

# St John Training e-News

A quarterly e-Newsletter on international training matters

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## Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of St John Training e-News, a quarterly e-newsletter about training in St John across the world. Thank you to Australia for agreeing to edit and distribute the newsletter.

The next issue of the newsletter is planned for June 2005. Please send any contributions for the newsletter to me by 31 May 2005.

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## England: New First Aid at Work Package

January 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 saw the full launch of the new style First Aid at Work package. This followed over 2 years of course development, research and piloting. Without doubt this package is the most tried and tested course ever developed by the training department at National Headquarters (NHQ) in England.

When the Training Framework Group (TFG), was set up in September 2002, its brief was to develop the current workbook style course into a more practical, interactive training programme and rely less on text heavy exercises to enable the package to reach more learners.

NHQ employed a market research company to contact students from previous courses and to feed back their views on the course and its delivery. This enabled the TFG to focus in on

the areas that the students felt needed the most attention. Some of the main concerns from the students were:

- Too long spent on filling in books
- Too much information contained in the course
- Language used in the reference material was too technical
- The amount of slides / PowerPoint used
- Students liked the video clips as they took them "outside the classroom"
- Not enough time spent practising skills

The main change to the course was the reference material that is issued to the students. It was decided that students would receive a copy of the 8<sup>th</sup> edition First Aid Manual and some blank worksheets for them to make their own notes. This would encourage learners to record information in a way that suited them and aided their memory retention.

Trainers would also have access to worksheets for specific subjects, with the emphasis on trainers only using the worksheets if they felt they would benefit the learners, not a case of having to use them in all courses.

The TFG developed other training aids to assist with the delivery of the course, including:

- Student packs
- Scenario cards

Prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> pilot, a Pre-pilot of the materials was run by the TFG to ensure that the materials could be used to the desired effect. The first pilot was run in January 2004. 13 of the 49 St. John Ambulance Counties and Special Centres were involved. The feedback highlighted the fact that some of the worksheets were not used and some more were needed, this was completed in time for the second pilot in May. This time 18 counties were involved. At each stage market research ran focus groups for students that had attended the courses, to ensure feedback was fair and a true evaluation of the course style, delivery and materials. Approximately 3,000 students took part in the pilot and their

feedback formed a crucial part of the final product development.

Although it was a lot of hard work we believe the end product has been worth it. Below are a selection of comments we have received about the new style course.

Trainer comments:

“Students are much more active & gel quicker, and the complete lack of stress is a most welcome improvement”.

“The Trainers appreciate the flexibility to develop their own styles & methods, & break away from the constraints of the previous package”.

“All resources have been well & truly tried & tested, & we’ve been getting together to share ideas & continually experiment”.

Student comments:

“More relaxed, less stressful, gradual build-up to more serious conditions”. “This time there was greater interaction, role-playing different scenarios, researching for ourselves, group work, team quizzes”.

“I liked using scenario cards/protocol cards/playing cards & the PowerPoint presentation, including the audio clips”.

“ I seem to have learnt a lot more in the last course than I have in the previous two”.

“ A very good course and I have joined St. John as a result”.

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## England: Change to youth programme

Hello from the Priory of England. Three years ago we consulted our young people and youth leaders on whether we should update the Youth Programme that we offer, and their overwhelming response was yes to an update. Over the following years our volunteers, in ongoing consultation, have developed a new youth programme to replace the existing programmes for Badgers (5-10 years) and Cadets (10-18 years) in the Priory.

The new programme for 5-25 year olds is based around three main components. The “Super Badger Award” for Badgers, the “Grand

Prior Award” for Cadets and the “Amalfi Challenge” for 16-25 year olds.

### Badgers

The new Badger Programme provides young people aged 5-10 years old with a wide variety of exciting learning opportunities through fun activities that will appeal to their interests and needs. To help make this happen, all Badgers are given opportunities to help make decisions about the activities they take part in.

The views of 2,500 young people have helped to shape this programme. They told us they most enjoy learning through practical activities, games and working together.

The highest award a Badger can achieve is the Super Badger Award. They take part in 12 Badger Subjects from a choice of 15, to gain the Award. There are also Paw Awards to work for on the way to receiving their Super Badger. The first is the Welcome Paw, which helps new recruits find out about being a Badger. They then received a Bronze Paw Award for taking part in 3 badger Subjects, a Silver Paw Award for taking part in 6, and then a Gold Paw Award for 9 subjects.

All Badgers also have the opportunity to be a Follow-me Badger, once they reach nine years of age. This involves them giving something back to their Badger Sett, by taking on a responsibility to help run the Sett, for example - leading a game, or helping a new recruit.

