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1. Introduction

Order of Malta Ireland is a recognised training institute of the Pre-Hospital Emergency Council (PHECC) and in keeping with this designation utilises the Cardiac First Response (CFR) programme as the standard life support training within the organisation.

The Order of Malta Ambulance Corps will delivery CFR training as outlined by PHECC in the CFR training standards.

All Personnel involved in administering and delivering of PHECC approved courses are responsible for the quality assurance of the course and must ensure that quality assurance checks of the course are carried out consistently.

1.1. Aim

To provide the necessary framework for the provision of the CFR programme, including facilitating its ongoing delivery both within the Ambulance Corps and in the Community at large.

This policy with limited exceptions as determined by the National Director applies to all members of Order of Malta Ambulance Corps or any unit and/or region affiliated to Order of Malta Ireland.

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1.2. Scope

All participants undertaking certified CFR training provided by the Order of Malta (Ambulance Corps and Training Services)

2. Definitions & Abbreviations

Assistant Director Training: Member appointed by National Director with overall responsibility for training.

Member: A registered member of the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps.

Officer in Charge: Member of the Ambulance Corps designated by the National Director as the senior commanding officer of the local unit as per the regulations of the Ambulance Corps.

Instructor: A member of the Ambulance Corps enrolled as an instructor in the roll maintained by the relevant Staff Training Officer.

CFR Instructor: A member or approved individual who holds a valid CFR instructor certificate form PHECC at Community or Advanced level.

Regional Director: Member of the Ambulance Corps designated by the National Director as the senior commanding officer of a defined group of units as per the regulations of the Ambulance Corps.

Regional Training Officer: Member appointed by a Regional Director to Co-ordinate training at a regional level.

PHECC: Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council

Course Director: A designated qualified member who has responsibility for overseeing the running for PHECC courses

Course verifier: A designated member who has responsibility for reviewing the paperwork and administration of a course.

Clinical Audit Officer: National team member with responsibility for clinical audit

First Aid Responder (FAR): A person who has undertaken a First Aid Response course incorporating the Cardiac First Response (CFR) standard

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Cardiac First Responder (CFR): a course covering CPR and other skills, developed by PHECC, and a requirement to practice for OFAs, EFRs, EMTs, Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics. CFR Community (CFR-C) level is included in FAR Full and refresher courses

CPG: Clinical Practice Guidelines issued by PHECC

Emergency First Responder (EFR): A person trained in Cardiac First Response that possesses additional knowledge and skills in the assessment and management of patients in a pre-hospital environment

3. Policy responsibility

Responsibility & ownership of this document lies with the Assistant Director for Training and will be reviewed at 2 yearly intervals or as changes required in line with PHECC training standards.

4. Syllabus

Course syllabus for each level of CFR course is found in the following relevant syllabi:

- Cardiac First Response Community Level Education and Training Standard Version 3 June 2016
- Cardiac First Response Advanced Level Education and Training Standard Version 3 June 2016
- Cardiac First Response(CFR) and Medications for Listed Organisations (SI 449 of 2015) Education and Training Standards 2016

5. Course Entry Criteria:

Two levels of CFR course are currently available,

- Community
- Advanced
- Available to members of public, work places and clubs/associations only (not available to members of OMAC)
 - Cardiac First Response (CFR) and Medications for Listed Organisations

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Both levels may be delivered internally and externally by the Ambulance Corps. Successful completion of a course leads to joint certification by both PHECC and Order of Malta Ireland.

CFR and medications for Listed Organisation may not be delivered internally to members of OMAC. Members holding this qualification through external sources cannot practice this qualification during Order of Malta activities. Successful completion of a course leads to joint certification by both PHECC and Order of Malta Ireland.

5.1. CFR Community (CFR -C)

is the standard level of training and all “medic stream” members must achieve this level on commencement, and recertify on a 2 yearly basis, and maintain their skills at all times. It is **highly recommended** that members engage in three monthly CFR refresher training.

5.2. CFR Advanced (CFR-A)

training is available to members, aged 18years and over, who are healthcare practitioners including Registered Medical Practitioners, Registered Nurses practicing in critical care areas, PHECC Registered Advanced Paramedics, Paramedics, EMTs & EFR.

