

Community First Aid Response

Equipping communities to provide emergency care

BACKGROUND

Every day, all over the world, adults and children suffer emergency health conditions that, if not treated promptly and correctly, threaten their life or well-being. Estimates suggest that over half of all deaths in resource-limited settings result from conditions that could be addressed by emergency care. In lower resource settings, long delays often exist before a patient can reach emergency services, and individuals may not know when to seek further care. Furthermore, many settings do not have effective prehospital emergency care systems, and health personnel are not adequately trained to manage life-threatening emergencies. Delays in effective emergency care result in high rates of mortality and disability, particularly among vulnerable populations, including women, children, and the elderly.

Increasing access to timely emergency care can be achieved by focused training community members who are linked to the emergency care system. Multiple studies have shown that training community personnel improves timeliness of life saving interventions, enhances system activation to help critically ill and injured people reach care, and can be highly cost-effective.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Community First Aid Response learning programme is intended to train lay providers or community health workers to recognize emergency conditions, safely provide simple life-saving interventions, and support an individual until they access further care, especially in communities where there is limited access to formal emergency care systems. The course supports an integrated system-based approach toward emergency conditions, from community-based to facility-level care.

This course is intended for lay emergency care responders who are either formally linked to the health system or are in the process of being prepared for formal integration with the system; Examples include police officers, fire fighters, taxi drivers, community health workers, and other community leaders who require first aid training and have been, or are intended to be, integrated into the emergency care system. This course is NOT for bystanders who should receive ad-hoc community-based first aid training via a different learning program.

This course focuses **ONLY on emergency conditions** and is not meant to be a general first aid course.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Community First aid Response learning programme is to equip community members with the necessary skills and knowledge to safely engage in immediate first aid for life threats, communicate essential information, and assist with the transfer and handover while protecting themselves from disease or injury. The objectives of the learning programme are to teach learners to:

- Recognize an emergency condition through danger signs.
- Recognize the key components of scene safety and use personal and patient safety principles at all times.
- Apply a practical, systematic approach to the evaluation of patients experiencing medical and traumatic emergency conditions.
- Perform simple lifesaving interventions to initiate care for emergency patients.
- Synthesize relevant information in a verbal handover directly to the next care provider.
- Perform basic patient transport procedures to aid in mobilization to a health facility.

COURSE DETAILS

- The **target audience** for the course includes individuals with little or no medical training but who are either formally linked to the health system or are in the process of being prepared for formal integration with the system. The CFAR course will require the ability to think critically, but no set knowledge or skills are required.
- **Duration and delivery modes:** This course may be delivered in different ways to meet local needs. The face-to-face course is developed as a suggested 2-3 day in-person course. The content could also be spread across weekly sessions, and additional sessions can be considered depending on local need. Active participation in case scenario discussions, as well as hands-on skills and simulation practice is expected.

COURSE CONTENT

The course is allied to the [WHO-ICRC Basic Emergency Care course](#) and emphasizes a similar approach to the acutely ill and injured. On completion of this course, participants are expected to have increased competence and confidence to safely approach patients with both medical and traumatic emergency conditions, including recognition of an emergency condition, provision of appropriate first aid, and mobilization to facilitate timely and safe patient transfer and handover.

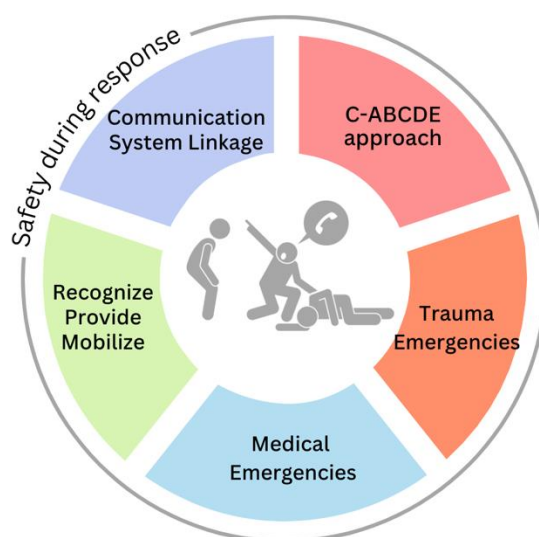


Figure 1. Community First Aid Response course

Course materials and implementation support are available by contacting emergencycare@who.int

Clinical Services and Systems
Integrated Health Services
Universal Health Coverage-Life Course
World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland