



VOLUNTEER  
HANDBOOK  
MY VETS NUMBER IS

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The Community HeartBeat Trust



comheartbeat/



@comheartbeat



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GDPR Compliance Statement 1

24th April 2018

Community Heartbeat Trust Charity (CHT) and Community Heartbeat Trust Solutions Ltd (CHTS)

By contacting us or asking us to contact you, you are agreeing for us to hold your details on our systems so we are able to support you and contact you in respect to any enquiries; in an emergency; for other purposes relating to the defibrillator or other services; or for research purposes.

Details of individuals (including local WebNos contact) may be transmitted to the local Ambulance Service for their command and dispatch computer system. These details will only be accessible to the Ambulance Service, or another Statutory Agency where required. In case of defibrillator activation, it is necessary for the Ambulance Service to report such instances, make contact with the local caretaker, and ensure that equipment is made fully operational after use.

If delivery details have been passed to a supplier, or courier company they will be required to delete your data after delivery unless needed for repeat deliveries.

You have a right to request viewing any information that we hold on you.

All data will be held for historical purposes for a minimum of 20 years. CHT is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for holding of this information. Data held by CHT will not be passed to any 3rd party marketing organisation.



# WELCOME TO VETS



VETS is here to assist where possible in a rescue situation whether the rescuer must stay with the patient, or in a situation referred to as the "out of active radius" by the Ambulance Service. In both of these situations, help needs to be found in collecting the community defibrillator and by using a single memorable telephone number, that will ring multiple lines at the same time, there is a greater chance that a helper can be found to assist you.

VETS uses "hunting group" technology and is not a telephone tree. ie, all telephones are polled at the same time, not one after the other.

In practice, as the telephone lines are managed by different providers, not all lines will ring at the same time, and some short delays may occur whilst all the calls are linked. This should only take between 1-60 seconds to connect to all numbers with the average time taken to reach the first number being about 10 seconds, this of course taking into account test conditions when multiple volunteers are available.

VETS relies on volunteers like yourself, within your community to be able to be called, however you and other volunteers may not always be available. Please remember that VETS is a "best endeavours" system and that even though you may be called at any time, you are not under mandate to attend a rescue if you have prior commitments, such as being away on holiday or child-minding, if you hang up the phone the other volunteer numbers will continue to be contacted.

We would suggest that if you are going to be away for a long period of time or wish to come off the system, that you let your VETS co-ordinator know so they can contact CHT to action.

# RESCUE,

# RESCUE, RESCUE



VETS works by using a single call number to route the call to up to 10 or more other landline telephone numbers, either directly or via the menu choice in case of X3 and R3, which will have your village or group under option 1,2 or 3.

If you are receiving a VETS call, the caller ID may sometimes display as the number of the person making the call.

Upon answering the phone you will hear the message, **RESCUE, RESCUE, RESCUE, PRESS 1 TO CONNECT.**

If for any reason you cannot attend...

**PLEASE HANG UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** - This ensures the other lines will continue to ring.

If you can attend then as instructed by the message

**PRESS 1 TO CONNECT.**

You will then be put through to the caller. It is likely you will be asked to fetch a defibrillator or to assist with CPR.

If the line goes dead as you pick up, stops ringing before you reach the phone or you only hear one or two rings before the phone stops, it could well be the case that another volunteer has answered the phone before you, or the caller has terminated the call.

**In this instance please do not panic!** Simply wait and if the phone does ring again then attempt to pick up if you can.

If you are dialling your VETS number for assistance please see the DrsABCD on the next page as a reference for what to do in an emergency,

# RESCUE,

# RESCUE, RESCUE



## DANGER,

Ensure the scene is Safe - For yourself and others. If it is not safe or you are uncertain, call 999 and wait for help to arrive



## RESPONSE,

Check response by TALK & TOUCH. Speak to the casualty in both ears, tap both collar bones



## SHOUT,

If the casualty does not respond, SHOUT for help. Do not leave them at this stage.