### Cadets

The New Cadet programme has had a similar transformation, with proficiency subjects being replaced by a new 24-part Grand Prior Award scheme, divided into 4 stages: Bronze, Silver, Gold and the Grand Prior Award itself. The Eight sections of the scheme (based on the 8 points of the cross) are Service, Personal Development, Creative, Our Organisation, Community, Skills, Communications and Lifestyle. Each section has a number of different subjects in it, and with a number of subjects in more than one section flexibility is the key.

A Cadet can visit each subject up to three times so there is plenty of choice. Gaining a subject is dependant on taking part and doing things rather than formal assessments, with each subject usually having three different levels of attainment so all Cadets can take part no matter their age or level of ability. Flexibility and assessability are the keys to the programme, with everything a Cadet does now

counting towards their Grand Prior Award were under the old scheme thing like competitions and first aid training weren't counted. To encourage flexibility there are no compulsory subjects at all, though everyone has to undertake the same introduction to cadets called the "Membership Award".

In recognition of cadet service to the community, the Cadet Service Award has been created for 50, 100, 200 and up to 1,000 hours of voluntary service to the community.

### **16-25 year olds – the Amalfi Challenge**

The Amalfi Challenge is a programme for all members between the ages of 16 and 25 years. This optional personal development programme was developed to provide an additional challenge for cadets who have completed their Grand Prior Award Scheme and for new young adult members so that they have a framework to help them develop their volunteering within St. John.

Based on the four arms of the Amalfi Cross representing four development sections of Service, Society, Challenge and Relationships – with three stages or 12 elements to work through before the young person is awarded the "Amalfi Award". Young adults are encouraged to come up with goals and challenges that they want to pursue, based on the four sections. Each goal is agreed with a mentor that the young person has selected to support them and the goals can be almost anything from helping to run a youth unit to training to take on an adult volunteer role, or even some other volunteer role outside of the organisation.

The most important thing is that the young person feels that they have the opportunity to develop through giving service and that St. John helps by providing support and guidance to allow them to develop and to provide them with recognition for their volunteering.

### **Sovereign's Award**

The new Sovereign's Award is open to any member of St John Ambulance between the ages of 16 and 25 years. To be eligible for consideration, a young person must have completed either their Grand Prior Award OR their Amalfi Award. Only up to 10 of these awards are presented each year and Candidates must show how they have benefited, their community has benefited and how St John Ambulance has benefited whilst they were undertaking either of the Award schemes.

It's been a long, hard process to complete the new programme – with lots of volunteer and staff effort along the way, but now the fun part begins with our young people and youth leaders now able to take part and use the new programmes.

If you have any queries, the English NHQ Youth Team would be happy to answer any questions, please contact us either via the Order Secretariat or by email to [youth@nhq.sja.org.uk](mailto:youth@nhq.sja.org.uk)

## **The new LIFAC course**

In 2004, the Centre for Adult Education (CAE) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal was commissioned to re-develop the Lifesaver International First Aid Course (LIFAC). There have been several steps in the re-development process, which include:  
an evaluation of the original course;  
the establishment of reference groups;  
two consultative workshops (one in Africa and one in the UK);  
sending out of the content, outcomes and curriculum for comment;  
and the Africa Regional meeting in February of this year.

The changes that the CAE has made to the LIFAC course include:

### **The Facilitator Guide**

Previously this consisted of blank lesson plans for trainers to write their own lesson plans drawing on learner-centred methodologies. In the evaluation, it was found that trainers often did not use the guide as intended. Now, the facilitator guide consists of detailed unit by unit plans for facilitators to follow. The facilitator guide has information on assessment and a front-end on facilitation methods. There are also resources and games included. The activities are learner-centred and require a lot of interaction from learners.

### **The Learner Workbook**

Previously this was a reference book and now it is a reference book and a workbook. It has space for learners to fill in things such as 'myths' about certain First Aid procedures (e.g. how to treat snake bites and epilepsy). The learner workbook also has space for learners to write in local poisonous animals and plants, and to fill in contact numbers for Poison Centres and other local organisations that may be of help. This is to make the book suitable

for local contexts (even though it is standardised). Assessment activities and worksheets are included.

The following changes that were made are informed by best practice with regard to the development of materials for learners learning English as a second language and for people with low levels of reading:

The language level in the new course is appropriate for learners who have low levels of English literacy. A glossary of difficult terms is included and words are explained in simple English. Learners are also given the opportunity of writing the words in their local language/s. A larger than usual font size is used to enable easier reading and there is white space provided on the pages so that they are not too cluttered, also to allow for easier reading.

