

Good Evening

A warm welcome to our 9th Annual General Meeting.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for coming along this evening and for your continual support.

I would like this evening to share with you some statistics in relation to our calls over the last year and to give you a snapshot of some of the work we have been involved in over the last 12 months.

As a group we currently have 16 active volunteers and a committee of 7.

CALL OUTS

This year we were dispatched to 52 call outs by NIAS. In addition to that we are often called by members of the public to attend to family and friends.

The 52 call outs varied from chest pain, choking, unconsciousness, to not breathing.

The average time spent on a call is 1hour 17 mins with call lengths ranging in length from 5mins to 4 hours 2mins

Each call had an average of 3 volunteers.

In total as a group we have spent 3624 hours on call outs this year alone in addition to this volunteers take part in monthly training sessions and training events within the community.

The times of the calls vary throughout the day and night and the busiest months were February and June with 8 calls each. The quietest month was August with only 1 call.

Training events

In April our scheme Co Ordinator and I represented our group at the Community First Responder Event held by NIAS in Templepatrick. On the day there was an opportunity for networking with volunteers from other schemes, and some informative training sessions. During the event a beautiful tribute was paid to our Chair the late Thomas McKenna, for the work he had done to assist in the development of Community First Responders' groups in Northern Ireland. The group was presented with a voucher to buy a tree and a plaque to put alongside it in Thomas's memory. We planted a Tree in Cullsville Gaelic Park in September in the presence of Thomas's Family and members of the community.

This year several volunteers, attended the Community First Responder Training event in Mullingar held by Respond Ireland. The day was excellent giving us additional training and skills and allowing us the opportunity to speak to other volunteers from across the country.

CPR Awareness and First Aid Cover

This year, we held CPR awareness events for the volunteers of St Patricks Church and the Crossmaglen Community Association. These people now have basic CPR and defibrillator awareness. Thank you to all our volunteers who helped at these events. A special word of thanks to Bernie O Connor, our scheme co Ordinator, for giving of her time and professional skills to provide members of the community with this vital training.

During the past year we provided first aid at a number of events including: the turning on of the Christmas Tree Lights, Darkness Into Light, and The South Armagh Halloween Festival. We use these events to raise public awareness of what we do as a group as well as helping manage event safety.

Public AEDs

We continued this year to maintain 9 public access defibs, ensuring that they are in working order and are ready and available should a member of the public require them.

NIAS Training

A special word of thanks to Stephanie Lecky and her community resuscitation team for the ongoing support, training, and guidance that they provide our group. Thanks also to all the NIAS staff, the call takers and paramedics who have been very supportive to us in our roles over the last year. Thank you also to Bernie O Conner and David Rushe who lead our training sessions with professionalism and bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the group.

Awards

We were honoured to be nominated this year for Armagh Person of the Year Awards. A number of the group attended the awards in the Armagh City Hotel in November and were delighted to be runners up at the event another testimonial of the appreciation for the groups work in from the community.

Patients and those who passed away

I want to make pay a special tribute to all our patients over the last year. Thank you for allowing us into your homes to help you and your families in what were often difficult and vulnerable circumstances. We hope that you have made a speedy recovery and wish you good health for the future.

We remember the patients and their families who unfortunately passed away. We keep them in our thoughts and prayers and hope that by being there we were able to offer some practical help, comfort and support, in their hour of need. We also take this opportunity to remember members of our own team who lost loved ones over the past year. We take a moment in silence to reflect and remember.

Thank you's

I have a long list of people, businesses, and organisation that I want to offer a heartfelt thank you to. We are completely funded by the generosity of our community, without them we would be unable to continue to provide our essential lifesaving service. We thank everyone who made donations this year, we appreciate your generosity and would be unable to continue to operate if it wasn't for your support.

Thank you to the all the families who made donations, often anonymously, following loved ones having used our services.

- Thank you to the Hearty family who donated to the group following the sale of a prize cow.
- Thank you to the Feeney Family who made a generous donation following the death of their mother Bernie.
- Thank you to the McConville Family who donated to the group in lieu of Christmas cards.
- Thank you to Ashfield golf club for their annual golf tournament which we are gladly the recipient of the proceeds each year.
- Thank you to Kay McArdle for her generous donation.
- Thank you to Community Association for their donation following first aid training.
- Thank you to Eileen McNamee and the McGowan Family for their kind donation in memory of Martin McGowan
- Thank you to Crafty Owl productions for the donation of our display cheque.
- Thank you must also to our parish priest father Dermot for allowing us to use the parish rooms for tonight meeting.
- A special thanks to Crossmaglen Fire service for the use of the Fire Station for Trainings and meetings.
- Thanks must also be said to Cullyhannah community association for kindly giving us use of premises for storage for out groups equipment.

I want to say a massive thank you to all of my fellow committee members. The work that they do behind the scenes is paramount to the success of the group. From long monthly meetings, to dealing with correspondence, looking after financial matters, coordinating trainings and events, communicating with group members and the public, sourcing and maintaining our equipment and dealing with governance and policies. The roles they undertake come with almost daily often thankless tasks that they complete all in a voluntary capacity.

Lastly a massive thank you to all our volunteers. Your tireless efforts and sacrifices do not go unnoticed. You provide round-the-clock coverage to our community. The challenges you face are numerous, yet your professionalism, resilience, and selflessness shine through in every call you respond to, and every life you touch. Your willingness to put the needs of others before your own is truly commendable. You are the true heroes of our community, and I am privileged to lead such a dedicated and capable team of volunteers. May the coming year bring us continued success, good health and safety.