

## Briefing for the Public Petitions Committee

**Petition Number:** [PE1707](#)

**Main Petitioner:** Kathleen Orr

**Subject:** Public Access Defibrillators

Calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce a requirement for all new build or newly renovated or re-purposed buildings with a floorspace of over 7500m<sup>2</sup> to have a public access defibrillator (PAD) fitted to the exterior of the building, for public use, and for the PADs to be officially registered.

### Background

Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest is a significant health issue in Scotland. Of around 3,000 people each year who have resuscitation attempted after a sudden cardiac arrest in the community, [only around 6% survive to hospital discharge](#). It is believed that if a number of events take place, then a person suffering from a cardiac arrest stands a greater chance of survival. This is known as the [“Chain of Survival”](#).

Figure 1: Chain of Survival.



Currently, there is no requirement to fit a PAD in a new or refurbished building set out in planning or building standards legislation, regulations or guidance.

## Defibrillation

The Scottish Government published the [Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest \(OHCA\) strategy](#) in 2015. This notes that the key factors in determining survival from out-of-hospital cardiac arrest are early, high quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and counter-shock therapy (defibrillation). All patients who have a survivable cardiac arrest require CPR and the majority also require defibrillation, both of which must be applied quickly to be successful. Defibrillation works with CPR, and is most effective the earlier it is performed. Delivering a defibrillatory electrical shock to the heart within 3-5 minutes of collapse can produce survival rates as high as 75%.

The [OHCA strategy](#) aims to “To put in place effective arrangements to ensure that PADs are mapped, maintained and accessible to the public”. By 2020 it aims for an improved public response to OHCA with PADs being more easily accessible and with more people understanding what they are for and with a greater willingness to use them.

## Register of Public Access Defibrillators

PADs can be registered with the Scottish Ambulance Service on the [Scottish Ambulance Service Public Access Defibrillators System](#). Once registered, call takers at the Ambulance Control Centers can signpost people to the nearest defibrillator in an emergency. In June 2018, 1889 PADs were [registered with the Scottish Ambulance Service](#)<sup>1</sup>.

The British Heart Foundation is currently developing a UK-wide [National Defibrillator Network](#) which is intended to link the ambulance services with the public. The network is due to launch in 2019. Defibrillators will be registered onto the network through their local ambulance service

## Scottish Parliament Action

There have been a number of recent Members’ Business debates on this issue. On the 24 April 2018 [S5M-10084 on show some heart, the Jayden Orr campaign](#) was debated and on 8 February motion [S5M-10145 on East Neuk first responders](#) was debated.

Other relevant motions include

- [Motion S5M-14005: Local Butcher, Donnie Shaw, Reaches Target for Defibrillator](#)
- [Motion S5M-13638: Hugh Black & Sons Climb Ben Nevis for Good Cause](#)
- [Motion S5M-13465: New National Defibrillator Network Announced](#)
- [Motion S5M-13420: Coyotes Scooter Club Raised Money for Defibrillator](#)
- [Motion S5M-13417: Public Defibrillator Installed in Tillicoultry](#)

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<sup>1</sup> [S5O-02297](#)

A number of relevant parliamentary questions have been asked including [S5W-17703](#), [S5O-02297](#), [S5W-12615](#), [S5W-1614](#). There is also a [Cross Party Group on Heart Disease and Stroke](#).

## **Scottish Government Action**

As noted above, in 2015, the Scottish Government published the [Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest \(OHCA\) strategy](#). This is a five-year plan with the aim of ensuring that by 2020 Scotland becomes an international leader in OHCA outcomes. The headline aim is to save an additional 1,000 lives by 2020.

In March 2018, the Scottish Government published the [Scottish Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest data linkage project: 2015/16 – 2016/17 results](#). [A guide to public access defibrillators](#) was also published by the Scottish Government, which aims to outline key things that should be considered before purchasing and installing a PAD.

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**SPICe**

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