

UK considers 'drunk tanks' to ease strain on health services

December 29 2017

British health officials are considering turning to so-called drunk tanks to ease the strain on emergency rooms and ambulance services caused by heavy drinkers.

NHS England said Friday that researchers are looking at whether Alcohol Intoxication Management Services, commonly known as drunk tanks, may be rolled out on a national level. They are already used in some cities.

NHS England chief Simon Stevens says heavy drinking is diverting resources needed by sick people.

"NHS doesn't stand for 'National Hangover Service,'" he said.

He says it is wrong for health workers to devote precious time to people who "just need somewhere to safely sleep it off."

Officials estimate that 12 percent to 15 percent of [emergency room visits](#) are due to acute [alcohol intoxication](#), with figures much higher on weekend nights.

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Citation: UK considers 'drunk tanks' to ease strain on health services (2017, December 29) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-12-uk-drunk-tanks-ease-strain.html>

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