Scotland's Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest Report 2022-23





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Preface

This report is published by the Scottish Ambulance Service on behalf of the Delivery Group for Scotland's Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest Strategy and provides a summary of activity and outcomes after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) in Scotland from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

This document builds on the baseline data contained in Scotland's Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest Report 2019-22 (Clegg et al., 2022), and should be read in conjunction with Scotland's Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest Strategy 2021-2026 (Scottish Government, 2021) which provides details of our programmes of work to improve outcomes after OHCA.

Who is the intended audience of this report?

The public — one of the central recommendations of the Global Resuscitation Alliance's Ten Programmes is to develop accountability by publishing an annual report of OHCA outcomes (Global Resuscitation Alliance, 2021). This report seeks to do that.

Those interested in variations in healthcare across communities in Scotland — this report seeks to facilitate greater understanding of differences in the system of care for OHCA across the country and stimulate discussion about how we can do better.

Healthcare professionals — those wishing to ensure a data-driven approach to improving the delivery of realistic medical care, as well as those working on the 'front line' who want to understand the performance of the system to which they contribute.

Third sector organisations and policy makers — those who want a deeper understanding of the challenges facing communities across Scotland and how best to deploy resources to meet them.

The resuscitation community — others engaged in building systems to save lives after OHCA who seek to understand our approach to and benchmark against our progress. We present this report to be transparent about our challenges and our progress.

How to read this report

The report is structured to provide a background to the challenge of OHCA, Scotland's Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest Strategy 2021-2026 and key metrics charting the progress of implementation of that strategy (Scottish Government, 2021).

Key clinical outcomes and process measures are given first including 30-day survival, ROSC, bystander CPR and PAD usage. These terms are defined in the appropriate sections. Each measure is shown as a geographic snapshot of the current state of affairs using a funnel plot of data from the last 12 months (April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023). There are also charts showing the variation of each measure over time. Analysis is provided which highlights progress towards the delivery of the Strategy including examination of key dimensions of inequality and an update on the work of the Save a Life for Scotland Partnership.

Timelines

Many of the line graphs in this report are presented as control charts in order to highlight how system elements are changing over time. In each case the average value (mean) is shown by a grey dotted line, and upper and lower control limits (at two and three standard deviations) are shown as red dotted lines. In general, control lines can be used to highlight areas that may benefit from further investigation.

Funnel plots

A funnel plot is a scatter plot showing a cross-sectional 'snapshot' in time. We have used funnel plots to illustrate the variation in key OHCA measures across health board areas in Scotland while taking into account the number of arrests that occur within each board. We include two sets of upper and lower boundary lines on each plot, for 95% confidence intervals and 99.7% confidence intervals. These lines can be used to identify data points that may merit closer investigation as they lie outside of what might be expected due to normal variation in the figures.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

SIMD is the Scottish Government's standard tool for identifying areas in Scotland with concentrations of deprivation by incorporating census data from seven different domains (income, employment, education, housing, health, crime, and geographical access) into a single index (Scottish Government, 2020).

The SIMD is calculated for each of 6,976 data zones in Scotland using census data. Data zones are geographic areas in Scotland each containing a population of between 500 and 1,000 people. Where possible, they have been made to respect physical boundaries and natural communities, have a regular shape and contain similar households. Data zones are then ranked. In this report we have described SIMD using quintiles, with approximately 20% of the Scotland population in each quintile: quintile 1 (SIMD1) has the greatest deprivation while quintile 5 (SIMD5) has the least deprivation. The SIMD can be used to target policies and resources appropriately. It is important to remember that the SIMD is a geographically based measure and identifies deprived areas, not deprived individuals.

For the OHCA described in this report, SIMD is derived from the postcode of the OHCA incident location and uses lookup files from Public Health Scotland (Scottish Government, 2020). Because SIMD varies with each census and changes to data zone boundaries, we have used the date of each OHCA incident to ensure that the relevant SIMD is applied.