5.3. Course entry Age Criteria

5.3.1. CFR Community (CFR - C)

is the standard level of training and all “medic stream” members must achieve this level on commencement, recertify on a 2 yearly basis, and maintain their skills at all times. It is **highly recommended** that members engage in three monthly CFR refresher training.

The minimum age to undertake the course is 14 years, where the participant is mature enough to gain the requisite level of knowledge and skills, to complete the assessment and understand the context in which one may be required to deploy those skills.

5.3.2. CFR Advanced (CFR - A)

training is available to members, aged 18years and over, where the participant is mature enough to gain the requisite level of knowledge and skills, to complete the

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assessment and understand the context in which one may be required to deploy those skills.

The course is available to members who are healthcare practitioners including Registered Medical Practitioners, Registered Nurses practicing in critical care areas, PHECC Registered Advanced Paramedics, Paramedics, EMTs & EFRs. It is **highly recommended** that members engage in three monthly CFR refresher training.

5.3.3. CFR and Medications for Listed Organisations

training is available to members of the public, work places and clubs/associations where they require training on the administration of specific medication as set by PHECC. This incorporates CFR-C and additional specific medication training required by individuals or companies.

There is no specific entry criterion including a minimum age. However, a course participant should be mature enough to comprehend the knowledge, skills and implications associated with the use of the named medication and have a maturity to complete the assessment to receive the certification. Note the minimum age for entry to an EFR course is 18 and should be applied also to the modules for Nitrous oxide and Oxygen

- Members of the public may receive training where they are caring for an individual who is prescribed a specific medication and carries that medication with them.
- Listed Organisations must sign up with the HPRA for specific medications prior to completing the course

6. Course Application

Applications for courses are made through the course application system on Moodle platform with the following conditions followed:

- CFRA can only be ran at Regional level

7. Course Administration

CFR is the life support training and practice standard approved for use within the organisation. Any reference to CFR within this policy refers to both the approved course of education as per the PHECC Education and Training Standards, and the Clinical Practice Guidelines, both of which may be revised from time to time by PHECC. All activities of the organisation and its individual members in this area must comply with PHECC standards at all times.

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7.1. Instructors

CFR - C courses may be delivered by all CFR/FAR/EFR instructors, CFR - A courses may only be delivered by CFR -A instructors.

CFR and Medications for Listed Organisations course may only be delivered by EFR instructors.

All courses may be delivered by PHECC assistant Tutors, Tutors and Facilitators All instructors teaching on behalf of OMAC must hold current IM level 1 certification along with current PHECC Instructor Certification

Similar requirements apply to both courses in terms of course preparation, facilities, equipment, course materials, and administration; (see Moodle for course administration requirements) however some additional points should be noted in the context of CFR courses:

7.2. Instructor to Student Ratio

As per the current PHECC CFR training standards the current instructor to student ratio is 1:6 for CFR courses. The PHECC education and training standard allow instructor to student ratio of 1:8 in "exceptional circumstances only". Approval to run at a ratio of 1:8 must be requested in advance from your Regional Director (or their Regional training designate). This will be provided for on a case by case basis. It is noted that when CFR is taught as part of the FAR course a ratio of 1:8 is allowed.

7.3. Teaching methods:

The PHECC CFR DVD will be used for all new member courses and all public courses. It is recognised that where members are continuously practicing and training at unit level, recertification will be focused on practical skills revision and assessment and the use of the DVD may not be required.

7.4. Timetable:

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The minimum duration for a CFR – C course is 4 hours (for 6 students). The CFR DVD is designed to accommodate these ratios – so additional participants will extend the course duration. (This is the minimum time required, depending on participants ability this may need to be extended, but cannot be reduced.)

The minimum duration for CFR-A course is 6 hours (for 6 students). The CFR DVD is designed to accommodate these ratios – so additional participants will extend the course duration. (This is the minimum time required, depending on participants ability this may need to be extended, but cannot be reduced.)

Students for the CFR and Medications course may only enrol following the successful completion of the CFR-C course including assessments. Module 4 of the CFR and Medications course (Medication Management) must be taught in its entirety before students proceed to Module 5. There are 4 Module 5 sessions, each focusing on a specific medication (Epinephrine, Glucagon, Glyceryl Trinitrate- GTN and Salbutamol – the Order of Malta have not undertaken to teach the Entonox and Naloxone modules at present). Students may enrol in one, some or all of the Module 5 sessions, as is appropriate to their situation. Module 4 of the CFR and Medications Course takes minimum of 2.5 hours, each Module 5 session takes minimum of 2.5 hours. The focus of the Module 5 sessions should be on practical skills and practice. Sessions should be extended to facilitate more practice where necessary, under no circumstances should sessions be shortened, or practical scenario and skills activities omitted.

