

A novel way to promote mass public engagement in CPR education

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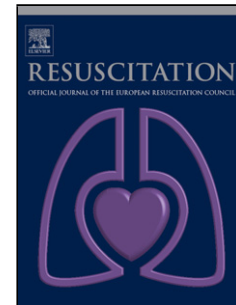
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A novel way to promote mass public engagement in CPR education

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Sir,

Bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) rates for out of hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) in the United Kingdom (UK) are relatively low at less than 45%. For each minute delay in delivering CPR and defibrillation following OHCA, chance of survival is reduced by 7-10% [1]. Improving public confidence by providing CPR education is a key factor to increase rates of bystander CPR. Whilst national training schemes have specifically targeted school pupils, an often neglected age group are young adults aged 16 – 24 years, with less than 10% stating they would be confident to perform CPR. [2]

In an attempt to address the training need in this cohort, medical students from the University of Birmingham group Resuscitation for Medical Disciplines (RMD) [3] piloted a large scale single shot training and awareness programme titled #VShocks in August 2016. RMD established a partnership with one of the UKs largest music festivals which hosts over 250,000 festival goers, approximately 70% aged between 19-34 years [4]. Festival goers were taught adult Basic Life Support (BLS) using face-to-face small group teaching methods on Laerdal Little Annie CPR Trainers. Following a short period of training (usually <15 mins) participants were invited to enter the #VShocks CPR challenge. The challenge involved the public performing CPR on Laerdal Resusci[®] Anne SkillReporter[™] Mannequins, which provide a percentage score based on accuracy of compressions and breaths. Following this, objective feedback was provided and further training offered. In order to incentivise willingness to learn how to perform high quality CPR, the participant with achieving the highest score was awarded tickets next year's festival.

Over 3 days, 8 medical students taught BLS to 65 members of the festival production staff and 1,260 members of the public. CPR awareness was directly raised among a further 3,000 people with indirect benefits more difficult to measure. The project received an overwhelmingly positive response from the public and festival staff. To spread awareness on a larger scale the project was promoted via social media. Tweets sent during the festival received 300 likes and were retweeted over 85 times, reaching a potential audience of approximately 1.5 million twitter users. Twitter and email support was received from the West Midlands Ambulance service, the UK Resuscitation Council and the British Heart Foundation. The event was publicised on both the festival and Birmingham Updates facebook pages, which have a combined following of 700,000 members of the public.

In summary, this novel approach was effective in engaging young adults in CPR education. We recommend this approach as a low cost high return method of engaging large numbers of people in CPR training.

Conflict of interest statement

Both authors are affiliated with the University of Birmingham. No other conflicts of interest are declared.

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