COVID-19 restrictions in Scotland

The longitudinal analyses in this report include the timeframe of the COVID-19 pandemic, including 'lockdown' measures enacted in Scotland and the eventual easing of such measures. Throughout the report, time series are marked to indicate the period where 'lockdown' measures were in place between 24th March 2020 and the move to level 3 restrictions on 20th April 2021.

Writing Group

This work includes the work of several individuals. We would like to publicly acknowledge the contribution of the following people in enabling the production of this report, whilst being mindful of the help of many others who are not listed here.

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Improving Outcomes from OHCA Where we are 2022-2023

Average number of OHCA $\frac{1}{37\%}$ $\frac{1}{37\%}$

OHCA can affect anyone of any age at any time.

Younger than 45 12% 29% 24% 35% People in the most deprived areas are twice as likely to have an OHCA.







Public Access Defibrillator deployment before the arrival of the Ambulance Service rose from **2.5%** before the Strategy* to:



1 in **10** Survived to leave hospital after

OHCA.



*Baseline figures are from 2011-2015 prior to the launch of Scotland's Strategy for OHCA in March 2015.

Summary of main findings in 2022-23

- From 1st April 2022 to 31st May 2023 there were 3,161 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests (OHCA) where resuscitation was attempted. This represents an incidence rate of 574.0 OHCA per million population of Scotland in keeping with previous years.
- Overall, 30-day survival was 9.1% (Strategy aim 15%), representing 53.1 survivors per million population. This is a little lower than in 2021-22, but not significantly different.
- Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) rate in patients with a shockable initial rhythm (Utstein comparator) was 50.2%, with a 30-day survival rate of 25.9%; these figures are very similar to 2021-22.
- Bystander CPR rate was unchanged at 66.0% (Strategy aim 85%).
- The rate of PAD deployment by the public continues to increase and now 9.8% of worked arrests have a PAD in place on arrival of the ambulance service (Strategy aim 20%) compared to 7.9% last year.
- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) associated inequalities remain. Those living in the most deprived areas in Scotland (SIMD1) are still more than twice as likely to have an OHCA and are likely to be alive 30 days after the event when compared to people living in the least deprived areas in Scotland (SIMD5). Bystander CPR rates are comparable across the socio-economic spectrum, but the disparity in the likelihood of PAD use is widening with those in more deprived communities missing out.
- Innovation continues with the Scottish Ambulance Service and Save a Life for Scotland partnership promoting the use of the GoodSAM app to crowdsource volunteer responders to help with OHCA.

Introduction — the system of care

A successful response to out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) requires a collective effort by many different parties. This system of care starts in the community with the recognition that someone has had a cardiac arrest, and involves the public ('bystanders'), community volunteers, the ambulance service, hospital specialists and eventually the communities that help survivors and their families resume their day to day lives again.

This system is often visualised using a diagram known as the 'chain of survival' (Nolan et al., 2006). This chain starts with bystander recognition of cardiac arrest and a call for help, and ends with post resuscitation hospital care for those whose hearts have been restarted. This is a helpful metaphor, emphasising that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and so the chance of surviving OHCA depends on the integrity of each link within the chain of survival.



Figure 1 The Chain of Survival

It is also the case that even before an OHCA occurs, an adequate response requires that the community is prepared. This preparation will take several forms including training community members in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how to recognise and respond to an OHCA, optimising public access defibrillator (PAD) placement and recruiting community members to be volunteer responders e.g. using alerting mechanisms like GoodSAM ("GoodSAM," n.d.). When an OHCA occurs, community members need to recognise what has happened and call for help. Bystanders must initiate CPR to keep oxygenated blood flowing through the body, and ideally apply a PAD that can restart the heart. Call handlers in Ambulance Control will give real-time instructions on how to do CPR, direct bystanders to the nearest PAD, and summon volunteer responders in the area who may be able to help. After the arrival of SAS personnel, advanced resuscitation care will be provided. If initial resuscitation is successful, the patient is taken to hospital for specialist care of the heart and brain before discharge back to the community. Finally, support needs to be available to the patient, their family as well as to bystanders and professionals who responded to and/or witnessed the OHCA in order to maximise recovery and restoration of quality of life.

