

Outdoor First Aid Training for OVA Walk Leaders

A group of OVA walk leaders and regular walkers attended a very interesting, instructive and thought-provoking training session for a day in November. Debbie, our instructor from Amplio Training, included the latest thinking with respect to outdoor first aid, which was an excellent update for some of us and new ground for others.



The purpose of First Aid is an immediate response to preserve life prior to professional medical assistance arriving when appropriate. We were taken through two important acronyms to help us deal with any situation: DR ABCD (Danger, Response, Breathing (properly), CPR and Defibrillator) to be followed by SAMPLE (Signs & symptoms, Allergies, Medication, Past medical conditions, Last thing eaten, and Events leading up to the occurrence).

We assessed three First Aid kits and identified what were essential items for OVA Walk Leaders to have in their first aid kits and what was not needed - we will be assessing all our OVA First Aid kits on this basis. We learnt how to make an emergency phone call from a locked mobile phone and access emergency information about an unconscious casualty, e.g., name, home address, phone contacts and medical conditions. This assumes that the casualty has entered this critical information into the Health app on their phone and everyone is strongly advised to do so. An alternative for all walkers is to carry in their rucksack the same information written on an 'in case of emergency' (ICE) card.

The practical sessions included:

- CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) using a life-sized doll named 'Little Annie': 30 compressions (2 per second) then two breaths (less than 5 seconds) - this has to continue until the person recovers or paramedics arrive or, if using a defibrillator, for the two minutes between assessments that the defibrillator gives you - this is physically demanding so having two people to help is invaluable. One of the 'Little Annies' can be seen in the photo with the attendees;



- the use of a defibrillator in conjunction with CPR;
- various slings for fractures and wound dressings;
- choking;
- strokes;
- shock; and
- heart attacks.

There were a number of short videos to show real-life examples which were very enlightening, if a little gory in some cases! The whole day was very interactive with people giving their personal experiences and Debbie covered all of the many OVA potential scenarios and requirements. Whilst we have been trained and will be able to respond to almost any circumstance, we hope that this will not be needed on our OVA walks!

Paul Kurowski