neoplasm of lip, oral cavity and pharynx	50%	40%
Fire injuries	38%	38%
Cardiac arrhythmias	35%	36%
Intentional self-harm/Event of undetermined intent	34%	35%
Psoriasis	34%	33%
Malignant neoplasm of larynx	34%	25%
Hypertensive diseases	34%	24%
Malignant neoplasm of oesophagus	32%	23%
Spontaneous abortion	NA	23%
Haemorrhagic stroke	31%	20%

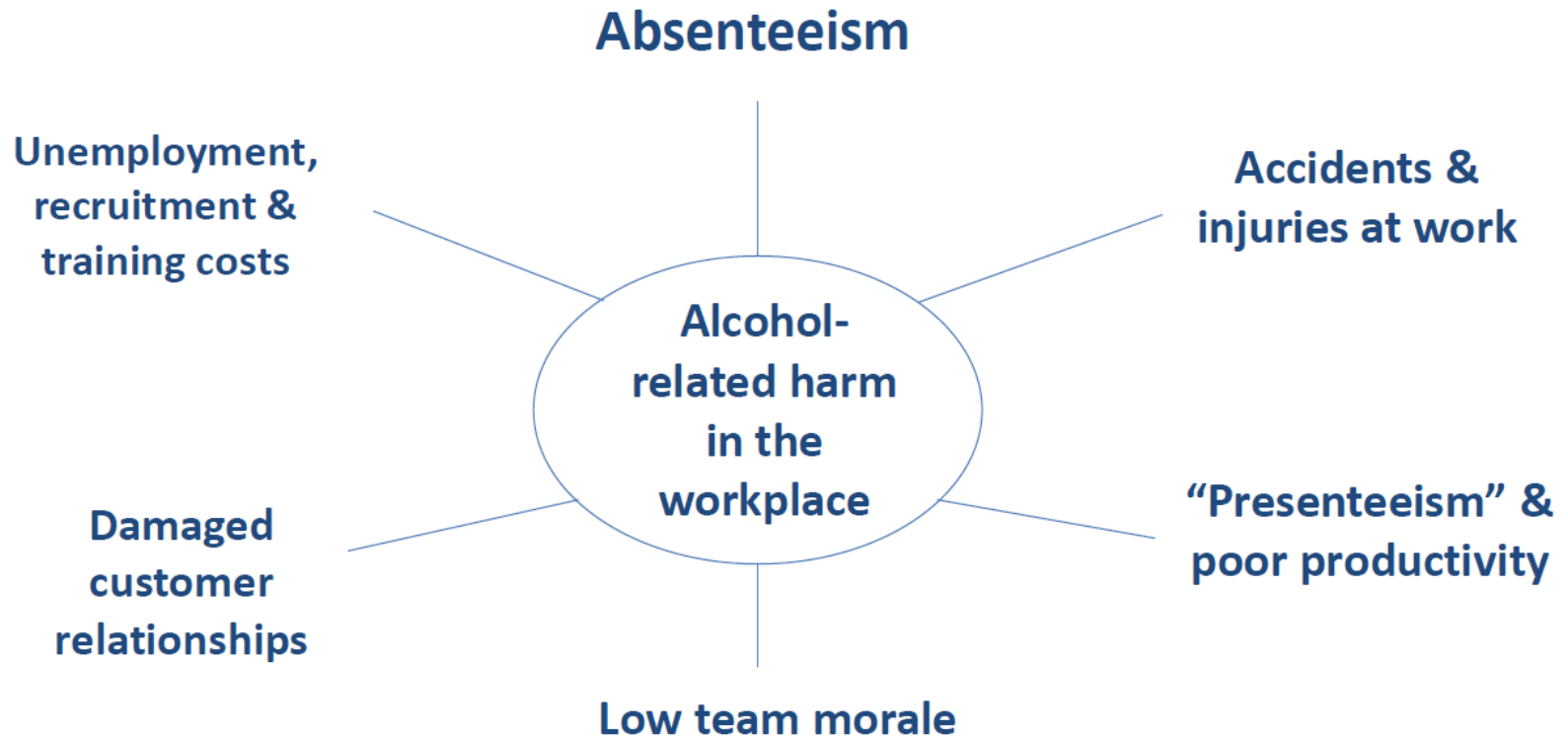
Impact on health



Impact on health



Impact of alcohol on the workplace



It's not all about binge drinking and dependency



Prevalence and costs in the workplace

In a workforce of 100+ it is likely that:

- ▶ 1 in 3 men will be drinking above lower risk levels
- ▶ 1 in 6 women will be drinking above lower risk levels

Alcohol costs the wider UK economy up to £6.4 billion per year and every year in England:

- ▶ **17.3 million working days** are lost due to alcohol
- ▶ absenteeism due to alcohol costs employers **£1.8 bn**
- ▶ on average, alcohol harm costs an organisation with 1000 employees at least **£190k per year**

There are no estimates for the cost to employers from “presenteeism” and alcohol-related poor performance at work

Alcohol Identification and Brief Advice (IBA)

- ▶ Identification of employees' risk levels by AUDIT screening tool
- ▶ 5 minutes of brief information about risks
- ▶ employees make their own decisions based on new awareness
- ▶ effective in reducing alcohol use in 1 in 8 recipients (very robustly evidence-based)

What can employers do?

- ▶ Include alcohol in holistic approach to improving employee health & wellbeing.
- ▶ ensure all employees have a good level of alcohol awareness including:
 - alcohol units,
 - recommended guidelines and risks of drinking above these
 - where to get more help and information
- ▶ staff in appropriate roles trained to deliver IBA
- ▶ managers clear on the importance of preventing alcohol misuse through promoting a healthy workplace.
- ▶ A suitable workplace alcohol policy that clearly sets guidelines for managers and staff on a range of alcohol-related areas
- ▶ Senior organisational commitment to the alcohol workplace policy and health and wellbeing objectives

Thank You

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