In order to emphasise both the community readiness and aftercare aspects of the system we have previously extended our chain of survival to include two additional links: 'readiness' and 'recovery' (Scotland et al., 2015; Scottish Government, 2021). Below we have gone further and reformed the linear chain into a circle to draw attention to the fact that a successful journey to recovery after OHCA begins, and ends, in the community.





The Chain of Survival has been augmented with links for 'Community Readiness' and 'Aftercare', then joined to form a wheel emphasising that effective response to OHCA begins and ends in the community.

Improving the system of care must be done using a variety of approaches to optimise the different elements of the Wheel of Recovery.

Setting the scene

Worked arrests

From April 30th 2022 to March 31st 2023, the Scottish Ambulance Service received 691,284 emergency calls, of which 1.9% were determined by call handlers to be possible out-of-hospital cardiac arrests. On arrival at the scene, the ambulance crew confirmed cardiac arrest in 8,953 cases and attempted resuscitation in 3,161 cases. Cases where resuscitation is attempted are referred to as 'worked arrests' (see BOX 1). The number of worked arrests forms the denominator for all subsequent outcome calculations unless otherwise specified.

BOX 1: Worked arrests

'Worked arrests' are OHCA that have a cause which does not involve major physical trauma and where resuscitation was attempted by the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). There are a number of reasons why SAS may not initiate resuscitation including obvious death (i.e., the patient shows obvious signs of having been dead for some time) or the confirmation that resuscitation was not the patient's wish (e.g., by the presence of a 'do not attempt CPR' order as part of an anticipatory care plan).

Number of worked arrests

Figure 3 shows the number of worked arrests each year from 2011-12 to 2022-23. The number of worked arrests has stayed relatively stable over the last decade. There were 3,161 worked arrests during the period of this report. In addition the number of worked arrests each calendar month over the duration of this reporting period is also shown in Figure 4. This shows a similar seasonal pattern to previous reports with a spike in activity in December-January. This winter peak in incidence of OHCA is also found in other parts of the world (Bagai et al., 2013; El Sibai et al., 2021; Muller et al., 2020).



Number of worked OHCA patients in Scotland 2011-12 to 2022-23

Figure 3 shows the number of worked OHCA in Scotland by year from 2011-12 to 2022-23.



Number of worked OHCA patients in Scotland April-20 to March-23

Figure 4 shows the number of worked OHCA in Scotland by month from April 2020 to March 2023. The shaded red area shows the period during which COVID-19 'lockdown' restrictions were in place.

Proportion of arrests worked

The decision to initiate resuscitation is an important component of care for OHCA. Prompt action by SAS is essential to saving lives, but resuscitation attempts are not always appropriate (see BOX 1). Studies have found that the proportion of OHCA which are worked arrests can vary significantly between ambulance services. For example figures from 129 North American EMS services participating in the Resuscitation Outcomes Consortium Epidemiologic Registry showed that overall, 54.8% of arrests had resuscitation attempted by EMS providers, and that this proportion varied from 23.9% to 100% ($p \le 0.001$) across EMS agencies (Brooks et al., 2017). The charts below show that in Scotland resuscitation was attempted in 24.6% of all OHCA in 2022-23 (Figure 5), which has decreased from a peak of 26.7% in 2019-20. There appears to be some variation in the proportion of worked arrests across health boards (Figure 6) with GG&C initiating resuscitating in a smaller proportion of patients found in cardiac arrest and the Borders and Forth Valley trending towards higher rates.



Figure 5 Shows the number of worked arrests by year from 2011-12 to 2022-23 (bar chart). The line graph above this shows what proportion of all confirmed arrests these bars represent.



