



**World Health
Organization**

Community First Aid Response

Course Syllabus

2025

BACKGROUND

Emergency care addresses a wide range of conditions in children and adults— including injuries, infections, heart attacks and strokes, asthma and complications of pregnancy. The community has an important role in the early recognition of danger signs, initial first aid and initiation of movement to definitive care for patients with life-threatening conditions. This role is essential in an emergency care system where patient outcomes are dependent on reaching care in a timely way that allows for delivery of high-quality care. However, in many health systems, those living and working in the community have insufficient training in first response. There is an urgent need to include community-based first aid response training into the emergency care systems' efforts to progress toward universal health coverage.

Course Description

This course teaches essential emergency care concepts and skills for community-based first responders who are either formally linked to the health system or are in the process of being prepared for formal integration with the system. 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.

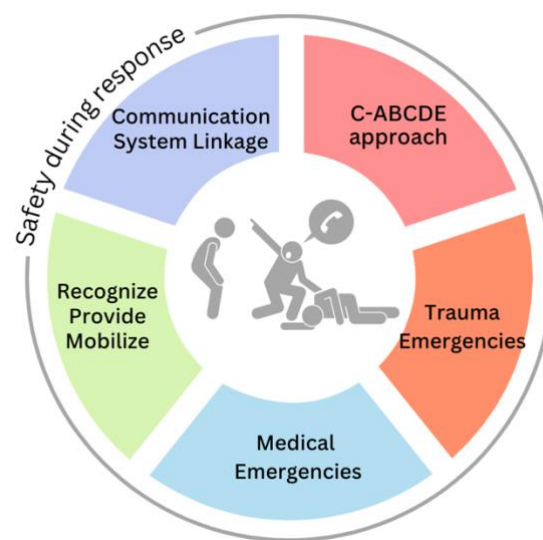


Figure 1: CFAR Course

Course objectives

Upon completion of this training, a CFAR will be able 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.
- Identify when a patient needs more advanced care and when transfer is required to an appropriate facility.
- 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.

Target audience

This training has been developed 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 could

include police officers, fire fighters, taxi drivers, community health workers and other community leaders who have received clinical training and have been, or are intended to be, integrated into the emergency care system.

Duration

This course may be delivered in different ways to meet local needs. The face-to-face course is developed as a suggested **2-day in-person course** ([Appendix A](#)), though it can be extended into 3 days if necessary. The content could also be spread across weekly sessions and additional sessions can be considered depending on local need.

COURSE CONTENT

This course content is distributed in six core modules described below. The details for each session are in [Appendix B](#).

	Module Name	Session name
1	Introduction	Introduction to CFAR Lecture
		Ethics Small Group
2	Safety	Safety During Response Lecture
		Safety Case Scenarios
3	CABCADE Approach	CABCADE Approach Lecture
		CABCADE Skills
		Handover Small Group
4	Trauma Emergencies	Approach to Trauma Emergencies Lecture
		Trauma Case Scenarios
		Trauma Skills
5	Medical Emergencies	Approach to Medical Emergencies Lecture
		Medical Case Scenarios
		Medical Skills
6	Recognize, Provide, Mobilize	Recognize, Provide, Mobilize Lecture
		System Integration Small Group
		Patient Transport Skills

COURSE STRATEGIES

This course is presented through a series of short interactive lectures, case scenarios and practical skills stations to promote the learning of key concepts. The course is designed to be logistically simple for utilization in low- and middle-income countries. Course materials are visual and practical to support individuals in locations where literacy is low.

This course will be presented through the following teaching strategies:

- **Interactive lectures.** Facilitators will share core concepts relevant to the CFAR approach. Emphasis will be placed on considerations in the local context, and learners' experience will be used as the basis for larger group discussions.