## DIAL 999, THEN VETS

Remain calm, dial 999 and tell them your emergency. If someone is with you have them dial VETS and begin CPR, if alone dial VETS if you can, Ambulance Service Dispatch may ring the number for you, but please be aware they may deny the request.



## AIRWAY,

Ensure the airway is OPEN & CLEAR. Open the airway by lifting the casualty's chin and tilting their head back.



## BREATHING,

LOOK, LISTEN & FEEL for normal breathing. See if the chest is moving. If the casualty is not breathing normally or you have doubts, call 999. It is also recommended to place a face covering over the patients mouth and not to put your face close to theirs.



## COMPRESSIONS,

If not breathing normally, start chest compressions. Place your hands in centre of the chest and push down hard. Just do compressions, press 2x per second.



## DEFIBRILLATION,

Get someone to fetch a Defibrillator, attach the electrodes and follow the instructions. If no one else is present continue CPR until the ambulance arrives.

NO

ASSIST



Whilst dialling VETS, if no one picks up you will hear the "No Assist" message.

As you MUST dial 999 first, do the best you can until the ambulance service arrives. VETS is a "best endeavours system" and it is not guaranteed that help will always be available.

I AM RECEIVING A VETS CALL, BUT I CANNOT ATTEND.

As stated earlier in this guide if you cannot attend then **HANG UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**, to give other volunteers and the caller the greatest chance of raising help.

With this in mind, it is of the utmost importance that you consider your circumstances and any change in them. VETS volunteers may be called upon at any time, and if you have dependents or other commitments that may severely limit your capacity to help then we would advise you consider this and notify your VETS co-ordinator if you wish to step down as a volunteer.

I AM HAPPY TO BE A VOLUNTEER BUT I AM NOT SURE HOW I CAN HELP?

Modern AEDs/Defibrillator equipment are designed to talk to you and tell you what to do. when applied to the victim, voice commands (and on some models visual prompts) will guide you step by step through the rescue.

The AED will also make the decision on whether to shock someone, as such you cannot shock someone who does not require it. In fact with basic CPR and defibrillation members of the public like you give the greatest chance for a positive outcome to someone who has suffered a Cardiac Arrest.

# VETS

# AWARENESS



As a standard **Community Heartbeat** provide an awareness session for the community that covers the DrsABCD provided in this guide (Though not always the VETS element)

If you are interested in further information, or you would like further training Community Heartbeat also run VETS Awareness Sessions specifically geared towards VETS Volunteers and members of their household who may also be present to take a call.

This session includes..

**What is Sudden Cardiac Arrest :-**

'5 minutes to save a life'

'Physiology of the heart'

Differences between heart attack and Cardiac Arrest

**How to recognise SCA**

**How to dial 999 :-**

What to expect

Questions you will be asked

Your local ambulance service activation protocols/activation radii

**How to do high quality CPR and why,**

inc. hands on practical sessions

Handover between rescuers

Recognising recovery

**How to use your AED, including differences between devices**

**Recovery position/turning a patient**

**Handover to the Paramedics**

**Governance and support programmes**

**Post rescue counselling**

**Understanding the VETS activation process**

**DBS where required**

All sessions are undertaken by professional First Aid Trainers, with public and professional liability insurances.





# THANK YOU

# GOOD NEIGHBOUR



**Community Heartbeat** would like to extend you a personal thank you to you for volunteering.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is one of the UK's largest killers. To achieve positive outcomes for victims, treatment must be given within 4-5 minutes. This is only possible if people like you are prepared to act, and you along with over 200 other VETS volunteer groups up and down the country, most of whom are not medically trained, give those that suffer a SCA a fighting chance at living.

If you have an interest beyond VETS, and would like further training, or are interested in the prospect of becoming a Community First Responder then it is well worth investigating your local CFR group or calling us on

**0330 124 3067.**



## LONG MAY YOUR COMMUNITIES HEARTBEAT