Figure 6 shows a funnel plot of the proportion of worked OHCA for each Health Board across Scotland during the single year 2022-23. The dotted grey line shows the national mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

Denominator

It is important to note that the number of non-traumatic worked arrests attended in 2022-23 is used as the denominator for reporting the proportions shown in the rest of this report, unless otherwise explicitly stated. It can be argued that OHCA secondary to hanging or drowning could be considered as traumatic arrests. We have included these patients in our denominator this year and in previous reports, on the grounds that the system of care required to deliver advanced life support to these patients is similar to arrests due to other medical aetiologies.

Data Linkage

In order to report outcome data, cardiac arrest incidents are linked to in-hospital outcomes via the Unscheduled Care Datamart (UCD) as we have described previously (Clegg et al., 2022, 2020, 2019, 2018). Figure 7 shows the number and percentage of worked arrests that were successfully linked. The linkage rate is currently in excess of 96%, consistent with previous years. Incidents which could not be linked to outcome data were assumed to be deaths (a worst-case scenario assumption) and included in the denominator for the calculation of the percentage of 30-day survival.



Number and proportion of worked OHCA successfully linked via the UCD

Figure 7 shows the number (bar graph) and percentage (line graph) of worked OHCA which were linked to outcome data via the Unscheduled Care Datamart by year from 2011-12 to 2022-23.

Patient characteristics

The characteristics of patients with worked OHCA have generally remained stable over the last decade as shown in Table 1 below. In 2022-23 the mean age was 65.3 years with males comprising 62.9% of patients. The percentage of patients having their OHCA at a location with the same postcode as their home address was 73.6%, while the percentage of patients presenting with a shockable initial heart rhythm (see BOX 2) was 21.9%. The percentage of worked OHCA in each of the SIMD quintiles was essentially unchanged from previous years, with the most deprived quintile (SIMD1) having the most worked OHCAs and the least deprived quintile (SIMD5) having the least worked OHCAs. Figure 8 shows a visual representation of these data.

BOX 2: Initial heart rhythm

The initial heart rhythm recorded on the electrocardiogram (ECG) on arrival of SAS is important. A patient may have a **shockable rhythm** (i.e., ventricular fibrillation or ventricular tachycardia) which may be treatable by delivering an electric shock using a **defibrillator**, or **non-shockable rhythm** (i.e., asystole, pulseless ventricular activity, or bradycardia). The initial treatment and prognosis depends on the initial heart rhythm: survival is more likely for OHCA with a shockable initial rhythm. The outcomes for patients with a shockable initial rhythm are used as a benchmark for systems of OHCA care.







Figure 8 shows the distribution of worked OHCA by age (left panel) and SIMD quintile (right panel) in 2022-23. In both charts the male patient distribution is shown in red and the female distribution in blue.

Period	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Age (mean)	66.7	67.0	66.1	67.1	66.9	65.9	66.1	65.5	65.1	64.4	64.4	65.3
Age (SD)	17.7	17.8	17.7	17.7	17.1	18.3	17.8	17.9	18.0	17.5	18.7	17.9
At home	68.5%	69.1%	69.2%	70.2%	71.3%	72.1%	73.1%	71.1%	73.7%	77.9%	73.2%	73.6%
Shockable	26.9%	25.2%	25.6%	22.9%	24.1%	22.5%	23.9%	28.6%	25.6%	21.5%	22.5%	21.9%
Male	62.7%	63.8%	63.3%	62.5%	62.7%	63.5%	64.2%	64.3%	62.8%	64.4%	65.6%	62.9%
SIMD - 1	26.6%	25.7%	26.1%	26.4%	26.9%	27.6%	26.2%	26.8%	27.1%	27.4%	26.9%	26.3%
SIMD - 2	24.3%	24.2%	23.1%	24.1%	24.3%	23.3%	23.2%	24.3%	24.5%	23.6%	23.9%	23.1%
SIMD - 3	19.2%	19.2%	20.0%	19.6%	18.6%	20.1%	20.8%	18.2%	19.3%	19.7%	20.5%	20.6%
SIMD - 4	16.7%	16.8%	17.1%	16.9%	16.6%	16.3%	16.8%	17.3%	16.2%	16.5%	15.7%	16.1%
SIMD - 5	13.1%	14.1%	13.8%	13.0%	13.6%	12.6%	12.9%	13.4%	12.9%	12.7%	13.0%	13.9%

Table 1 shows the age, sex, location of arrest, initial heart rhythm, and SIMD distribution for worked OHCA in Scotland by year from 2011-12 to 2022-23.