7.5. Equipment requirements:

7.5.1. CFR-C course:

- The manikin to student ratio is 1:3 – adult and infant
- Each student must have access to PHECC CFR student handbook during the course. (There is no requirements for a printed copy to be retained after the course).
- Each student must have access to a CPR pocket mask during the course. Each participant should have their own valve for a pocket mask which they retain. (There is no requirement to provide a pocket mask to each participant to retain. – a keyring face shield may be provided if desired).
- Training AEDs – 1 per manikin

7.5.2. CFRA course:

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As per CFRC and also:

- Airway manikins
- Oropharyngeal airway - all sizes
- Advanced airway kit including I-gels – all sizes
- BVM
- Oxygen cylinders
- Suction equipment – manual and electronic, including all required attachments
- Training Resuscitation bag as per ambulance equipment checklist

7.5.3. Equipment List for CFR and Medications for Listed Organisations Modules:

(Please note: documentation required is listed in the course pack)

Glucagon Module:

Glucometers

Test strips

Testing solution

Antiseptic wipes

Gloves

Plasters

Lancets

Sharps box

Salbutamol Module:

Training Salbutamol Inhalers

Volumizing/spacer devices (variety if possible)

Glucagon Module:

Training Glucagon Packs

Glucose Gel

Injection Training Pads

Saline Solution

Epinephrine Module:

Training auto-injectors (variety to include Anapen, EpiPen, Jext – examples of paediatric and adult doses)

Sharps box

Glycerol Trinitrate (GTN) Module:

GTN Medication Trainers

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7.6. Course Assessments

Assessment is as per current PHECC Education and training standard relevant to each course

7.7. Course Manual

All students will be provided with PHECC Cardiac First Responder Student Manual relevant to the specific course

7.8. Course Documentation

Course paperwork may be the subject of an audit, thus all documentation must be retained for a period of 2 years. A minimum of 10% of ALL responder courses will be audited annually. This paperwork is uploaded to the units folder on onedrive for courses and a checklist is checked off before paperwork is submitted to PHECC for certification.

8. Instructor Training

8.1. CFR Instructors:

CFR Instructors are trained in accordance with the PHECC's requirements and hold a PHECC CFR instructor certificate to the relevant level along with OMAC IM level 1 instructor certificate.

7.2 Externally trained instructors:

Externally trained CFR Instructors who are members are premitted to teach a CFR course on behalf of Order of Malta Ireland following the production of relevant certification and completion of the RPL process, and with the approval of the assistant Director for Training or his designate. Queries to training@orderofmalta.ie .

9. Certificate Validity and Recertification

9.1. Certification Validity:

All courses are eCertified by the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC), enabling accredited training providers to provide digital certificates to qualified

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applicants. This solution guarantees prompt qualification verification, lowers administrative burden, and improves security. Employers and regulatory agencies can readily access and validate eCertificates, which are issued via PHECC's online portal and contain unique identifying information.

CFR certification is valid for a 2 year period. Recertification must take place prior to the expiry of current certificate. Where recertification occurs after 1 month of expiration date, full relevant course must be sat.

9.2. Members of the Ambulance Corps

Recertification courses must be applied for as outlined in the course administration process.

As per PHECC training standards – “Generally the full course is recommended in order to recertify in CFR however, the principle of recognition of prior learning can apply”. Team resuscitation skills must be principle focus of recertification process (see instructor recertification guidance notes).

- CFR-A recertification requires the completion of the MCQ as part of the process
- See CFR Advanced recertification procedure document for details of recertification procedure

9.3. Public /Commercial Recertification

Members of the public/ commercial are required to undertake the full CFR Community course to re certify (4 Hours).

Assessment is conducted as per current PHECC Education and training standards.

9.4. Award

OMAC Members in the Republic of Ireland & members of the public/commercial courses will be awarded joint PHECC/OMAC CFR certification to the level trained – Community or Advanced.

