

Minister for Public Health and Women's Health
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4 December 2025

Dear Convener,

Thank you for the constructive evidence sessions held on the four important petitions relating to cardiac and stroke emergencies. During my evidence on 12 November, I agreed to write to you with several updates.

Italian cardiac screening in sport study

The committee asked whether the Scottish Government acknowledge the findings from the Italian screening experience in sport, in particular the study which reported an 89% decrease in sudden cardiac death.

Having reviewed the submission from the Consulate General of Italy in Edinburgh, I note that the main study referenced which references an 89% decrease in the incidence rate of sudden cardiac death among young competitive athletes aged 12 to 35 years is *Corrado D, Basso C, Pavei A, Michieli P, Schiavon M, Thiene G. Trends in sudden cardiovascular death in young competitive athletes after implementation of a preparticipation screening program. JAMA. 2006 Oct 4;296(13):1593-601.*

When making decisions regarding screening, it is necessary to consider the body of research, rather than the outcomes of a single study. However, the UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) did consider this study in its last review on screening for conditions associated with sudden cardiac death in the young. Full details on its consideration, along

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with the other evidence considered, can be found in *Evidence summary sudden cardiac death (2019)* available here; [Sudden cardiac death - UK National Screening Committee \(UK NSC\) - GOV.UK](#)

The UK NSC evidence summary also recognised that international guidelines – the American Heart Association and the European Society of Cardiology – do not recommend population level screening but do support pre-participation screening in competitive athletes.

Sportscotland offer cardiac screening to all Sportscotland Institute of Sport supported athletes in-house. Some sports require cardiac screening, via the International Federation regulations, which is also provided at the Institute.

Sportscotland also provide guidance for Sports Governing Bodies if a requirement is identified. These bodies have been guided to promote Cardiac Risk in the Young screening for their wider athlete populations.

First Aid Training and CPR in sport coaching pathways.

The committee highlighted the opportunity to better embed CPR training within coaching pathways, with particular reference to the Scottish Football Association coaching pathway.

My officials will raise this with Sportscotland.

Defibrillator registration campaign

The committee discussed the previous evidence provided by Kym Kestell, British Heart Foundation Scotland, in which she noted the importance of defibrillator registration and the fact that many defibrillators remain unregistered.

The committee considered whether it could play a role in raising awareness of this issue and encouraging other MSPs to promote defibrillator registration in their constituencies. I agreed that this would be a positive action and confirmed that I would check whether there was a graphic or awareness campaign which we could use.

BHF Scotland have provided a poster which contains a QR link to the Circuit website and also some social media assets which can be used by members to draw attention to the importance of defib registration in their constituencies. I have attached both alongside this letter.

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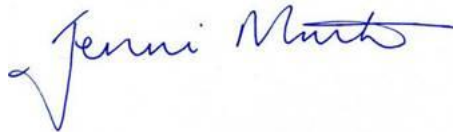


FAST stroke awareness campaign

Regarding NHS Forth Valley's use of 'BE FAST' for stroke screening, I have instructed my officials to speak to NHS Forth Valley to understand what data has been collected as part of this pilot and whether there is learning that can be applied to our wider stroke awareness work.

I trust this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Jenni Minto MSP

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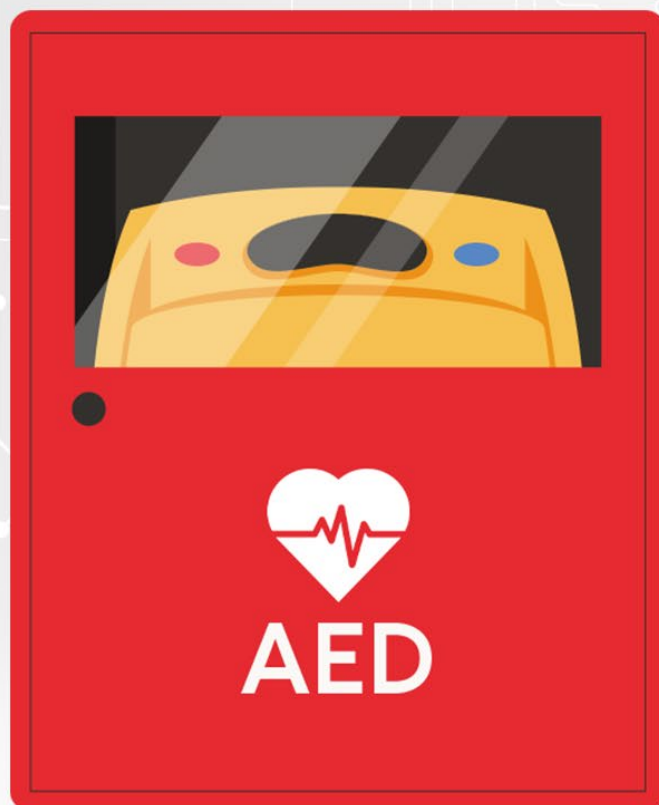


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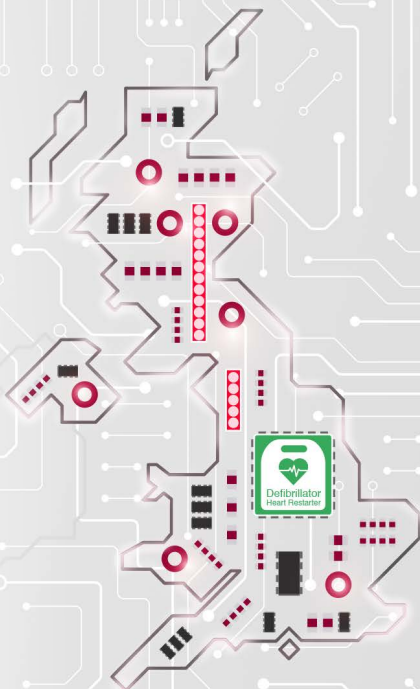
Help your defib carry out
its lifesaving work.

Update The Circuit today

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Is your defib emergency ready?



In a cardiac arrest, every second is vital.

Early CPR and defibrillation can more than double the chances of surviving an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, but if defibs aren't visible to ambulance services, how can they direct people to them in an emergency?

Registering your defib on The Circuit – the national defibrillator network, ensures ambulance services can locate your defib when 999 is called.

It is free and takes as little as 5 minutes.



Find out if your
defib is registered

Over 100,000 defibs are registered and ready to save a life, but is yours?

Find out at defibfinder.uk

**Not registered? Register
today at thecircuit.uk**

The Circuit helps ambulance services direct bystanders to their nearest defib, so defibrillation can start as early as possible.

Are you the guardian of a defib that is yet to be registered on The Circuit?

Once registered, you will receive reminders whenever something needs to be done – such as status checks or replacing expired pads. By regularly updating your defib's status on The Circuit, ambulance services can trust it's ready to use in an emergency.

Next steps

- 1 Visit **thecircuit.uk**
- 2 Set up your account
- 3 Register your defib
- 4 Regularly update your defib's status on The Circuit



Scan the QR code to go straight to registration.

Information to have to hand

The location and surroundings of your defib

The brand, model and device serial number

When the defib is accessible

When the pads expire and if it is emergency ready

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In 2025 Omaze raised funds for British Heart Foundation that will help to power The Circuit for two years.

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