Key outcome measures

30-day survival

The number of patients still alive at 30 days after their OHCA is commonly used as a proxy for long-term neurologically intact survival (see BOX 3). The timeline shown in Figure 9 includes the mean 30-day survival percentage across Scotland from April 2011 to March 2023. Survival peaked at 11.9% in Scotland in 2019, and decreased as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold to a low of 7.5% in 2020-21. There has been some recovery with mean 30-day survival in 2022-23 at 9.2%.

The funnel plot in Figure 10 shows a snapshot of 30-day survival by health board in 2022-23. None of the health boards lies outside the 95% control limits, suggesting that the range of outcomes are within expected variation around the mean. Tables showing 30-day survival data for individual health board areas can be found in the Appendix at the end of this report.



Figure 9 shows the percentage of survival at 30 days after OHCA for the whole of Scotland from 2011-12 to 2022-23. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' time period. The dotted grey line shows the national mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.



Figure 10 shows a funnel plot of 30-day survival vs the number of worked OHCA per Health Board during the single year 2022-23. The dotted grey line shows the national mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

BOX 3: 30-day survival

The definition of 'survival' used in this report is survival to 30 days after the date of the OHCA. We have counted survival as the percentage of worked OHCA where patients were still alive at 30 days. Worked OHCA which were not linked to outcome data have been assumed to be deaths and included in the denominator when calculating survival rates.

Number of 30-day survivors per million of the population

Calculation of the percentage of people with worked OHCA who survive for 30 days is useful for tracking system performance (see BOX 4) but is dependent on the denominator value (i.e., the number of worked arrests). Reporting the number of survivors per million of the population is not affected by variation in the proportion of OHCA which are worked arrests and gives a helpful additional measure of the system of OHCA care ("Ten Programs – Global Resuscitation Alliance," n.d.). Figure 11 shows that the number of 30-day survivors per million has trended upwards over the past decade, albeit with a dip during 2020-21 as was experienced elsewhere as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Bielski et al., 2021).

BOX 4: 30-day survivors per million

Reporting the number of 30-day survivors per million of the population is a useful measure which is not as dependent on rates of initiation of resuscitation. If we assume that the population of Scotland and the incidence of OHCA remain relatively stable, then monitoring the change in the absolute number of 30-day survivors per million is a more useful measure of the system of OHCA care than reporting changes in the proportion of patients who survive after resuscitation is attempted.



Number of 30-day survivors and 30-day survivors per million for worked OHCA patients

Figure 11 shows the number of patients alive at 30 days after worked OHCA for the whole of Scotland between the years 2011-12 to 2022-23 (blue bars) and the number of 30-day survivors per million of the population (red line).

30-day survival in patients with a shockable initial rhythm — the Utstein Comparator Group

Patients who have an initial shockable initial rhythm are most likely to survive their OHCA. Examining clinical outcomes for this subgroup of patients is an attempt to allow benchmarking of systems of OHCA care. The 'Utstein Comparator group' provides a benchmark for the emergency medical systems that respond to OHCA (see BOX 5). Whilst the majority of patients suffering OHCA do not fall into this group (Table 1), by focusing on those patients who are most likely to survive, the comparator seeks to eliminate as far as possible all the other variables that influence survival independently of the efficiency of the systems under review.

BOX 5: the Utstein Comparator

The Utstein templates aim to provide uniformity to OHCA data definitions around the world. One element of this is the use of the 'Utstein Comparator group' (bystander-witnessed cardiac arrest with a shockable initial heart rhythm). We have referred to this group as **'patients with a shockable initial rhythm'** in this report.