OMAC members of North of Ireland Region will be awarded OMAC CFR certification to the level trained – Community or Advanced.

10. Clinical Practice Guidelines

Members will practice to PHECC CPG at which they are trained. Where an updated CPG is issued by PHECC between courses, members will only be permitted to

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practice to the CPG at which they are taught until such a time as upskilling is provided.

11. Defibrillation Policy

In accordance with PHECCs defibrillation policy the following is recommended:

- Medical Practitioners may consider the use of manual defibrillation for all age groups provided they have received appropriate training and it is within their scope of practice.
- Registered Nurses may consider the use of manual defibrillation for all age groups provided they have received appropriate training and it is within their scope of practice.
- Advanced Paramedics should use manual defibrillation for all age groups.
- Paramedics who have received appropriate training and maintain competency may consider the use of manual defibrillation for all age groups. Paramedics who have not received training in manual defibrillation or have not maintained competency are not authorised to use manual defibrillation on behalf of Order of Malta Ireland. Paramedics who are not authorised to use manual defibrillation shall use AED mode for all age groups. This directive is implemented as Order of Malta Ireland cannot ensure appropriate training in manual defibrillation is offered to all paramedics operating on their behalf.
- EMTs and Responders shall use AED mode for all age groups.
- Chest Compressions will not be performed during rhythm analysis and Defibrillation charging when using AED

12. CISM for Cardiac Incidents

First and foremost the organisation appreciates that attendance at any cardiac incident has the potential to have serious effects on those involved. Any person involved in such an incident should seek support from for the (CISM) Critical Incident Stress management team they can be accessed through your Officer in Charge/Duty manager. (See critical incident procedure policy and process on Moodle)

All Cardiac Incidents whether in the form of a Cardiac Arrest or other incident should be recorded on the CFR report (CFRR). The CFRR is a two page duplicate document. The top copy may be given to a practitioner taking over care with the bottom copy retained as part of patient care documentation records. All CFRRs relating to cardiac arrests should be returned to the Clinical Audit Committee, via HQ for review.

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Following the use of an AED the machine should be immediately taken out of use pending downloading of data, and returned to the designated officer for review.

The Clinical Audit Officer will review all aspects of patient care and provide feedback to the Unit/s involved. This exercise purely supportive with the aim of quality improvement.

13. Related Documents/Materials to be read in conjunction with this policy

13.1. Relevant Documents

- CFR course administration policy
- PHECC CFR Community Education and Training Standards
- PHECC CFR Advanced Education and Training Standards Forms
- PHECC CFR Instructor and Student Handbook, DVD materials
- Cardiac First responder advanced recertification procedure
- CFR Student information pack
- CFR advanced recertification procedure
- PHECC Cardiac First Response (CFR) and Medications for Listed Organisations Education and Training Standards
- Clinical Practice Guidelines – Medications for Listed Organisations (S.I. 449) □ Medication Formulary for Listed Organisation PHECC Cardiac First Response (CFR) and Medications for Listed Organisations – see additional documents in Instructors pack on Moodle

13.2. Relevant Forms

- AC 27 for CFRC and CFRA
- AC 27+ For CFR with Medications for listed Organisations
- CFR specific sign in sheet
- Verifier checklist
- Relevant Candidate Assessment Sheet
- Course Evaluation Sheet
- CFR Advanced assessment and evaluation form

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13.3. Relevant and related Legislation/Standards

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (First Aid Training)

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 299 of 2007) (First Aid Training)

Current PHECC Education and Training Standards

14. Revision History

Version	Revision date	Revision by	Purpose
1.0	20/10/2008		
1.2	08/01/2010	Capt. Edward	Updated to comprehend instructor recertification
2.0	20/10/2010	Mathews	Total revision to comprehend revised PHECC CFR course
3.0	23/08/2013	Comdt. Edward Mathews	Updated following review of Foundation Course and course application procedure
4.0	12/11/2019	Lt. Jack Collins	Review. Changes made to policy structure. Content on course administration and AED type removed
4.5	16/11/2021	Capt. Anne Montague	Review and update policy – minor changes to format and wording
5.0	20/12/2021	Comdr. Brian Coote	Approved
6.0	16/09/2025	HQ	Policy reformatted
7.0	21/10/2025	Adj Gemma Byrne	Paperwork submission information, Ecertification added CFR + course Added