

## 2374 A generation of lifesavers

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### Summary

The importance of bystander application of first aid has been cited many times, most notably in the case of cardiac arrest and bystander Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Both the Resuscitation Council (UK)<sup>i</sup> (RC(UK)) and British Heart Foundation<sup>ii</sup> (BHF) have published reports which highlight the significant increase in survival rates of persons found to be not breathing through bystanders intervening with the use of CPR and even more so with the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

“Cardiac arrest is a critical medical emergency, where the heart stops pumping blood around the body. Unless treated immediately, it leads to death within minutes.

- There are around 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests (OHCAs) in England each year.
  - The overall survival rate in England is 1 in 11.
- The Chain of Survival is a sequence of steps that together maximise the chance of survival following cardiac arrest.
- Every minute without cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillation reduces the chance of survival by up to 10 per cent.
- Performing CPR can more than double the chances of survival in some cases (ventricular fibrillation).”  
- **British Heart Foundation<sup>iii</sup>**.

In their guidelines the RC(UK) highlight that the knowledge and confidence of bystanders in the application of Basic Life Support (BLS) will vary vastly according to their level of training, prior experience and the circumstances of the arrest<sup>iv</sup>.

### Council Notes

1. That the chances of a person’s survival from a cardiac arrest can be significantly increased when bystanders intervene with BLS
2. Following a long and arduous campaigns by national first aid charities the government have recently made it a legal requirement for all schools in England to teach children CPR and basic first aid by 2020<sup>v,vi,vii,viii</sup>.
3. That BLS incorporates many essential lifesaving skills that can aid persons who are not breathing, unconscious, choking or bleeding heavily<sup>ix</sup>.
4. That BLS awareness style courses are now relatively inexpensive and whilst they do not provide formal first aid qualifications, they do teach participants essential, lifesaving, skills and build confidence in the application of these interventions.
5. That alongside bystander CPR, early defibrillation significantly increases the chances of survival from cardiac arrest.

### Council Believes

1. That bystander intervention can the real difference between a life lost and a life saved.
2. That training our community in the essential skills mentioned within this motion can help to create a generation of lifesavers who may one day save a person’s life.
3. That defibrillators should be widely accessible to the public to ensure they are available when needed most.

4. That whilst the law implemented by government will teach the next generation of children these essential skills, it leaves a generational gap where the skills have not been taught widely at school age.
5. That whilst the next generation of UEA students may have been taught these skills prior to attending university, revision and further practice of the skills will build confidence and ensure knowledge remains current.

### **Council Resolves**

1. To mandate our Campaigns and Democracies Officer to lobby the university to implement a policy that will ensure all students are taught BLS during their time at UEA.
2. That UEA SU will hold regular, subsidised, BLS awareness style courses (such as Heartstart offered by the BHF) throughout the year which will be open to all students and persons within our community.
3. That UEA SU will train all career and student staff in BLS.
4. That UEA SU will fundraise for a publicly accessible AED, to be installed on or in Union House in an appropriate lockable box and register it with the East of England Ambulance Service.
5. To mandate our Campaigns and Democracies Officer to lobby the university to review its provision of AED's on campus and campaign for more AED's to ensure they are accessible anywhere on campus in the event they required.

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<sup>i</sup> Perkins G, Colquhoun M, Deakin C, Handley A, Smith C, Smyth M. Adult basic life support and automated external defibrillation [Internet]. Resus.org.uk. 2015 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from:

<https://www.resus.org.uk/resuscitation-guidelines/adult-basic-life-support-and-automated-external-defibrillation/>

<sup>ii</sup> Consensus Paper on Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest in England [Internet]. British Heart Foundation, Resuscitation Council (UK) and NHS England; 2014 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from:

<https://www.resus.org.uk/publications/consensus-paper-on-out-of-hospital-cardiac-arrest-in-england/>

<sup>iii</sup> BHF Statistics Factsheet - England [Internet]. British Heart Foundation; 2018 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/what-we-do/our-research/heart-statistics>

<sup>iv</sup> Perkins G, Colquhoun M, Deakin C, Handley A, Smith C, Smyth M. Adult basic life support and automated external defibrillation [Internet]. Resus.org.uk. 2015 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from:

<https://www.resus.org.uk/resuscitation-guidelines/adult-basic-life-support-and-automated-external-defibrillation/>

<sup>v</sup> First Aid in Schools - PSHE Curriculum - St John Ambulance [Internet]. www.sja.org.uk. 2018 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from: <http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/support-us/our-campaigns/every-child-a-lifesaver.aspx>

<sup>vi</sup> Shaw D. First aid in school: saving lives will be on the curriculum - [Internet]. British Red Cross. 2018 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from: <http://blogs.redcross.org.uk/first-aid/2018/09/first-aid-in-school-saving-lives-on-the-curriculum/>

<sup>vii</sup> Plan to teach all children first aid [Internet]. BBC News. 2018 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-44883708>

<sup>viii</sup> Maude F. All children to learn CPR and basic first aid in school [Internet]. Sky News. 2019 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from: <https://news.sky.com/story/all-children-to-learn-cpr-and-basic-first-aid-in-school-11597438>

<sup>ix</sup> Perkins G, Colquhoun M, Deakin C, Handley A, Smith C, Smyth M. Adult basic life support and automated external defibrillation [Internet]. Resus.org.uk. 2015 [cited 27 January 2019]. Available from:

<https://www.resus.org.uk/resuscitation-guidelines/adult-basic-life-support-and-automated-external-defibrillation/>