



**Scottish
Ambulance
Service**
Taking Care to the Patient



how do I become a...

COMMUNITY FIRST RESPONDER



What is the role of a Community First Responder?

Community First Responders are a vital part of our emergency resource and provide care and support while an ambulance is on its way.

By being local and able to respond quickly, Community First Responders are able to provide an early intervention in situations, such as breathing problems, or choking incidents, before the ambulance crew arrives.

What experience will I need?

You do not need to have any previous medical training, but you will need to be enthusiastic about providing a professional level of care to others. You'll need to be flexible, able to work under pressure and able to respond quickly.

What training will I receive?

You will be trained by our specialist trainers in a wide range of emergency skills including the use of specialised equipment such as Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's) and CPR.

Will I be employed by the Scottish Ambulance Service?

No. As a Community First Responder you would be part of a community first responder scheme and as such not directly employed by the Scottish Ambulance Service.

However, you will have a Scheme Coordinator who will provide you with support, advice and guidance during your time as a Community First Responder.

Why should I be a Community First Responder?

The role as a Community First Responder is a great way to make a difference to your community and the people who live there. By being local, you might just be able to provide the immediate care that makes a real difference to someone's life. This is a long-term commitment, but the satisfaction that you can achieve from the role can be incredible.

As a Community First Responder am I more likely to get a job as an Ambulance Technician?

All our vacancies are advertised and

filled through a strict recruitment and selection process and we cannot guarantee that being a Community First Responder will automatically mean you will go on to become an Ambulance Technician.

By working alongside our accident and emergency crews, you will be given an insight into what working for the Service is like and whether it is right for you. Whilst it may not guarantee you a job as an Ambulance Technician, if you do choose to apply for a vacancy, being a Community First Responder initially will give you a real understanding of the job that you are applying for.

To be a Community First Responder you must be:

- at least 18 years old;
- able to drive and have a vehicle available for your use;
- able to demonstrate and maintain a level of fitness;
- an effective communicator with good interpersonal skills;
- able to demonstrate logical approach;
- able to work under pressure, yet stay calm;
- reside or work in the area in which the scheme is based;
- able to respond quickly to incidents;
- able to complete a satisfactory application to the PVG (Disclosure) Scheme;
- have a long-term commitment to the role;
- able to successfully complete a four day training course.

To find out more about a career with us, how to apply, and what skills we are looking for, visit our website at www.scottishambulance.com or find us on Twitter or Facebook



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“
Being local and knowing the area means we are able to respond quickly. We can be the first on the scene and the first to start life support care.”

Why did you become a Community First Responder ?

Ever since I can remember I have been interested in first aid, biology and health related issues.

I took up pool life guarding 20 years ago and since then I have gone on to teach and examine lifeguards for the Royal Life Saving Society.

When my mum died of a heart attack, I became very active with the British Heart Foundation and have been an active fund raiser ever since.

Six years ago, I got involved with the Penicuik Community First Responder Scheme. I knew the Scheme Co-ordinator from my days as a life guard and it seemed to bring a lot of my interests together. As a qualified Paramedic, the Scheme Co-ordinator is hugely experienced, making the training sessions enjoyable and interesting.

Why are Community First Responders so important?

Community First Responders play such a key role because we are exactly what the title suggests. Being

local and knowing the area means we are able to respond quickly and are often first on the scene. We often have to perform CPR or use our automatic external defibrillator in the case of cardiac arrest. These keep the blood circulating, increasing the patients chance of survival.

We also act as a handover point for the ambulance crew. We take details from the patient and their family, find out what has happened and record these details, saving critical time when the ambulance arrives.

But sometimes, it is as much about reassuring the patient and their family. Making sure that they are prepared for a trip to hospital, that they have their medication with them, that their house is secured and that someone knows what is happening.

What sort of incidents have you been called to?

We get called to all sorts of patients, people with breathing difficulties, heart problems and chest pains. For example, I was called out on Boxing Day to attend a young girl who had

collapsed. Being there meant I was able to record all the necessary details, get an overnight bag ready and reassure the family. All this means that the ambulance was able to leave for hospital within three minutes of arriving with the patient.

What is the best thing about being a Community First Responder?

I volunteered to become a Community First Responder because I have always been interested in health and life saving. I am passionate about helping others and trying to make a difference, this role enables me to do that in a professional and meaningful way.

You also get to work as a team, meet new people and learn new skills. You are always facing new challenges, finding out new things about yourself and your capabilities – that's what makes the role so rewarding.

What advice would you give someone thinking of becoming a Community First Responder?

Being a Community First Responder is a great role for anyone, regardless of their background. You really can bring something special to families in your community.

Do you play any other role?

Because we are part of the community, we often deliver CPR training to local schools, workplaces and other public groups. Early bystander CPR is a vital part of the chain of survival in a cardiac arrest.