

BREATHING LIFE BACK INTO THE RURAL COMMUNITY

A €5,000 charitable donation will allow Newport's Community First Responders to purchase their first two automated external defibrillators and heated cabinets, thereby enabling the team to save dozens more lives in the local west of Ireland community.

Ireland's largest telecommunications company has awarded €5,000 to Newport Community First Responders through the eir Fund – the company's Corporate Social Responsibility investment programme.

The donation from eir will also help the group to enable its responders become certified trainers through the Irish Heart Foundation. This will assist in allowing Newport CFR to roll out its 'Project Saving Lives', thereby making an enormous difference to the likelihood of saving someone's life in the event of a cardiac arrest.

Newport CFR is a voluntary organisation of trained first responders who respond to emergency calls in conjunction with the HSE National Ambulance Service. Since it was established in 2015, the Newport CFR has responded to 46 incidents and currently has 26 volunteer responders within the 5km radius of Newport town.

Currently, cardiovascular disease is the most common cause of death in Ireland, accounting for 33% of all deaths – so, early response is essential in helping to save lives. Newport CFR's sights are set high with the aim of training one member of every



Pictured (l-r): Newport CFR's Majella Coffey, Jodie Lenihan, Claire Armstrong (chairperson), Michelle Toner, eir's Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, and Newport CFR Jenny Darcy. (Pic: Liam Burke Press 22)

household in Newport by 2020.

Over time, they plan to expand Newport CFR's role from primarily first-aid driven to encompass health promotion and preventing cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Claire Armstrong, Chairperson of Newport CFRs, said they are extremely grateful to eir for choosing to support 'Project Saving Lives' in Newport. "This money will allow us to purchase and place two public access AEDs in prominent positions within the town. As such, this will greatly increase the likelihood of saving someone's life in Newport in the event of a cardiac arrest."

Michelle Toner, eir's Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, said that the volunteers of Newport Community First Responders carry out an incredibly important service in their community.

"They are often the first on the scene when a cardiac arrest occurs and they have educated hundreds of children in life saving CPR skills. With this new equipment and training that vital service will continue to grow, helping many more people and we are proud to help 'Project Saving Lives' through the eir Fund."

As a direct result of the funding, a further €160,000 will be invested into charitable organisations across Ireland from now up until 2019. For more information, or to submit a case to the eir Fund just email eirFund@eir.ie



Pictured at the announcement of eir's donation (l-r): Newport CFR Jodie Lenihan, Claire Armstrong, chairperson of Newport CFR, and Michelle Toner, eir's Head of Corporate Social Responsibility. (Pic: Liam Burke Press 22)