

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 a casualty is in a serious life-threatening condition or:

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

BASICS Scotland is working with the Scottish Ambulance Service to recruit responders, particularly in rural areas 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 pre-hospital care. Quite simply, if you are interested in maintaining & developing your pre-hospital care skills and want to make these available to your local community, we're keen to hear from you.

## How are responders selected?

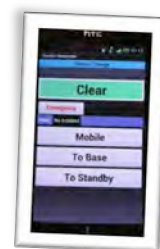
The Responder Support Team works with the Sandpiper Trust to identify applicants that have current clinical experience in a relevant specialty. We also look at the area(s) that applicants plan to respond in to provide good geographical coverage. We review any specialist skills and qualifications that applicants may have which could be of a benefit to an incident response and patient outcome. This includes experience of lone working and team working.

## How do I make myself available?

During the set up process the team will discuss the most appropriate method of making yourself available and visible on the SAS system. Once you are logged on with SAS, emergency call handlers are able to see if you are the closest resource available to attend an emergency. In general, they prefer to use mobile phone contact in the first instance.

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 those who are the most active. There is a mandatory SAS training course that you need to attend

Responders can work individually or as part of a fixed resource if they work in a GP surgery. please ask if you would like more information about this option.



## 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. We know that occasionally it might not be possible to provide assistance due to poor weather/road conditions or simply forgetting to log off etc. If you are unable to attend, just tell the call handler and this allows them to end the call and seek an alternative resource.

For governance and accountability reasons we ask that all equipment provided by The Sandpiper Trust is used for BASICS Scotland responding only. Generally this will be when you have been tasked by SAS or have informed control that you have come across an incident. The huge advantage of being able to sign on and sign off is that even if you have a few hours spare you can be available for taskings and provide vital emergency support in your community.

## What do I need to have to respond?

We need responders to be safe, competent and able to practise independently. We work closely with SAS regarding the clinical governance and safety of responders. The information below summarises this, but you are encouraged to familiarise yourself with all of our working agreements 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. Oxygen is available from SAS and emergency drugs pouches can be requested through SAS if you have no other reasonable access to these.

**Vehicle:** you should ensure that your vehicle is roadworthy, insured for responding purposes, and that you carry out regular maintenance checks.



**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.

New applicants should have completed a BASICS PHECC course 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. Paramedics and nurses should have at least five years of post registration experience before applying to be a BASICS responder.

All responders need approval from their current line manager and we will ask for a brief reference from them.

**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 the Responder Support Team.



*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 and we strongly recommend looking at Lifelines Scotland website. Colleagues locally may also be in a good position to co-attend or offer phone support and advice.

The Responder Support Clinicians want to ensure that you have adequate opportunity to debrief and can be contacted via the [responders@basics-scotland.org.uk](mailto:responders@basics-scotland.org.uk) email address. We review all Patient Report Forms (PRF's) and will aim to be in touch within a few days if we see that a BASICS

responder has been involved in a particularly challenging incident.

We are always really keen for responders to get in touch if you would like to discuss anything, feedback issues or just to have a chat!

Responders 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 would like to find out more, please see the BASICS Scotland website, or email [responders@basics-scotland.org.uk](mailto:responders@basics-scotland.org.uk).