

A First Aid Strategy for Scotland: June 2019

Due to the nature of our expertise, the RC (UK)'s response focuses on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillators (AEDs).

Context: Key Policy Gaps and Challenges

These are key areas which are not currently addressed by 'Out-Of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest: A Strategy for Scotland' (2015), or any other relevant policy documents.

1. Consider how to address barriers and facilitators to bystander CPR such as capability, opportunity, and motivation (*Smith et al, Smith and Perkins*). A lack of public knowledge, skills, and awareness of what to do in an emergency, fear (of doing harm or being sued) and lack of confidence are common amongst the public.
2. Accessibility of AEDs: making locations known (through mapping of AED locations via promoting the use of apps such as GoodSAM, and signage). AEDs should also be kept in unlocked cabinets where possible, to minimise delay in accessing them when they are needed.
3. Inequalities: those living in deprivation are more likely to have cardiovascular disease (CVD) and experience out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA), and are also less likely to survive, or to receive help, such as bystander CPR.

Goals for Success: Aim for Scotland to be a world leader in OHCA outcomes

1. Promote the augmented Chain of Survival: community readiness/resilience, early recognition of cardiac arrest and call for help, early CPR, early defibrillation, post resuscitation rehabilitation and aftercare.
2. Raise public awareness and knowledge through information campaigns and promoting community training in Basic Life Support (BLS). Make training (such as the RC (UK)'s free interactive training app Lifesaver) available for all at low cost, through schools, workplaces and voluntary groups. Refresher training should be available across life stages. Promote consistent, quality information and community training: the RC (UK)'s 'Quality Standard for CPR/AED practice and training in the community' clearly defines best practice.
This is important because evidence shows that training more people how to do CPR and use an AED leads to higher rates of bystander CPR, and therefore higher survival rates from sudden cardiac arrest (SCA).
3. Put CPR training and AED awareness on the national curriculum for Scottish secondary schools, building on work such as the RC (UK) Restart a Heart campaign.
4. Aim for a culture shift in public attitudes towards bystander action becoming the norm, constituted of rapid bystander CPR and AED use in the event of OHCA, and increased public awareness and confidence. Goal: all residents know, are aware what to do and are confident, empowered, willing and able to help in an emergency.

RC (UK) Recommendations:

1. Public information campaigns to raise awareness of what to do, confidence to act in the event of OHCA, and to reduce fear of intervention amongst the public.
2. Make CPR and AED training compulsory:

- A) Put CPR education on the national curriculum for Scottish schools. The RC (UK) recommends first aid awareness at primary level, and CPR training and AED awareness at secondary level. The RC (UK) can offer insight gained from leading the Restart a Heart campaign to support implementation of this proposal, and exemplar resources such as Lifesaver.
 - B) Consider making first aid training part of the driving test, as part of exploring ways to offer repeated opportunities for training across the lifespan.
3. Address inequalities, including narrowing the gap between deprived and affluent communities.
- A) Undertake a mapping exercise to identify areas where there is a high prevalence of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, and a low rate of bystander CPR. Prioritise making good quality community first aid training accessible to those who are most at risk, via funding to subsidise training costs, with the ultimate goal of making such training available to all, where budget allows.
 - B) To ensure the quality of training, the Scottish government could promote and endorse the RC (UK)'s Quality Standards for CPR/AED Practice and Training in the community, which aims to reduce variety in training quality.
4. AEDs and public access defibrillation (PAD): establish and develop PAD schemes throughout Scotland and encourage registration of AEDs with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). Make AEDs publicly accessible by using unlocked cabinets wherever possible.

Further information:

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