**The Trevor Collins First Response Unit** 

The Programme



Trevor lived the last three vears of his life in Sneem. together with his partner Liz, and became a very respected and liked part of the Sneem Community. Trevor's death was associated with heart disease. In Trevor's Memory, his brother Michael Collins, has provided the funding for two sets of top quality First Responder equipment and also for Training. We would like to thank Michael and his family for this generositv!

# COMMUNITY **SNEEM FIRST RESPONDER** PROGRAMME

The service will commence 1st November 2008

## We are proud to announce that the programme has reached the stage where it can go operational.

Our group of volunteers is providing a 24 hour response service to assist people with a heart attack and stroke. The response radius at this time is up to 5 minutes from the centre of Sneem

## If you suspect a Heart Attack or Stroke First dial 112 or 999 **Then Contact your Sneem Cardiac First Responder Dial 087 9800999**

The geography of the Iveragh peninsular means that it can often take up to 35 min. for the ambulance to reach an emergency, so it's up to everyone to be prepared !

Immediate bystander CPR and defibrillation within 3-5 minutes results in an average survival rate of 50% of victims of sudden Heart Attack,

Ireland has a high rate of death from coronary heart disease, with one in five of all deaths being attributed to this cause. It is estimated that approximately 5,000 people die in Ireland each year from sudden cardiac death. This equates to 14 deaths per day. Death can often be prevented if CPR is started immediately.

CPR consists of two main actions: chest compressions (which pumps the blood) and rescue breathing (which delivers oxygen to the lunas).

CPR, if started early enough, can prevent permanent damage to the brain and heart. In most cases, CPR alone will not restart the heart. However, well-performed CPR makes it more likely that other resuscitation procedures such as defibrillation will be effective.

The chances of successful defibrillation decline at a rate of 7-10% with each minute of cardiac arrest. If defibrillated within five minutes, survival rates are approximately 50% and potentially higher with younger people. If time to defibrillation is ten minutes, survival rates approach zero percent without CPR and 10-20% if CPR has been used.

IRELAND

Foundation First Aid and Membership to the Order of ORDER OF MALTA Malta is now available in Sneem. This introductory course will teach you how to handle emergency situations and also covers life-saving First Aid techniques. When an accident happens, your first reactions are vital: the more you know about First Aid, the more effective you will be. Sign up for a course: Tel:0863561150

## If you suspect a Heart Attack or Stroke, first dial 112 or 999

### Ask for a Cardiac Ambulance

Information required by Ambulance Control (and sequence) when requesting an Ambulance:

- 1.Phone no. you are calling from 2.Location of incident
- 3.Nature of emergency
- 4.Number of patients
- 5.Age (approximate)
- 6.Gender
- 7.Conscious? Yes/No
- Breathing normally? Yes/No

## **Then Contact your Sneem Cardiac First Responder,** dial 087 9800999

1.Your name & Phone number 2.Location of incident **3.Is Ambulance Control informed?** 4. Give brief directions if needed 5.Ask a bystander to meet responder on road entrance to reduce possible delays 6.Return to patient and perform CPR if he/she is not breathing

is now implementing the service it offers to the area. New recruits to the programme are continually being sought and training for Sneem residents is FREE! All that we ask of you, is that two or three days each month, you would be available to be on call. You will work with a team of trained local volunteer residents with whom you can exchange ideas, receive and give guidance. When you are on call, you will always have the backup of another First Responder; as soon as you get the call out, and are en route to the incident, you will summon the back up CFR. In this way, there will always be two CFR in attendance. Regular training and refresher sessions are held, usually at Sneem Resource Centre for anyone who wants to come and learn or just brush up on their existing skills. Thanks to the generosity of the Sneem residents and others from as far afield as the USA and Barbados, we have been able to source excellent training equipment and now, with the help of the Order of Malta, we are looking at a wider range of First Aid training and activities.

www.sneem.com/firstresponder is a web address we ask you to put into you internet favourites folder; you will be able access a reqularly updated web site giving news, progress and techniques plus a whole lot more. And remember, the success of this life saving project is down to you: the residents, friends and visitors of Sneem. Please be generous and give us all the support you can. One day it may even be you whose life is saved!

