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## CPR 4 Schools - Irish Heart Foundation



### **BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR INTERVENTION**

The Irish Heart Foundation's (IHF) CPR 4 Schools programme was established in 2016. It is currently in 82% of Irish secondary schools with a potential to reach 372,296 secondary school students and their teachers. CPR 4 Schools aims to train the next generation of students who will have the skills and confidence to perform CPR and use in cardiac emergencies. In Ireland, we have 55/ 100,000 population OCHA with a survival rate of 6.2% in Ireland (OHCAR, 2020). 28% were discharged alive (UTSTEIN group).

### **HOW IS THE PROGRAMME FUNDED?**

CPR 4 Schools is a free programme available for all secondary schools in Ireland. The programme initially received two years of corporate funding but is now fully funded by the Irish Heart Foundation. The Irish Heart Foundation is a national charity fighting heart disease and stroke.

### **DESCRIBE THE RATIONALE FOR CHOICE INTERVENTION**

In Ireland, the bystander CPR rate is 84%; in providing CPR 4 Schools programme, our goal is to increase the quality of CPR. Providing schools with the programme allows schools to run CPR training every year; thus increasing the opportunity to practice CPR. We aim to train the next generation of lifesavers in Ireland. Schools are the ideal setting as it has the potential to reach all young people in a supportive and educational environment. By having the programme taught in schools, all young people will have the opportunity to learn and practice CPR, AED use, recognize a stroke, and help someone if they are choking. In just one 60 minute class, a group of students can be trained in these lifesaving skills.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

While CPR is not mandatory in schools in Ireland, we've had a tremendous uptake whereby school principals and teachers voluntary sign up for the programme. We've found this approach to be highly effective. However, our ultimate aim is to make CPR and AED training mandatory in schools.

The Children and Young People team created lesson plans and links to the learning outcomes in the existing school curriculum. The links are created in the following subject areas social, physical, health education (SPHE), Physical Education (PE), Science & wellbeing.

CPR 4 Schools is designed to be sustainable and flexible to meet the varying needs of schools. We use a train the trainer approach whereby IHF trains teachers who train students in CPR both online and face to face. Each school receives a manikin kit to train their students. They also receive a full suite of resources such as lesson plans, training videos, implementation strategies, and refresher training. Schools can opt for a 60 minutes session or extend the programme for deeper learning should they wish.

Schools can run the programme with flexibility by adapting to their own timetables and calendars. Implementation has taken place in a variety of ways:

- Teachers train their students during class time via the school curriculum
- Peer to peer training whereby students train as instructors and deliver training to all students
- School projects and awards
- Whole school training days
- Incorporating into school events such as celebration days or sporting days.

We reward schools through two awards a special recognition award for training all their students in CPR and a CPR Hero's award which recognizes outstanding efforts made by teachers and students.

### KEY SUCCESS FACTORS:

- Successful collaboration between the IHF's schools team and resuscitation team.
- Fun and engaging content that is tailored for the adolescent age group
- Funding
- A good understanding of schools and education
- Relationship with schools & understanding their needs and requirements
- Adaption of the programme to meet different schools' needs
- Teachers trained as instructors to deliver the training to school teachers
- Dedicated schools team in IHF to support schools
- Implementation evaluation carried out annually
- Offering refresher content to teachers to skills refreshment and engagement
- Offer a variety of ways to deliver the programme to maintain interest in the programme annually and support annual training.

### RESULTS

Successful national implementation of the programme in Ireland with yearly process and implementation evaluations marking key performance indicators. Ireland has a high bystander CPR rate. However, by implementing this programme more people will be trained in CPR, and AED use every year; this, in turn, will create better quality CPR, which will save lives both now and in the future.

Survival rates are measured annual through the Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Register. To date, we know that students and staff have used the skills taught in the programme. The programme has already saved lives in schools but also in the community.

For more information visit [www.irisheart.ie/cpr4schools](http://www.irisheart.ie/cpr4schools) or contact Laura Hickey [lhickey@irisheart.ie](mailto:lhickey@irisheart.ie).

