

**23/05/2023**

Dear Instructor,

Below are statements from both Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) and from American Heart Association (AHA) in relation to the re-introduction of breaths. The Irish Heart Foundation is affiliated to both of these organisations and we will be adopting this guidance. Please read the memos below carefully.

### **PHECC statement**

#### **Update to Cardiac First Response training and practice**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, changes were made to Cardiac First Response training and practice. From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023, all Approved Training Institutions and Recognised Institutions teaching Cardiac First Response courses should resume the teaching, practice and assessment of all required skills to include rescue breaths. Institutions should continue to place a strong emphasis on hygiene and protective measures for students.

Consideration should be given to methods of risk mitigation when providing CFR training:

- Personal issue of pocket face-mask
- Adherence to manikin hygiene procedures
- Student hand hygiene measures
- Awareness of symptomatic students (unable to progress with training at that time)
- Consideration of reduced manikin to student ratios
- Consideration given to mouth-to-mouth practice being optional during classes

#### **Patient Care**

For responders providing CPR to a patient in cardiac arrest, the responder must assess the risk and decide whether to provide rescue breaths via mouth to mouth or mouth to mask methods. It is reasonable to provide compression-only CPR where the responder considers there to be a risk, or they are not comfortable providing rescue breaths.

It should be noted that the benefit of providing rescue breaths to children and infants generally outweighs the risk of disease transmission and rescue breaths should, where possible, be provided to this patient group.

Ray Carney

Clinical Programme Manager

### **AHA statement**

Dear AHA International Training Network,

The AHA is providing updated guidance on resuming in-person classes and skills sessions for CPR,

first aid, and emergency cardiovascular care training. Due to the global decline in COVID-19 cases and the need to ensure the highest quality CPR and ECC training is taught, **effective 1 June 2023**, all International Training Centers and Instructors should resume conducting in-person skills practice and testing in all CPR, first aid, and ECC training following AHA's course curricula outlined in the AHA PAM and AHA Instructor Manuals. This includes returning to practicing giving rescue breaths and demonstrating 2-person CPR and first aid skills.

**Please note:** Blended learning in all disciplines is still an option.

### **In Hospital**

A further statement will follow on clinical practice and training in healthcare facilities, the Deteriorating Patient Improvement Programme (DPIP) are currently reviewing guidance issued for cardiac arrest management (in the healthcare setting). For the moment continue with the guidance from 2020.

**Please note:** It is advisable that all healthcare professionals be trained in using BVM