

August 2023

Dear Education Lead

**Higher Education Institution (HEI) community cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training initiatives and 'Restart a Heart 2023'**

I am writing to seek your support, through community engagement by healthcare students, for the 2023 Restart a Heart campaign, which aims to:

- Increase the number of people trained and willing to deliver bystander CPR
- Increase defibrillation awareness - you don't need training to use one
- Raise awareness of health inequalities - defibrillators are currently disproportionately placed in more affluent areas, with a lower residential population density. This contrasts with poorer parts of the country where incidence of cardiac arrest is higher.

Resuscitation Council UK lead on this annual campaign, which culminates in a day of action on or around 16 October each year (Restart a Heart day). This campaign and the day of action is supported by the British Heart Foundation, St John Ambulance, British Red Cross, the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, NHS England and NHS Improvement, Save A Life for Scotland and Save a Life Cymru.

For those HEI's who currently participate, thank you for your ongoing engagement. Your efforts have helped ensure that over 1 million people have been trained in vital lifesaving skills.

For those HEI's yet to participate, there are numerous collateral benefits on offer. There are opportunities for collaboration with other professionals and this also provides a key opportunity for leadership development. This activity also lends itself to being incorporated into outreach activities aimed at widening participation. Finally, participation in Restart a Heart provides a valuable opportunity for students to learn about health inequalities and potential solutions as we know that survival from out-of-hospital cardiac arrest and the provision of CPR and AED usage is not uniform amongst all members of our society.

Excellent examples of Restart a Heart initiatives in 2022 included the development of videos, social media campaigns, and training in person as well as via Zoom.

Ultimately, it is about improving the chances of survival for people who have a cardiac arrest. We know from data from other countries (like Denmark) that training every child in CPR leads to a three-fold increase in survival. In the UK, our survival rates from cardiac arrest are dismal (roughly 9%) and this relates to a low bystander CPR rate. Cardiac arrest, bystander CPR and survival rates also vary widely across the UK, so it's important we address this inequity by focussing more efforts on communities in the areas of greatest need.

With the help and support of your healthcare students we can do better.

The Restart a Heart campaign is key in increasing awareness of bystander CPR and defibrillation across the UK, so more people have the confidence to use this lifesaving skill in order to give more people their best chance of survival from a sudden cardiac arrest. Our dedicated team of student representatives can be reached on [studentleads@resus.org.uk](mailto:studentleads@resus.org.uk), and they will be able to provide information on how your School can take part and to provide support to your volunteers. **Please contact them with an email address of the best person for us to liaise with.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards



**Prof Andrew Lockey MBE**  
RCUK President and World Restart a Heart Co-Lead

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