- **Case-based sessions (large group).** Facilitators will guide the learners through step-by-step real-life case analysis, promoting the learning of key concepts and facilitating knowledge transfer to different contexts by identifying core considerations for acute care settings, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.
 - **Case-based sessions (small group).** Learners will be divided into small groups and will discuss real-life cases in a low-stake and high-participation environment. Facilitators will encourage the integration of theory and concepts learned through lectures and large group case sessions.
 - **Skills practice sessions.** A set of CFAR skills will be reinforced throughout the course in the skills sessions. These skills will strengthen learners' ability to care for critically ill patients in their settings.
- Practical Case Scenario sessions (PraCS).** Learners will integrate all the key knowledge, skills and attitudes reviewed in this course in a simulated environment.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

This program will assess participants in key course competencies. A **post-course skills assessment** will be conducted to ensure competency in skill acquisition. Participants must actively participate in all practical sessions to complete the course.

Optional: The post-course skills assessment may be accompanied by the **pre/post course confidence survey**. Confidence surveys play a valuable role in clinical learning programs by providing insight into how prepared and comfortable learners feel applying new skills and knowledge in practice. They complement objective assessments by identifying areas where additional support or emphasis may be needed and help track changes in learner confidence over time, offering an indirect measure of a program's impact. Confidence surveys also encourage self-reflection and self-awareness among participants, helping them recognize their strengths and areas for growth. Beyond supporting individual learning, they guide program evaluation by highlighting gaps in perceived competence and informing targeted improvements. **While the confidence survey is optional with the course, it is strongly encouraged.**

APPENDIX A. SCHEDULES

The CFAR course can be adapted to different country and regional needs. Face-to-face delivery is conducted via a 2-day or 3-day schedule (below). Additional emphasis can be placed for setting-specific hazards such as conflict related injuries.

2-DAY SCHEDULE

	Day 1	Day 2
8:00	Sign In	Sign In
8:15		
8:30	Opening Remarks & Introductions	Recap
8:45		
9:00	Module 1: Introduction to CFAR	Module 5: Approach to Medical Emergencies
9:15		
9:30	Small Group Case: Ethics	
9:45	Break	
10:00	Module 2: Safety During Response (+ practice scene safety and handwash)	Small Group Case: Medical
10:15		Break
10:30	Small Group Case: Safety	Skills Session 3
10:45		
11:00		
11:15	Module 3: CABCDE Approach	Lunch
11:30		
11:45		
12:00	Lunch	Module 6: Recognize, Provide, Mobilize
12:15		
12:30		
12:45	Skills Session 1	Small Group Case: System Integration
13:00		
13:15	Small Group Case: Handover	Skills Session 4
13:30		
13:45	Break	
14:00	Module 4: Approach to Trauma Emergencies	
14:15		Post-Course Survey
14:30		
14:45	Small Group Case: Trauma	Practical Case Scenarios
15:00		
15:15	Skills Session 2	
15:30		
15:45		
16:00		
16:15		
16:30	Certificate Ceremony	
16:45		
17:00		

Course Strategies
Lecture
Small Group Session
Skills Practice Session
Simulation & Assessment

3-DAY SCHEDULE

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
8:00	Sign In	Sign In	Sign In
8:15			
8:30	Opening Remarks & Introductions	Recap	Recap
8:45			Post-Course Survey
9:00	Module 1: Introduction to CFAR	Skills Session 2	Skills Assessment
9:15			
9:30	Small Group Case: Ethics		
9:45			
10:00	Break	Module 5: Approach to Medical Emergencies	Break
10:15	Module 2: Safety During Response (+ practice scene safety and handwash)		
10:30			
10:45			
11:00	Small Group Case: Safety	Break	Practical Case Scenarios
11:15			
11:30	Module 3: CABCDE Approach	Small Group Case: Medical	
11:45			
12:00	Lunch	Skills Session 3	Certificate Ceremony
12:15			
12:30			
12:45			
13:00	Skills Session 1	Lunch	
13:15			
13:30	Small Group Case: Handover	Module 6: Recognize, Provide, Mobilize	
13:45			
14:00	Break	Break	
14:15			
14:30	Module 4: Approach to Trauma Emergencies	Small Group Case: System Integration	
14:45			
15:00			
15:15			
15:30	Small Group Case: Trauma	Skills Session 4	
15:45			
16:00			
16:15			
16:30			

Course Strategies
Lecture
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APPENDIX B. SESSION PLANS

