

Cardiac arrest treatment study exceeds paramedic recruitment targets

February 21 2012



A [pilot study](#) by emergency care experts at UWE Bristol to test the best method of airway management to resuscitate out of hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) patients has exceeded target recruitment of paramedics from Great Western Ambulance Service (GWAS). The research team had hoped to recruit 150 paramedics but over 180 have signed up to be involved.

Professor Jonathan Benger, who was named as a top 10 [emergency care](#) consultant in a Sunday Times list in 2010, is leading the study in

partnership with GWAS and University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust. The study is funded by the National Institute for [Health Research](#) (NIHR) Research for Patient Benefit program.

Data will be collected by paramedics, who will report back a set of key findings after attending OHCA patients.

Professor Bengner said, “We know that less than one in twenty OHCA patients will survive to hospital discharge. This study will inform us of the relative success of different airway management methods, but crucially it will also provide vital insights into the feasibility of conducting this type of research in ambulance services. ”

“We are delighted that we have had such a positive response from paramedics at GWAS. This is the first stage of our study that will be carried out over the coming year, starting in March.

“Current resuscitation guidelines place a strong emphasis on life support which includes continuous chest compressions and management of the patient's airway with rescue breathing. Traditionally tracheal intubation has been regarded as the best form of pre hospital airway management, but recently new supraglottic airway devices (SADs) have become available, and these may have some advantages over older techniques, with the potential to improve long-term patient survival.”

GWAS Paramedic Alison Sparke is looking forward to taking part in the study, she comments, “Opportunities to take part in research don't come along very frequently so I was keen to sign up. This is one of the biggest pre-hospital airway studies ever undertaken in the UK so it's exciting to be part of it. I have been trained to use one of the new airway devices. Although pre-hospital cardiac arrests are a rare occurrence– it is a life or death scenario so it's reassuring that this important study is taking place, and I'm pleased to be involved.”

Megan Rhys, Research Paramedic responsible for co-ordinating the study, is delighted with the take up for the project. “We set out to recruit 150 paramedics from GWAS and the response we received was overwhelming. I think this is because paramedics value professional development and education. We hope the results of the study will influence the development of a definitive large-scale study in the future.”

The study, entitled REVIVE Airways is considered by the team to be groundbreaking, not least because of the very sensitive issues connected with the ethics of testing care methods at an extremely vulnerable time for patients and their families. The study provides a unique opportunity for [paramedics](#) to take part in research that it is anticipated will eventually inform and improve clinical outcomes for those who suffer out of hospital [cardiac arrest](#).

Provided by University of the West of England

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