



BASICS Scotland

Factsheet for New Responders

A GUIDE TO SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT RESPONDING

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Thinking about becoming a BASICS Scotland responder?

BASICS responders provide a valuable resource to communities across Scotland, particularly in remote/rural areas and where prehospital care specialists are able to provide assistance in other areas of need. They may be contacted when there is a serious casualty (airway, breathing or circulation are compromised) and:

- there is likely to be a delay in ambulance response, for example in remote/rural locations
- when additional support is necessary with multiple casualties, request from ambulance crew or specific patients such as children or pregnant women

BASICS Scotland is working with the Scottish Ambulance Service to increase the number of tracked responders, particularly in rural 'hotspots' where a BASICS response would be most valuable. This fact sheet outlines some of the considerations you should think about prior to signing up, and also how BASICS Scotland & the Sandpiper Trust can support you in this role.

Why should I sign up?

There are a number of reasons why individuals want to offer BASICS prehospital care. Quite simply, if you are interested in maintaining & developing your prehospital care skills and want to make these available

to your local community, we're keen to hear from you.

How are responders selected?

Regional co-ordinators work on behalf of BASICS Scotland to identify areas of need with the ambulance service, and decide where responders should be allocated. We are particularly keen to get responders set up in rural/remote areas, and also identify where specialist skills might be available.

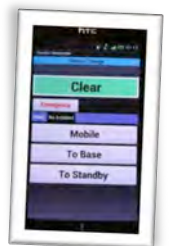
How do I make myself available?

Your regional co-ordinator will discuss the most appropriate method of making yourself contactable. Once your details are with ambulance control, they will see whether you're available right at the time of handling the 999 call. In general, they prefer to use mobile phone contact, although also like to have alternative means such as home/work phone and/or pager too.

There are a limited number of AIRWAVE radio units available to BASICS responders. These are allocated to those responders where the mobile signal is poor and who are likely to be busiest with BASICS calls. There is a mandatory six hour training session, however the benefits in providing a

direct link with ambulance control can prove extremely valuable.

Responders can be tracked or fixed resources. A number of devices exist to make this possible, and your regional co-ordinator can explain further. It's useful to know what times you are likely to be available, and what size of area you cover, in order to decide on which tracking option will be easiest for you.



What commitment do I need to give?

As a BASICS responder, the ambulance service can **request** your assistance, but there is no official obligation to attend - they realise that occasionally it might not be possible to provide assistance due to childcare arrangements, forgetting to turn your tracker off etc. If you are unable to attend, just tell them succinctly to allow them to find another resource.

There is no minimum commitment required to become a tracked responder. It is a voluntary role, and we all have busy lives – such as work commitments, family, holidays and precious time off. This is the advantage of being able to sign on and sign off. If an incident is particularly serious in more remote areas, ambulance control may try you even if marked unavailable. Please don't take offence at this, and let your regional representative know if it is becoming a problem.

What do I need to have to respond?

We need responders to be **safe**, **competent** and able to practise **independently**. A number of documents have recently been produced by BASICS Scotland regarding clinical governance of responders. The information below summarises this, but you are encouraged to familiarise yourself with these documents prior to responding.

Membership: of BASICS Scotland is required so that we can maintain an accurate register for the Scottish Ambulance Service.

Kit: responders should possess a Sandpiper bag (with standard contents and personal protective equipment), defibrillator and oxygen. Additional kit can be made available to tracked responders, such as pulse oximeters and EZIO drills, and you are welcome to supplement your kit as you see fit. You will need to source your own drugs; oxygen is available from SAS and the Sandpiper Trust can help to provide a defibrillator.

Vehicle: you should ensure that your vehicle is roadworthy, insured for responding purposes, and that you carry out regular maintenance checks. Green light beacons can be used by GMCH registered doctors only, although be aware that this is just to highlight awareness, and does not allow any road traffic act laws to be broken. You may wish to consider doing an Advanced Driving Course.



Skills/Qualifications: Responders will be expected to undertake only those procedures and roles that they are competent to do so. There is no generic skillset other than provision of Advanced Life Support, and the onus is on the responder to work within their competency.

Doctors should have completed a BASICS IMC1 (or refresher), PHECC or DipIMC. Doctor responders come from general practice, or hospital medicine with a CCT in a relevant specialty such as anaesthesia or emergency medicine. Trainee doctors must be at registrar (ST3 level or above) in an

acute care specialty, and have the formal and documented approval of their educational supervisor. Please be aware that the focus of BASICS Scotland work is in remote/rural areas.

All other responders (paramedics, nurses etc.) should have a completed PHECC course, and keep this updated every four years. Paramedics should have at least two years of experience before 'going solo' as a BASICS responder.

Indemnity: it is essential that you confirm that your indemnity cover is adequate for the responding work that you do. If you have any queries, you can discuss this with your regional co-ordinator.



All incidents present their own challenges, physical and emotional. BASICS Scotland, with the Sandpiper Trust, is keen to support its members in both respects.

Where can I get support?

You will remember your first call for some time, and all calls have a degree of emotional response. Support is available from a number of sources. Colleagues locally may be more experienced and in a good position to co-attend or offer phone support. Your local regional representative will be keen to ensure that you have adequate opportunity to debrief, and will be keen to know if you are having difficulties identifying local opportunities for this.

Regional co-ordinators tend to keep an eye on incidents in their areas too, and will try

to offer a friendly email of support if they are aware that a BASICS responder has been involved.

Responders will also have full access to the range of courses available from BASICS Scotland, and we are keen to ensure that responders' CPD is being facilitated by attendance at these.

If you are interested, please see the BASICS Scotland website, or contact the BASICS Scotland office and they will put you in touch with your local co-ordinator.