Module 1: Introduction to CFAR

Session Name:	Introduction
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the goals of Community First Aid Response training • Define an emergency condition, emergency care, and emergency care systems • Understand how Community First Aid Response can help an emergency care system • Identify the role of ethics and law in patient care • Recognize the importance of documentation and handover
Session modality:	Interactive lecture
Details:	This lecture will introduce the course goals and expectations, as well as the definitions of emergency conditions and emergency care systems.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT + Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook

Session Name:	Ethics Case Discussion
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply the fundamentals of consent, privacy, and confidentiality in ethical patient care
Session modality:	Large or small group case discussion
Details:	During this case scenario, participants will discuss principles of ethical community first aid response.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook

Module 2: Scene Safety

Session Name:	Safety During Response
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify hazards on the scene of a medical or trauma emergency • Perform critical actions upon initially approaching a scene to ensure safety • Recognize special considerations to maintain personal and patient safety while providing community first aid response • Describe how to avoid infectious disease exposure by using personal protective equipment and practicing handwashing • Describe steps to take if exposure to blood or another body fluid occurs
Session modality:	Interactive lecture
Details:	This lecture will introduce participants to the principles of scene, personal, and patient safety during response. If the CFAR becomes ill or injured, they will not be able to provide care. It is of the utmost importance that a CFAR can recognize dangerous situations, adapt to protect against hazards, and only deliver care when it is safe to do so.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT + Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook

Session Name:	Scene Safety Case Discussion
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify hazards on the scene of an emergency condition Apply knowledge of scene safety principles Describe how to avoid communicable disease exposure
Session modality:	Large or small group case discussion
Details:	During this case scenario, participants will discuss a simple approach to safety while responding to an emergency condition.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook

Module 3: CABCADE

Session Name:	CABCADE Approach
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the CABCADE approach for ill and injured persons Check for major bleeding Assess an airway Assess breathing Assess circulation Assess disability Explain the importance of exposure Gather information on the history of events, medications, past medical history, and allergies of an ill or injured person Recognize the importance of documentation and handover
Session modality:	Interactive lecture
Details:	This lecture will introduce participants to the core elements of the CABCADE approach. Using the ABCDE approach, life-threatening emergencies can be quickly identified. Immediate life-saving treatment can be taken. When an ABCDE condition is found, the CFAR will know when to transfer the patient to a higher level of care and what immediate actions to take. Special considerations for paediatric and pregnant patients are considered throughout. The critical role of documentation and handover in community first aid response is highlighted.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT + Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook + CFAR Pocket Guide

Session Name:	Handover Case Discussion
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a quick handover of a patient to emergency care providers Complete a CFAR case form
Session modality:	Large or small group case discussion
Details:	CFARs should provide a verbal and/or written report to the person who will next care for the patient. This session will share a framework to tell the next care provider critical information about the injury or illness occurred.

Materials required: • Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook + CFAR Pocket Guide

Module 4: Approach to Trauma Emergencies

Session Name:	Approach to Trauma Emergencies
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform the CABCADE approach to the evaluation of people with traumatic injuries • Perform critical interventions for catastrophic bleeding and other high-risk injuries • Recognize key history findings of high-risk injuries • Recognize special considerations in the care of high-risk injuries in children and pregnant women • Recognize key considerations in the care of common traumatic injuries
Session modality:	Interactive lecture
Details:	This lecture will introduce participants to the elements of the CABCADE approach in a patient with a trauma emergency. Trauma is a leading cause of death and disability throughout the world. Through the CABCADE approach in trauma, many lives can be saved and improved. The CFAR will learn high-risk injuries and the immediate basic care of those injuries. The CFAR will learn to recognize when trauma patients will need to be sent to a higher level of care.
Materials required:	• PPT + Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook + CFAR Pocket Guide

Session Name:	Trauma Case Discussion
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply a systematic approach to the evaluation and care provision to trauma patients using a case scenario
Session modality:	Large or small group case discussion
Details:	During this case scenario, participants will discuss the CABCADE approach to the trauma patient.
Materials required:	• Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook + CFAR Pocket Guide

Module 5: Approach to Medical Emergencies

Session Name:	Approach to Medical Emergencies
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform the CABCADE approach for the evaluation of people with medical emergencies • Perform critical interventions for life-threatening illness • Recognize key history findings for life-threatening illness • Recognize special considerations in the care of medical emergencies in children and pregnant women • Recognize key considerations in the care of common medical emergencies
Session modality:	Interactive lecture
Details:	This lecture will introduce participants to the elements of the CABCADE approach in a patient with a medical emergency.

