

Be the Beat 2026 – Every Life Has a Story.

OxygenCare National CPR Awareness & Community Response Campaign

To honour the dedication of our community first responders, showcasing the vital difference they make in people's lives every day. Their role is not just important; it is life changing. By stepping forward in moments of crisis, they bring safety, reassurance, and hope to our neighbourhoods.

We would like to showcase their selfless service and remind communities of the invaluable part they play in building stronger, safer, and more connected communities. In the hope that their stories may inspire and encourage others to join their local Community First Responder group too.

Not every story needs to involve CPR, a dramatic rescue or emergency. Sometimes the most important action was reassurance, support, basic first aid, or communication. The story could be about how the life of a Community First Responder has been enhanced by their involvement, how they now support local events and have gotten to know their neighbours better.

Stories will be gathered from the six regions, and a panel of judges will choose a story from each region to receive a free Defibtech AED for their local community.

Sample Story Structure & Writing Template

A Community First Responder story is about ordinary people helping one another during ordinary and extraordinary moments. Whether you are a **Community First Responder, survivor, family member, friend, or witness**, your story should focus on the human experience, the actions taken, and the lasting impact.

Aim for approximately **1,000 words**, following the structure below.

Title: _____

Storyteller: _____

Role (tick one):

- ☐ Community First Responder
- ☐ Survivor
- ☐ Family Member
- ☐ Witness
- ☐ Other: _____

The Structural Template

Part 1: The Beginning

Before the Emergency *Approx. 250 words*

Goal: Introduce the people involved and what life looked like before the incident.

Include:

- Where you were and what you were doing.
- Who the person needing assistance was.
- For CFR stories: what led you to become a responder.
- Any details that help establish an ordinary day before events changed.
- The moment the situation unfolded.

Writing Prompts

If you are a Community First Responder:

"Before becoming a CFR, I was _____. I first heard about the programme through _____. When my alert sounded that day, I was _____."

If you are a Survivor, Family Member or Witness:

"It started as a normal day. I remember _____. The person at the centre of this story was _____. None of us expected that within a short time we would need help from a Community First Responder."

For everyone:

"The weather was _____. The sounds around us were _____. Then suddenly _____."

Part 2: The Middle

The Response *Approx. 500 words*

Goal

Describe what happened, what actions were taken and how people experienced the event.

Include:

- What the emergency was.
- What happened when help arrived.
- What the CFR did.
- What family members, bystanders or others did.
- How people were feeling and reacting.
- The arrival of emergency services.
- The uncertainty of not knowing what would happen next.

Writing Prompts

"The emergency involved _____.

The first thing I noticed was _____.

The CFR arrived and immediately _____.

I remember hearing _____.

Someone else helped by _____.

The CFR explained _____ or reassured us by saying _____.

At one point, nobody knew what would happen next because _____.

When the ambulance crew arrived, _____."

Part 3: The End

The Lasting Impact *Approx. 250 words*

Goal

Reflect on how the experience changed those involved.

Include:

- What happened afterwards.
- What you remember most.
- What the experience taught you.
- How the CFR impacted the person, family or community.
- Any change in outlook, confidence, appreciation, or understanding.

Writing Prompts

"Afterwards, I felt _____.

What stayed with me was _____.

The person who received help later _____.

The CFR's actions made a difference because _____.

Looking back now, I think _____.

The moment I still remember most clearly is _____."

Closing Reflection

End with a simple thought, quote, or memory that captures what the experience meant to you.

Examples:

"I realised how important it is that someone in the community is willing to answer that call."

"It wasn't a dramatic moment. It was simply knowing we weren't alone."

"A stranger arrived when we needed help most, and that's something I'll never forget."

Guidelines

Competition Rules & GDPR Compliance

Before you write, it's important to anonymise. To comply with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and respect privacy, all entries must adhere to the following "Anonymity First" protocol:

- **No Full Names:** Use first names only or pseudonyms (e.g., "Mark" and "Sarah").
- **No Exact Locations:** Do not state the specific hospital, street address, or company name. Use generics (e.g., "The General Hospital" or "A busy street in the town").
- **No Dates of Birth:** Use ages (e.g., "a 42-year-old father") rather than birthdates.
- **Signed Consent:** The storyteller must have verbal or written permission from the "Saver" and "Survivor" to share the specific incident, or the storyteller must be one of these individuals.

Word Count Guidelines

To ensure a fair and engaging competition, use the "Goldilocks Zone" for storytelling:

- **Minimum:** 800 words, allows for emotional depth.
- **Maximum:** 1,200 words to maintain pacing.
- **Sweet Spot:** 1,000 words. This forces you to focus on the emotional arc.

The "GDPR-Safe" Writing Style

When writing your draft, use these replacement terms:

Avoid (Not GDPR Compliant)	Use (Compliant)
14 Tree Avenue, Carlow	A street in the town / village / city
St. Mary's Hospital, Ward 4	The local A&E department
June 15th, 1982	A warm summer evening
His name is John Smith	He was a middle-aged father
The company, "Smith & Sons"	His family business

Final Story Checklist

Before submitting, ensure your story:

- ☐ Uses no full names or identifiable locations
 - ☐ Has consent from those involved
 - ☐ Includes a clear beginning, middle and end
 - ☐ Focuses on real events and experiences
 - ☐ Uses sensory details and specific memories
 - ☐ Avoids exaggeration and unnecessary hero language
 - ☐ Is between 800 and 1,200 words
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Consent Note

"Identifying details have been changed to protect privacy. Those involved have given permission for this story to be shared across all media."

REMEMBER: Not every story needs to involve CPR, a dramatic rescue or emergency. Sometimes the most important action was reassurance, support, basic first aid, or communication. The story could be about how the life of a Community First Responder has been enhanced by their involvement, how they now support local events and have gotten to know their neighbours better.