



Our Mission: A Transformational Curriculum

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Contact Details

Name:	
Organisation/role	
Telephone/Mobile number:	
Email:	

1. BHF Cymru is pleased to respond to the Welsh Government's consultation on the white paper for the new curriculum.
2. Together with St John Cymru and British Red Cross Cymru, we have been engaging for some time with the Welsh Government on the development of the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE) especially with the health and wellbeing AoLE with regards to Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and other life-saving skills being a routine part of the new curriculum.
3. We have been pleased to present to the pioneer schools who are shaping this AoLE on the importance of life-saving skills, and have made the case for the health and wellbeing AoLE being more than just about the learner's own health but also the wellbeing of others.
4. CPR has been drafted into the new Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PHSE) curriculum in England which will come into effect in 2020¹. In Scotland, nearly every local authority has now formally committed to teaching CPR in its schools.²
5. BHF Cymru is very aware of the pressures facing teachers and the reasoning behind the Donaldson review and the subsequent curriculum reform. This is why we provide free training resources to all schools to support students to learn lifesaving skills and which support flexible delivery.
6. On Restart a Heart Day in October 2018, our YouGov poll showed that nearly a third of adults would not attempt CPR.³ Many people quote reasons which are outdated such as worries over being sued, or that they might do more damage, when in reality a person whose heart has stopped will die without intervention. Many are not even aware of the difference between a heart attack and a cardiac arrest, which means that the ability to recognise a cardiac arrest is likely to be very poor. Bystander CPR is imperative and without it, our lower than 1 in 10 survival rate from a cardiac arrest is likely to remain at this level.
7. The international evidence for survival rates improving is clear. In Denmark, mandatory CPR training was introduced in schools in 2005. Over the next decade, alongside better

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/damian-hinds-learning-life-saving-skills-in-school-is-crucial>, 3 January 2019

² <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=34181>, 26 February 2019

³ <https://www.bhf.org.uk/what-we-do/news-from-the-bhf/news-archive/2018/october/restart-a-heart-day-2018>, 16 October 2018

access to Public Access Defibrillators (PADs) and guidance from ambulance services, bystander CPR rates tripled. And so did the survival rates. Now more than 1 in 4 people survive an out of hospital cardiac arrest.⁴

8. Norway and Seattle in the US, have also seen improvements in survival rates following mandatory CPR lessons in their schools. 1 in 4 survives in Norway⁵ and 1 in 5 survives in Seattle⁶.
9. The World Health Organization (WHO) endorsed 'Kids Save Lives' Statement in 2015, a joint statement from the European Resuscitation Council (ERC), the European Patient Safety Foundation (EPSF), the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR) and the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists (WFSA). This statement recommends two hours of CPR training annually from the age of 12 in all schools worldwide.⁷
10. It has also been recognised that public play a vital first responder role in the event of emergencies and need to be better equipped with the skills and confidence to act - the Kerslake Arena Review following the Manchester terrorist attack recommended the Government should increase its support for public first-aid training programmes (including those for children and young people). Whilst this was a recommendation to the UK Government, this is clearly something all governments of the UK should take note of.⁸
11. British Heart Foundation has worked with the resuscitation council to produce a half an hour video (in English and Welsh) which demonstrates and explains CPR, and with our kits can be facilitated with teachers without the need for teachers to be trained themselves (further videos in the series also teach CPR on babies/children, the recovery position and how a PAD works) BHF Cymru has worked to produce these resources bilingually so that all schools in Wales are able to access the learning.
12. In June 2017, the Cabinet Secretary for Health launched the Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Plan⁹ which makes clear the need for optimising the chain of survival, 1 - early recognition of a cardiac arrest and the call for help; 2 - Early CPR; 3 - Early defibrillation and 4 - post-resuscitation care.¹⁰ The plan itself recognises that many are not confident identifying a cardiac arrest: "recognising the signs of cardiac arrest may seem straight forward to health professionals, but bystanders often doubt their judgement, often relying on others to call for help delaying the resuscitation process".¹¹

⁴ Wissenberg M, Lippert FK, Folke F, et al. Association of National Initiatives to Improve Cardiac Arrest Management with Rates of Bystander Intervention and Patient Survival After Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest. *JAMA*. 2013; 310(13):1377-1384. Doi:10.1001/jama.2013.278483

⁵ Lindner TW et al. Good outcome in every fourth resuscitation attempt is achievable - An Utstein template report from the Stavanger region. *Resuscitation* 2011; 82:1508-13

⁶ Perkins GD, Lockey AS, de Belder MA, et al. National initiatives to improve outcomes from out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in England *Emerg Med J* Published Online first: 23 September 2015

⁷ Böttiger BW, Van Aken H. Kids save lives - Training school children in cardiopulmonary resuscitation worldwide is now endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO), *Resuscitation* 2015; 94:A5-7

⁸ The Kerslake Report: An independent review into the preparedness for and emergency response to, the Manchester Arena attack on 22 May 2017, p.156

⁹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-03/out-of-hospital-cardiac-arrest-plan.pdf>, Welsh Government, June 2017

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.3

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.4

13. The plan goes on to state the settings in which CPR can be taught and that all schools, further and higher education students should be provided with opportunities to learn CPR techniques. Rather unfortunately it does state that it is up to schools to decide if this is appropriate for the learners. However, the evidence is unequivocal and therefore BHF Cymru and other lifesaving charities do not agree with this approach. The Welsh Government must take the lead and ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn CPR by including lifesaving skills as part of the new curriculum.
14. Unlike other skills and subject learning which should very much be flexible and up to teachers and the school to shape and develop how their students learn, CPR is a medically proven technique which does not change with the student or the patient. To have an effect on the stubbornly low out of hospital cardiac arrest rates, universal approach must be taken - although schools will retain flexibility in terms of how and when and by whom training is delivered.
15. It is very conceivable that as in Denmark and Norway, the effect of nationally mandatory CPR lessons in secondary schools in Scotland and England could yield a major change to cardiac arrest survival rates within a decade. Welsh people and school children could be disadvantaged hugely by this divergence in educational policy. It should not be left to the third sector to ensure that CPR remains of prominence in every community in Wales. BHF training kits are currently in 85% of Welsh secondary schools and we have trained over 100,000 secondary school students in Wales since 2014 - but this is not universal coverage, and much as each charity who works in this area will do its best to fulfil the needs of CPR training, a national approach will improve survival rates much more significantly.
16. Children who are encouraged to learn about life-saving skills throughout the health and wellbeing AoLE are likely to be more confident about difficult situations which require them to step in and help, as they will be equipped age-appropriately with the knowledge of what to do in an emergency. This will also help to create confident citizens who participate in their community. We would be supportive of the 'what matters' statement for this area including learning how to call 999 in an emergency and what is and isn't an emergency, as well as the difference between a heart attack and a cardiac arrest and finally how to perform life-saving skills at the appropriate point in a student's school career.
17. The First Minister has spoken about the importance of 'health in all policies'. We believe that the curriculum is a huge opportunity for Wales to build on the Wellbeing of Future Generations (2015) (Wales) Act and be joined up across government to ensure that lives are saved and students are shaped and equipped with more than just knowledge as they become active and participative citizens.