Diagrams show an appropriate range of people, overtly showing people of different race groups. Research has shown that people with limited 'picture literacy' skills often misinterpret drawings that don't show all of the body, e.g. if only the top half of a person is shown the reader may think the person is disabled, with no legs. The new course tries to use as many full-bodied figures as possible, space and/or content permitting.

#### **The Content**

The content has remained largely the same, with certain units being moved around (after extensive consultation). A few changes have been made:

'Long-term' care is a relative concept. In Africa, a First Aider may have to care for a casualty longer than in the UK. Issues of calling for help, what to do if one is unable to call for help; what to do if help doesn't arrive, have all been dealt with. Included is the issue of transportation in Africa.

A detailed section on HIV and AIDS has been included and reference to it has been included throughout.

Tables of common diseases have been included at the end and blank tables to insert local conditions (e.g. guinea worm).

#### **The Toolkit**

The need to develop a toolkit which was light and portable with low-cost, low-tech teaching aids in it was identified in the evaluation. The toolkit has numerous creative teaching aids such as a ball covered in material which has been painted on, to represent an eye, and a t-shirt with anatomy (heart and lungs and spine) painted on the front and back.

#### **The Pilot**

The course will be piloted in five countries in 2005 before a final version is made available for wider use.

The CAE has tried to make the course an 'African' course, so that the learning is appropriate, relevant and meaningful to the people who attend the course and who then need to apply their new knowledge and skills in an African context.

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## **Australia: Flexible Learning**

In February 2005, St John Ambulance Australia launched its Senior First Aid (flexible) program which allows students to complete some learning using a workbook or CD-ROM at a time that suits them and then attend a one day workshop which covers the practical aspects of the course and the assessment. An online version of the program has also been developed and this will be tested with clients during the first half of 2005.

Senior First aid is the most popular course offered by St John Ambulance Australia with over 180,000 people completing the program last year. The aim is that the flexible learning options will increase enrolments in first aid courses through providing learning options which match student needs.

The flexible learning program was developed during 2004, including extensive pilot testing of the workbook and CD-ROM. The CD-ROM incorporates extensive audio material and a number of video sequences. Comments from people involved in the testing of the CD-ROM included: "easy to use", "good, clear explanations", "very colourful" and "I thought the scenarios and interactive sections were the best as they tested knowledge and maintained interest". For further information on the flexible learning program, contact:  
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## Events

### 2005 International Cadet Camp

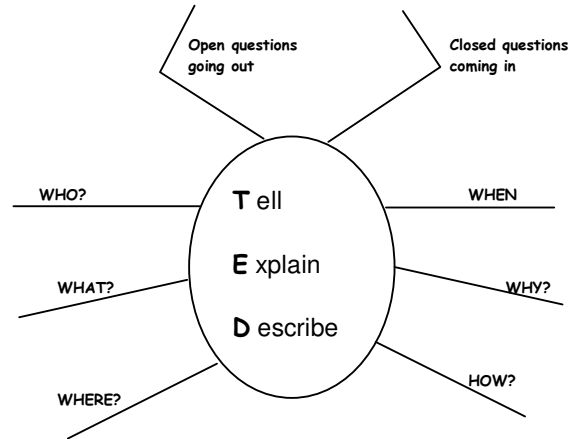
Perth was home to around 320 International St John Cadets and their officers between 13 and 22 January, 2005. The camp began with a colourful Opening Ceremony, including an indigenous welcome to country and performance. The range of activities provided participants with a lot of fun and a taste of the Australian lifestyle. The National and International Cadet Competitions were eagerly contested and well attended. Australia won the international competition and South Australia the national competition.

“A major symbol of the great success of the Camp was the Giant Jigsaw. On arrival, all participants were given seven pieces of the giant jigsaw and were instructed to do their bit to solve the puzzle by the end of the camp. The team from Western Australia produced the jigsaw themselves - even doing the art work entailed. It took them dozens of hours and they just managed to complete the project in time for the camp. To me, the Jigsaw represented the unity of all participants from distant corners of the globe - the one-ness of St John - a truly international organisation of service volunteers.” Kieran Brown, Chief Officer (Cadets), Australia

## Training Tips

This tip comes from Dawn Upton – Training Manager, Northampton, England

**TED** the spider is used to explain questioning techniques as a visual!!



## Mailing List

If you want to be included in the mailing list for this newsletter, please send an Email to [training@stjohn.org.au](mailto:training@stjohn.org.au)