

WORKPLACE FIRST AID DELIVEROO LEADS THE WAY

Only five per of our population know how to give first aid, but that's all about to change, as Ireland has joined many other European countries in making first aid training compulsory in the workplace. And now food delivery company Deliveroo is leading the way by rolling out training for its riders in the Greater Dublin Area. Report by Lorraine Courtney.

With 95% of its population trained in first aid, Norway is the leading country in Europe for first aiders, followed by Germany and Austria (80%).

The difference between Ireland and Norway and other countries with a high percentage score is that they have laws that make it compulsory either at school, at the workplace or even when applying for a driving licence.

According to the Irish Red Cross only 5% of our population know first aid but that's changing; 70% of European countries – including Ireland – have decided to make first aid training compulsory at the workplace.

And you don't have to be a medical professional to give first aid to a casualty. Offering first aid classes in Dublin and the Greater Dublin Area, First Aid for Everyone has noticed an increased awareness among employers of training their staff in first aid.

“There is definitely an increase in the number of work-related first aid courses,” according to Siobhan, one of their instructors.

“There is a duty of care for employers to look after their staff, so having someone trained in first aid seems to reassure employees that if something goes wrong there is a link between the casualty and the arrival of the emergency services.”

She claims that, for example if someone collapses and stops breathing there is a 6-8 minute window before there will be irreversible brain damage. “Here it is crucial that CPR is commenced immediately. The

average call-out time for the ambulance in the Greater Dublin Area is 8-10 minutes or more.”

Siobhan says that it's important as the first aider is the link between the ill/injured person and the advanced medical personnel. “It is also important as evidence shows that people are more likely to intervene if they have some sort of training as opposed to none at all.”

DELIVEROO FIRST AIDERS

Leading the way are Deliveroo riders, easily recognisable in their bright kits and backpacks. Renowned for delivering great food from Dublin's favourite restaurants, now many of them will now also be able to deliver first aid in the event of an emergency.



Deliveroo riders Dominic Barnes and Andrew Gallagher take part in first aid training under the guidance of Pat Behan from St John Ambulance.



“The safety of our riders has always been incredibly important to us and we provide training and equipment to help keep them safe on the roads” – Liam Cox, Deliveroo Ireland’s regional manager.

In association with St John Ambulance, Deliveroo has trained a group of its riders in first aid to equip them with skills needed in an emergency situation, so that they are prepared if they come across someone in need during their time on the road.

“The safety of our riders has always been incredibly important to us and we provide training and equipment to help keep them safe on the roads,” says Deliveroo Ireland’s regional manager Liam Cox.

“But we also realised recently that Deliveroo riders are an important part of the community who are well placed to help make it a better, safer place. There are hundreds of riders cycling around every day bringing great food to customers and, while we hope they never come across an accident, we feel it’s important we offer them the extra skills to help if it ever happened.”

It’s not a common problem, thankfully, but yes, sadly, a rider once told Liam that they witnessed a member of the public setting hit by a car while crossing the road. “Fortunately, the person was okay and the emergency services arrived very quickly. But it could have been quite different,” he says. “Following the training, I think riders would be more confident in what to do in an emergency situation. Knowing what to do, and importantly, what not to do in the minutes after an emergency can have a big impact on the outcome.”

WIDE RANGE OF SKILLS

The training by St John Ambulance covered a wide range of skills from prevention of choking to giving CPR and using a defibrillator. The training also covered respiratory issues, stroke, heart attack as well as being able to assess a patient so that they can advice emergency services.

“The training was wide ranging and gives you the confidence to know how to provide the right kind of assistance. Having a cool head and the confidence in your skills is critically important, as it avoids the confusion and panic that can all too often happen in an emergency,” says Liam Cox.

The company was genuinely delighted at the uptake, which was completely on a voluntary basis. The first session was filled very quickly and showed that the idea worked and that the riders felt this is something that would be meaningful.

FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH FIRST AID

It was the first experience with first aid training for Andrew Gallagher, one of their Dublin riders. “It was always something I was interested in doing, especially CPR and how to do it properly. I would’ve been very worried about helping someone if there was an accident or someone collapsed. I’d be afraid of doing something wrong and maybe making the situation worse when you’re trying to help,” he says.

“I was surprised at how detailed and intense the course turned out to be. St John Ambulance did the training with us and covered everything from assessing a patient to helping someone who may be choking, has respiratory emergencies, fractures, unconsciousness, stroke or heart attack.”

While he hasn’t needed to put his skills to use yet he admits that he did have an incident a couple of years ago while out cycling with a friend.

“He went over the handlebars and managed to cut his chin quite badly as well as grazing on his hands and legs. There was a lot blood. I didn’t really know what to do so I tried to clean it as much as I could. We ended up in A&E and he ended up with six stitches,” Gallagher recalls.

CONFIDENCE TO HELP

“I really wanted to have the skills to help if I ever came across someone in distress or who might be in an accident. You never know when you might need first aid training but now that I know what to do and how to do it correctly has given me confidence to help. I think it’s a great life skill to have and I think everyone should have some basic level of first aid.”

From the people whom Deliveroo Ireland’s regional manager Liam Cox has spoken to about this, he says he’s really pleased to say they’re all excited about the initiative.

“We’ve also had some very positive feedback from our restaurant partners, who acknowledge that we’re looking to do some good within the community.”