



“Two Hands Can Save a Life”

With these words, we launch the 2020 World Restart a Heart (WRAH) initiative, which has already had a phenomenal impact in 2018 and 2019. WRAH was launched in 2018, following its adoption by the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (Böttiger & Lockey, 2018; Böttiger et al., 2019; Böttiger et al., 2018). Its origins stem from the highly successful European Restart a Heart initiative (Georgiou & Lockey, 2013), formed in 2013 following the successful lobbying of the European Parliament to produce a Written Declaration in support of promotional awareness of the importance of bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in cardiac arrest. For WRAH 2019, over 5.4 million people were trained in CPR worldwide and the social media messaging reached up to 206 million people (Böttiger, Lockey & Aickin, 2020). We have received the support of many organizations including the European Society of Emergency Medicine and also the World Federation of Societies of Anesthesiologists. In particular, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is a key strategic partner and in 2019 ensured that the central message that “all citizens of the world can save a life” reached virtually every country in the world.

These sentiments are now even more important than ever. In recent months, the world has seen out-of-hospital cardiac rates increase as a result of the COVID-19-SARS pandemic. More worryingly, the bystander CPR rates and survival rates have decreased. The citizens of the world need to be re-motivated and reassured that they have the ability to save a life and that it is safe for them to do so.

Sixty years ago, the concept of chest compressions was first described (Kouwenhoven, Jude & Knickerbocker, 1960). The authors described that “the method of closed-chest cardiac massage is simple to apply: it is one that needs no complex equipment. Only the human hand is required.” Months later, after collaboration with Peter Safar, the concept of CPR was described for the first time.

On this important anniversary, the positive messaging around the importance of CPR and, in particular, chest compressions, is vital. We wish to celebrate the success of this simple intervention, whilst reminding and reassuring the citizens of the world of its importance and value. We recognize that the first aid community is a key stakeholder, and that there is a common overlap with the aims and objectives for World First Aid Day. By working together, we can mobilize a massive influential community that can restore the positive trend for survival from cardiac arrest.

Join us 16 October for World Restart a Heart 2020 – your two hands **can** save a life!

www.ilcor.org/wrah

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