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Scotland – Community Butchers

Butchers at the Heart of the Community: A National Life-saving Project in Collaboration with Save a Life for Scotland

BRIEF BACKGROUND

Each week in Scotland, 70 people of all ages and backgrounds will have an OHCA. Currently, only one in 12 will survive. Save a Life for Scotland (SALFS) is a grassroots campaign aimed at increasing bystander CPR in Scotland and ultimately saving lives. It is the cornerstone of Scotland's OHCA strategy, aiming to train an additional 500,000 people with CPR skills by 2020, and grow a local CPR and AED program run by people at the heart of their communities. Pamela Hunter, a Scottish Craft Butcher (SCB) from a small village, was seeking to take her local defibrillator initiative wider and establish a national project open to all SCBs.

STEPS TAKEN

The plan was to enable butchers across Scotland to raise funds within their shops to buy 24-hour defibrillators for their communities to be placed outside their shops. The initiative would empower butchers to start the conversation around cardiac arrest and CPR with their customers, as well as coordinate CPR and defibrillator awareness sessions for their communities.

Working in partnership, SCB and SALFS sought to engage communities around CPR and defibrillation. During regional meetings, they presented local butchers with CPR and AED demonstrations. Butchers contacted the SALFS team, who connected them with a local supporting partner. SCB provided them with collection tins and posters, and supported them via social media, so butchers could engage with their local community, politicians and the media to raise further awareness and hold CPR training events when placing their AEDs in their communities.

CHALLENGES

Following the regional meetings, there was a huge interest in the project, which required significant administration to meet demand. SALFS stepped in as the hub for butchers to contact in order to be linked with local support for CPR sessions and AED purchases. Some butchers had challenges obtaining planning permission to place AEDs on site.

RESULTS

To date, over 100 butchers are on board, and 40+ PADs are placed outside of butcher shops across Scotland. Staff and communities are learning CPR and defibrillation skills. As a result, each of these communities (both urban and rural) have started the conversation around cardiac arrest and are CPR-ready. PADs have been used by people in the local community, knowing that there's always one available at the local butcher shop.

OUTLOOK

In the fall of 2018, the project won a UK-wide innovation award. The project continues to grow rapidly, resulting in more independent business enquiries to SALFS from out of the SCB network. Their model has received national and international interest, with requests for assistance to replicate it further — a true sign of a small project making a big impact.

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