The proportion of worked OHCA with a shockable initial rhythm was 21.9% in 2022-23. This is similar to recent years, but the overall trend since 2011-12 has been a gradual

reduction in the proportion of a shockable initial rhythm with the exception of 2018-20 (see Table 1 above). This is consistent with findings from other areas (Oving et al., 2020).





Figure 12 shows the percentage of survival at 30 days after OHCA for patients with an initial shockable rhythm from 2011-12 to 2022-23. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' time period. The dotted grey line shows the overall mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

Figure 13 shows a funnel plot of 30-day survival vs number of worked OHCA for patients with an initial shockable rhythm per Health Board during the single year 2022-23. The dotted grey line shows the national mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

Figure 12 shows the trend over the last decade in 30 day survival after OHCA presenting with a shockable rhythm. It is notable that almost twice as many patients survived to 30 days in 2022-23 as did in 2011-23. The funnel plot in Figure 13 shows the average survival in this group of patients was 25.9% in 2022-23 with no significant variation in survival rate across health boards.

Return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC)

An important precursor to long term, neurologically intact patient survival is return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC) – see BOX 6 for a definition of ROSC. The time series of annual ROSC rates in Figure 14 and the associated funnel plot in Figure 15 shows a steady increase in the mean annual proportion of patients with ROSC, with a mean of 28.6% in 2022-23. There was no significant variation across health board areas.

BOX 6: Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC)

Definitions for ROSC vary. The Scottish Ambulance Service records ROSC if a patient with OHCA regains a palpable pulse during resuscitation which is sustained until arrival at the Emergency Department. This includes those patients who are successfully resuscitated by members of the public using Public Access Defibrillators before the arrival of the ambulance service. The proportion of worked OHCA with ROSC is sometimes referred to as **'survival to hospital'** or **'number of hearts restarted'**. ROSC does not equate to 30-day survival.



Figure 14 shows the percentage of worked arrests with attained ROSC per year from 2011-12 to 2022-23. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' time period. The dotted grey line shows the overall mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

Figure 15 shows a funnel plot of worked OHCA with attained ROSC vs number of worked OHCA per Health Board during the single year 2022-23. The dotted grey line shows the national mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

ROSC in patients with a shockable initial rhythm

Examining ROSC rates in OHCA patients with a shockable initial rhythm (i.e., those in the Utstein Comparator group), the timeline in Figure 16 and the funnel plot in Figure 17, show a general pattern consistent with the survival and ROSC charts above. The



national average figure for ROSC with an initial shockable rhythm was 50.2%. It is encouraging that 1 in 2 patients presenting with OHCA and a shockable rhythm will have a pulse on arrival in hospital. There was no evidence of concerning variation in Utstein ROSC across health boards. Dumfries and Galloway has a mean survival rate lower than the 95% control limit, but within the 97% limit.



Figure 16 shows the percentage of worked OHCA with a shockable initial rhythm and where ROSC was attained per year from 2011-12 to 2022-23. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' time period. The dotted grey line shows the overall mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

Percentage of ROSC for worked OHCA patients with a shockable Initial rhythm by health board in 2022-23



Figure 17 shows a funnel plot of the percentage of worked OHCA with shockable initial rhythm and where ROSC was attained vs the number of worked OHCA with a shockable initial rhythm per Health Board during the single year 2022-23. The dotted grey line shows the national mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

Key process measures

The following sections of the report examine key elements in the Wheel of Recovery. These are the processes which need to be in place for successful resuscitation to occur leading to ROSC and 30-day survival.

Bystander CPR

Bystander CPR is one of the few resuscitative interventions consistently demonstrated to make a difference to neurologically intact survival after OHCA (see BOX 7). The chances of survival after OHCA in cases where CPR has not been performed are very low.

BOX 7: Bystander CPR

The bystander CPR rate is the proportion of worked OHCA where a member of the public ('bystander') is performing CPR when the ambulance crew arrive. Whilst CPR can include both chest compressions and rescue breaths, the definition of CPR as used in this report is whether any chest compressions were performed.

