

Leading organizations train 100,000 people in CPR on Restart a Heart Day

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Thousands of people die every year because people are not carrying out life saving CPR on cardiac arrest victims before emergency services arrive, according to new research from the British Heart Foundation (BHF).

The shocking figures, released today on Restart a Heart Day, coincide with the largest ever CPR training event of its kind where more than 100,000 people will be taught CPR in schools and community groups across the whole of the UK. This comes as part of collaboration between the Resuscitation Council (UK), BHF, St John Ambulance, British Red Cross, Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS), and the UK NHS ambulance services and fire & rescue services across the country.

New research¹ from the University of Warwick reveals that it is too late to save one-in-eight cardiac arrest patients as rates of bystander CPR were very low. The BHF estimates that this leads to around 10,000 deaths every year across the UK.

The study, published in the journal *Resuscitation*, looked at more than 11,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests attended by the emergency services and found that in 13 per cent of cases the patient could not be saved as levels of bystander CPR were very low.

Chances of survival for cardiac arrest patients are almost zero if they collapse and receive no bystander CPR until emergency services arrive.

All the partner organisations want to create a Nation of Lifesavers and say that more people need to be educated and trained in life saving CPR to help improve the low cardiac arrest survival rates in the UK. Currently less than one in ten people survive. Professor Gavin Perkins, from the University of Warwick who led the research, said: "This study shows that thousands of people are dying because it is too late for them to be saved when the emergency services arrive, and this is associated with low bystander intervention.

"The community response to cardiac arrest is a critical step in the chain of survival. Performing immediate CPR when someone suffers a cardiac arrest can in some cases double the chance of survival."

Simon Gillespie, Chief Executive of the British Heart Foundation, said: "Shockingly, thousands of lives are being lost every year because people lack the confidence and skills to step in and save a life when someone collapses with a cardiac arrest.

"Survival rates in the UK have remained stubbornly low for far too long and it's time we improved them.

"We need as many people as possible to learn this life-saving skill to give them the confidence to step in and try to save a life when they see someone suffer a cardiac arrest.

"That's why we are urging secondary schools across the UK to apply for our free training kits and help create a Nation of Lifesavers."

Dr Andrew Lockey, from the Resuscitation Council (UK), said: "Today there will be in excess of 100,000 new lifesavers in the UK. This is a fantastic step towards training all children in CPR. That has to be the ultimate goal to give victims of [cardiac arrest](#) the best chance of survival."

Sue Killen, CEO at St John Ambulance, said: "There is overwhelming evidence that more lives could be saved if more people knew CPR. It is vital that we teach our young people simple first aid techniques so that no one is helpless in an emergency. Restart a Heart Day is a fantastic initiative that will help thousands of children across the country learn the skill to save a life."

Joe Mulligan, head of first aid education at British Red Cross said: "At the British Red Cross we want everyone to feel confident and willing to provide help when faced with a first aid emergency. This is why we are delighted to support Restart a Heart Day, giving young people the opportunity to learn a potentially lifesaving life skill."

"The benefits of first aid, including chest compressions for someone who is unresponsive and not breathing, are well recognised. This is why we are also calling for more opportunities for people to learn first aid throughout their lifetime, particularly in schools across the UK where it should be more widely taught in existing subjects or after school activities."

Jason Carlyon, Resuscitation Manager for Yorkshire Ambulance Service, said: "While these statistics are disappointing, they reinforce the need for community CPR initiatives and by going into schools to teach CPR we can give people the skills and confidence to save a life from an early age."

"Thanks to our partnership with the BHF and other agencies, we have provided CPR training to 31,000 children at 137 schools on Restart a Heart Day over the last two years and another 20,000 youngsters are due to learn in Yorkshire alone today (18 October). We are incredibly proud of the fact that that our concept for Restart a Heart Day is this year being rolled out across ambulance trusts nationally - even as far as Australia - ensuring that thousands more youngsters learn this vital skill."

Provided by University of Warwick

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