Donations to support the programme are welcome and can be transferred or lodged into our Bank of Ireland account: Sneem First Responder Programme, Branch code: 905731 Account: 88539210

### The Chain of Survival is: Early Access, Early Resuscitation, Early Defibrillation, Early Advanced Life Support



# As nearly 75% of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in a home.

An out-of-hospital cardiac arrest has the worst possible outcomes for survival, primarily because resuscitation is often delayed or absent. Resuscitation for a cardiac arrest is time critical. A CFR can be most effective by starting resuscitation guickly and effectively and by using an AED as soon as possible, where one is available. A sequence of steps has been developed to provide the best possible chance of survival for a patient with a cardiac arrest. These steps are described as the links in the 'Chain of Survival'. Like any chain, the Chain of Survival is only as strong as its weakest link and, therefore, each link is of equal value and importance.

The links in the Chain of Survival are: Early Access Early Access involves phoning the emergency number 112 or 999 upon finding an unresponsive person. This call will initiate help from the emergency medical services (EMS). A responder should also check if there is an automated external defibrillator (AED) available on site. Early Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Early CPR is essential to pump blood when the heart stops. It is particularly important to pump blood to the brain to prevent brain damage. Start CPR as soon as the call for help has been made, keep pressing on the chest until help arrives. Do not stop CPR because if oxygen stops going to the brain the chance of survival is dramatically reduced.

Early Defibrillation Defibrillation applies an electrical shock to the heart which stops the uncoordinated electrical activity within the heart muscle. The heart then has a chance of restoring normal electrical activity and resumes its function of pumping blood. There is a 7-10% reduction in survival for every minute that defibrillation is delayed.

Early Advanced Life Support Early Advanced Life Support (ALS) involves the administration of medications and advanced airway procedures. ALS in the Irish prehospital environment is provided by advanced paramedics and doctors.

## **HEART ATTACK**

Coronary arteries supply the heart muscle with blood carrying oxygen. A heart attack is caused by a blocked coronary artery, thus

depriving part of the heart muscle of oxygen.

- •A heart attack should be suspected if a patient has persistent central crushing chest pain that does not go away with rest (circa 10-15 mins).
- The pain may spread to the arm, jaw or throat. The patient often also describes feeling sick, weak and dizzy and may sweat profusely.
- •There is a six-hour window of opportunity to reverse or reduce the effects of a heart attack. This window commences at the onset of symptoms.
- •Studies have identified that the average time to seek medical help by patients having a heart attack in Ireland is four hours.
- •There are a significant number of patients presenting outside the window of opportunity resulting in ongoing cardiac problems.
- •Heart attack can be difficult to detect out of hospital, therefore 112 or 999 should be called immediately for all patients with chest pain.

### STROKE

Stroke is a medical emergency. A stroke is caused by either a ruptured blood vessel or a blood clot within the brain. It is not possible to differentiate between both causes in the pre-hospital environment. Like heart attack there is a window of opportunity to reduce or reverse the effects of a stroke caused by a blood clot. This window, however, is just three hours long and patients and their families rarely meet this time-frame because they do not recognise or suspect a stroke. The FAST assessment process for stroke recognition can help to identify stroke patients early and ensure they receive the appropriate care rapidly.

### **FAST ASSESSMENT**

- F = FACIAL WEAKNESS Can the patient smile? Have the eyes or face drooped?
- A = ARM WEAKNESS Can the patient raise both arms equally and hold for five seconds?
- **S** = SPEECH PROBLEMS Can the patient speak clearly and understand what you say? A good way of checking is to ask the patient to repeat a sentence.
- T = TIME TO CALL 112 OR 999 Call 112 or 999 immediately if facial or arm weakness is identified or if there is a speech problem.

### **Our AED in Sneem:**

Philips HeartStart FRx Defibrillator Simple to use. Saving a life is stressful. A defibrillator should pull you through, not get in your way. The HeartStart FRx offers ondemand CPR Coaching to help the stressed user recall their training. Calm, clear voice instructions are precisely timed to the responder's actions, guiding the responder every step of the way.



## Free Training:

#### Anyone who wants to help their community to combat heart attack and stroke, can become a Community First Responder.

No previous medical experience or training is necessary although you will obviously need a caring attitude and be able to cope with potentially distressing situations. Community First Responders are trained in

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the use of Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's), and Oxygen Therapy. This initial training is provided by qualified instructors from the Ambulance Service and local qualified instructors. It takes place over weekends or evenings. Certificates will be issued after completion of the course. All participants are assessed throughout the course and will demonstrate their skills in a short test before being able to act as a Responder. Once qualified, Community Responders continue training and are required to re-qualify every 3months. **Anyone who does not whish to become a Community Cardiac First Responder, but still want to take part in the course is also welcome,** and invited to become a member of the pro-

gramme. Being able to perform CPR and use an AED is a skill that can save lives.