	By utilising the CABCADE approach in patients with medical emergencies, the CFAR can identify life-threatening syndromes, including difficulty in breathing, shock, altered mental status. The CFAR will learn danger signs to recognize, immediate first aid techniques for stabilization, and how to identify patients requiring a higher level of care.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT + Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook + CFAR Pocket Guide

Session Name:	Medical Case Discussion
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply a systematic approach to the evaluation and stabilization of medical patients using a case scenario
Session modality:	Large or small group case discussion
Details:	During this case scenario, participants will discuss the CABCADE approach to the medical patient.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook + CFAR Pocket Guide

Module 6: Recognize, Provide, Mobilize

Session Name:	Recognize, Provide, Mobilize
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a higher level of care Recognize key considerations in choosing where to send patients for higher care Recognize key considerations in how to mobilize patients to healthcare facilities Consider how CFARs can integrate within broader emergency care systems Perform basic patient transport procedures
Session modality:	Interactive lecture
Details:	CFARs can form a critical link in the chain of survival for people experiencing emergency conditions. By recognising health conditions that threaten the health of people if not treated emergently, performing stabilising actions to prevent worsening condition, and mobilising people experiencing emergency conditions to the right health facility quickly and safely, CFARs can save lives and prevent disability. CFARs will consider how they fit within the broader emergency care system and how to safely transport patients when necessary.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT + Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook + CFAR Pocket Guide

Session Name:	System Integration
Learning objectives:	By the end of this session, the participant will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how CFAR integrates with the rest of the emergency care system Apply the principles of CFAR to their local context
Session modality:	Large or small group session
Details:	While CFAR integration with the system will vary depending on location, CFARs should have a clear understanding of how they fit in the rest of their emergency care system. This session will share the context specific details of when and how a CFAR should activate the system and provide local contextual details (review of local hospitals, reference numbers, transport options). The

	session will be structured as a small group session where the CFAR reference worksheet will be completed together to ensure understanding. The worksheet can service as an easy reference after the CFAR leaves the training for all the local details about how the CFAR is connected to the health system.
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner Portfolio + Facilitator Handbook + CFAR Pocket Guide

Session:	Skills Sessions												
Duration:	Total = 285-345 min practical skills												
Learning objectives:	By the end of the practical skills sessions, the participant will be able to:							Module					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate a CABCADE approach• Check a pulse• Check capillary refill time• Perform a skin pinch test• Assess alertness• Choking – Adult and Children• Choking – Infant• Direct Pressure• Deep Wound Packing					Skills Session 1 (45 min) Core Assessment Skills - Choking		1	2	3	4	5	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perform immobilization of a fractured limb• Place a tourniquet for haemorrhage control• Place a pelvic binder• Maintain cervical spine (neck) immobilization Perform a Log-Roll manoeuvre					Skills Session 2 (90 min) Bleeding Immobilization Trauma First Aid					4		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perform basic airway opening manoeuvres (Head-Tilt/Chin-Lift, Jaw-Thrust, and removal of visible foreign bodies)• Position patient in a recovery position• Position patient in left lateral position in pregnancy Perform uterine massage					Skills Session 3 (60 min) Airway Positioning Medical First Aid					4	5	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perform first aid for snakebites• Perform basic wound care• Perform first aid for burns• Perform first aid for drowning• Perform first aid during a seizure• Perform first aid for high temperature/fever• Give glucose by mouth• Prepare oral rehydration					Skills session 4 (60 min) Trauma and Medical First Aid				3	4		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate a comprehensive CABCADE approach to a case scenario• Demonstrate safe patient handover					Practical Case Scenarios 120 min		1	2	3	4	5	6

Details:	The practical sessions will introduce basic skills, with demonstration by facilitator and practice by each participant.
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator Handbook + Skills equipment + CFAR Pocket Guide
Notes for facilitator:	The timing and clustering of practical skills can be adjusted based on level of experience of the group, specific local needs, group size and number of facilitators.