Figures 18 and 19 below show a steady increase in the proportion of worked OHCA where bystander CPR is ongoing on arrival of the Scottish Ambulance Service on scene with an overall level of 66.0% in 2022-23. It is of note that the bystander CPR rate in Scotland did not drop during the COVID-19 restrictions - this is shown in Figure 18, and also the month by month timeline in Figure 20. The funnel plot in Figure 19 shows that Grampian is the only health board which deviates significantly from the national average with a mean of 56.9% in 2022-23, a substantial decrease from the level of 63.2% recorded during 2021-22 (Clegg et al., 2022).





Figure 18 shows the percentage of worked OHCA with bystander CPR performed per year from 2011-12 to 2022-23. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' time period. The dotted grey line shows the overall mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

Figure 19 shows a funnel plot of the percentage of worked OHCA where bystander CPR was performed vs the number of worked OHCA per Health Board during the single year 2022-23. The dotted grey line shows the national mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.



Figure 20 shows the percentage of worked OHCA with bystander CPR performed per month from April 2020 to March 2023. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' time period. The dotted grey line shows the overall mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

Public Access Defibrillator usage

Here we report on the proportion of OHCA where a PAD was applied by a member of the public before the arrival of SAS. Our previous OHCA report included a detailed description of the context of PAD use in Scotland (Clegg et al., 2022). Figure 21 shows that the trend over time continues towards more PAD use, reaching a national mean of 9.8% in 2022-23. The funnel plot in Figure 22 shows that there may be some significant variation in PAD use by health board with Grampian trending towards more use, and Lannarkshire trending towards less frequent use, although both figures sit within the 97% control limits. The proportion of worked arrests where a PAD was used in Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GG&C) was 5.6% in 2022-23, a metric which sits below the lower 97% control limit. This suggests significantly less PAD deployment by the public in GG&C when compared to the national mean.



Figure 21 shows the percentage of worked OHCA where a PAD was applied before SAS arrival per year from 2011-12 to 2022-23. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' period. The dotted grey line shows the overall mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

patients by health board in 2022-23

Percentage of PAD usage for worked cardiac arrest



Figure 22 shows a funnel plot of the percentage of worked OHCA where a PAD was applied before SAS arrival vs the number of worked OHCA per Health Board during the year 2022-23. The dotted grey line shows the national mean, with the upper and lower 95% and 99.7% control limits shown as dotted red lines.

BOX 8: Public Access Defibrillator (PAD)

A PAD is an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) which is available for use by the general public in case of OHCA emergencies. AEDs are used to automatically detect an abnormal cardiac rhythm and deliver a lifesaving shock to reset and restart the heart. PAD should be located in areas where they are likely to be available to treat OHCA, well signposted and registered so that the SAS can direct a bystander to fetch one in an emergency.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and OHCA

Figures 25-28 illustrate the relationship between survival, bystander CPR, PAD use and SIMD (see above for a description of SIMD).



Figure 23 shows the mean annual 30 day survival for all patients with OHCA by SIMD. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' period.



Figure 24 shows mean annual 30 day survival for patients with OHCA and a shockable rhythm by SIMD. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' period.





Figure 25 shows the proportion of patients with OHCA receiving bystander CPR, by SIMD. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' period.

Figure 26 shows the proportion of patients with OHCA where a PAD was used before the arrival of SAS, by SIMD. The shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' period.

Figures 23 and 24 show that, in general, those living in the most deprived communities in Scotland are less likely to survive their OHCA compared to those in the least deprived areas. These data are unadjusted, but a recent analysis of OHCA in Scotland showed that after adjustment for age, sex, and urban/rural residency the relative odds of survival in SIMD1 dropped further when compared to SIMD5 (OR 0.56, 95% CI 0.47–0.67 (Bijman et al., 2023a). The largest difference in survival was observed in males <45 years old. This association between socio-economic position and outcomes after OHCA is not unique to Scotland and has been reported elsewhere (Chamberlain et al., 2020). Examining some of the processes which lead to OHCA survival it is striking that while there is a modest difference in the percentage of patients in SIMD1 receiving bystander CPR compared to SIMD5 (Figure 25), the disparity in PAD use is more marked (Figure 26). See the Appendix for data tables relating to these charts.

