

# Community Responders Frequently Asked Questions

## **What are Community Responders and why do we need them?**

In a nutshell, Community Responders are volunteers who learn how to provide life saving techniques to patients before the arrival of an ambulance.

The first few minutes in an emergency are vital so we need Community Responders in as many areas as possible to deliver patient care as quickly as possible. Community Responders in villages, towns, or in shopping centres can help people in those areas within minutes which improve survival rates.

## **Are Community Responders a cheap alternative to Paramedics?**

Absolutely not and Community Responders never replace ambulance provision it is merely an enhancement to the existing service. For every emergency the Community Responder is activated to the Ambulance Service will also mobilise an ambulance.

## **Who can become a Community Responder?**

Community Responders come from all walks of life. We currently have volunteers who are doctors, nurses, fire fighters, engineers, forestry workers, postal workers, managers, retired people and administrators...the list is endless. In essence whatever your vocation your application will be welcomed and taken on its merits. Some Community Responders only operate in their workplace and others are more comfortable doing it from home in the evenings. The only restrictions on application is that you must be over 18 years of age and physically able to carry out the role. You must also be willing to submit to an enhanced criminal records check.

## **How well are Community Responders trained?**

The types of emergencies that Community Responders attend are carefully screened and we ensure the training given matches the needs. In the most serious of incidents it is the simple things that save lives that is why First Response delivers to all its operational volunteers the specially developed First Person on Scene Course. This course is gives the volunteer the skills to be able to deal with a wide range of medical and trauma related emergencies prior to the arrival of an ambulance. The course also leads to a nationally recognised qualification. This is the highest level of training of this type given to any Community Responders in the United Kingdom.

## **Why is the recruitment process so comprehensive?**

The Charity has a duty to provide a safe and effective service to the public so we need to ensure that the people we select to be Community Responders are appropriate. The process is comprehensive but it will be easy for any one who is honest, of good character, and is willing to help their community. It may look daunting on paper but most of it is just to check that the person volunteering has the personal qualities needed to help people in a safe way.

## **If I became a Community Responder, would I have to do shifts?**

No, Community Responders choose when they are free to give periods of cover. They then book on and off duty as necessary.

## **What sort of emergencies are Community Responders sent to?**

Community Responders are sent to predominantly medical emergencies such as chest pain, asthma, or diabetes. They are not sent to dangerous situations or to calls where pregnancy is involved. Notwithstanding this the work can be exceptionally rewarding and varied.