

Restart a Heart Day 2020

Restart a Heart is an annual campaign held on 16 October. It is led by the Resuscitation Council UK (RCUK) and partners, The British Heart Foundation, British Red Cross, and Yorkshire Ambulance Service and St John Ambulance.

This year, Restart a Heart became a Community Engagement team project led by Claire Maynard, Community Development Officer. Reflecting on the key aims of community engagement and CPR skills, we focused on exploring new ground and the impact we can make.

Research was undertaken to identify the hot spots of high Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OOHCA) and low Bystander CPR (BCPR), being mindful that we need to engage community networks and groups who may otherwise not access first aid and basic lifesaving skills. Cardiovascular disease data shows high numbers in South Asian people and other BAME groups, so this campaign is ideally placed to focus our effort on communities and areas most in need.

The impact of Covid-19

In 2020, most of the health focus has been around Covid-19 but it has still been important to remind the community that 30,000 out of hospital cardiac arrests occur every year in the UK (80% at home). With an ageing population, more isolated areas and stretched services, BCPR is critical. The pandemic has increased people's fears of performing bystander CPR, so myth busting and removing social and cultural barriers was central to the messaging for Restart a Heart this year.

So, what did we do?

As part of a pilot this year, online engagement with targeted groups helped us understand the potential local impact and provide insight into the challenges and opportunities to shape future work for community outreach. Several virtual sessions were provided to Hindu Temple Community Groups throughout London and The Midlands and South Asian Women's Group in London. The partnerships developing with these organisations continues to grow and has increased the awareness of the work St John provide.

A key highlight included an intergenerational session



with family groups, young people – and their teddy bear! We were fortunate to be able to provide Gujarati translation for elders and English subtitles during our videos, so the session was fully accessible. Creating interactive and engaging activities proved that virtual sessions can provide as much value, engagement and confidence as face-to-face activity.

The feedback has been excellent and there was a ripple effect of interest in first aid, resulting in a request for a follow up session for those who missed the initial evening.

We reached just over 1,700 people with the virtual sessions with an age range from 4 to 85+!

Our social media reach from all St John channels reached 343,673 people and we had coverage from BBC Norfolk, Sussex Express and BBC Somerset. This is an achievement in itself, given the packed news agenda. Claire managed to get an evening mention on Harbour Radio broadcast from Great Yarmouth, and they also shared CPR skills on their social media and mentioned first aid being on the school curriculum.

The impact

It's important to measure the impact and outcomes of our work to ensure our interactions are meaningful and serve the purpose for that community. Outcomes for community first aid were focused on, Skills, Competence and Knowledge and Confidence to help. Participants evaluated their confidence against the session outcomes through a survey, which gave another opportunity for them to reflect on their confidence as a result of the session.

Do you feel competent (able) to give CPR (or advice another person if you are unable)?

- Before the session: 97% - No or not sure
- After the session: 98% - Yes

What happens next?

There is a plan to follow up with participants in the near future, with a quiz on CPR and AED's, along with signposting to our website resources, App and YouTube channel.

The success of Restart a Heart for all Ambulance Trusts and partners has been in reaching networks and groups who may otherwise not have the opportunity or felt first aid is relevant to learn. We have also learnt to focus on groups and locations most in need and adapt delivery methods to ensure our information is accessible. St John has led the way in terms of measuring impact and capturing confidence.

This year has provided us all with great challenges; however, we continue to strive to reflect the communities we aim to serve. Our aim is to take the learning from this year and create plans for next year where together, all St John people can get involved.



"Really worthwhile CPR session. Was useful to recap for our daughter who is part of Badgers and for us it was very helpful to learn and be aware of what to do to help save someone else's life."

"We found the session really informative and the kids enjoyed taking part. Thank you very much for the important work you are doing to raise awareness and save lives!"

"Thank you for delivering such clear, concise and potentially life saving skills - I found it extremely interesting and am grateful to you and our Mandir for providing the training."