Initiatives to improve the system of care

Save a Life for Scotland

Save a Life for Scotland (SALFS) is a collaboration between the Emergency Services, third sector organisations, Scottish Government and academic researchers. The partnership is directed by the Resuscitation Research Group at the University of Edinburgh and aims to promote CPR readiness in young people and in communities across Scotland. In order to achieve this SALFS also attempts to shape perceptions of OHCA with an emphasis on giving all communities the opportunity to engage.

The campaign aims to equip 1 million people with CPR skills by the end of 2026. An update on progress can be found at <u>www.savealife.scot</u>.



Figure 27 shows the number of people learning CPR and bystander CPR rates in Scotland 2011-12 to 2022-23. Shaded red area shows the COVID-19 'lockdown' period.

GoodSAM

GoodSAM is a crowdsourcing platform used by most UK ambulance services. In Scotland we use the GoodSAM Responder smartphone app to alert registered volunteers to an OHCA which has occurred near their location. A volunteer who is alerted can choose to attend if they are available, and can help perform CPR or fetch a defibrillator while an ambulance is en route. GoodSAM is an effective mechanism for providing vital extra help in the crucial early minutes of a cardiac arrest.



Figure 28 Shows a wallet card advertising GoodSam in Scotland. Scan the QR code for further information or to sign up. Requirements for volunteering are over 18 years old, photographic ID (e.g., drivers licence, passport), and either online or in person CPR familiarisation.

A limited deployment of GoodSAM involving only Scottish Ambulance Service staff began in 2019. The system was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic and launched for use by the general public in October 2022. In the reporting period from April 1st 2022 to March 31st 2023, 577 new users were registered by SAS; Figure 29 shows the cumulative number of sign-ups during this period. There are currently 2,058 users visible to the Service. Additionally, there is a small number of other volunteers who have registered directly with GoodSAM who may also be alerted to OHCA in Scotland.



4 week rolling trend of GoodSAM alerts sent and accepted for suspected cardiac arrests from April-22 to March-23 1,000



Figure 29 Shows the cumulative number of sign-ups to GoodSAM registered under the Scottish Ambulance Service from April 2022 to March 2023..

Figure 30 Shows the number of incidents initially coded as OHCA and the GoodSAM response. All lines are shown as a rolling 4 week average.

During 2022-23, 9,180 emergency calls triggered the criteria for GoodSAM alerts with a total of 4,916 alerts being sent through the GoodSAM smartphone app (up to five responders per incident are alerted if they are within a radius of 500 metres). Of those alerts, 1,656 were accepted by a responder. Figure 30 shows the number of calls coded as suitable for GoodSAM by ambulance control (green line). The number of volunteers on the system within 500m of the incident who received an alert is shown by the red line (note, up to five alerts per incident may be sent if volunteers are available). The blue line at the bottom of Figure 30 shows the number of volunteers who accepted the alert sent to their phone. It can be seen from Figures 29 and 30 that as the number of volunteers registered on the system has increased (Figure 29) the likelihood of a volunteer being available to accept an alert has also risen (Figure 30). The proportion of OHCA where a GoodSAM volunteer has accepted an alert is still relatively modest (Figure 30).

Crowdsourcing apps like GoodSAM are a great way to help communities to take care of each other, but their success is critically dependent on a high enough density of volunteers (Stieglis et al., 2020). Work continues to promote GoodSAM as a platform for alerting CPR aware volunteers to a nearby OHCA.

Anyone who is CPR-aware can register through <u>www.savealife.scot/goodsam</u> or scan the QR code above in Figure 30. To learn how to do CPR see <u>www.savealife.scot</u>.

Conclusion

In 2022-23, there were 3,161 worked OHCA in Scotland, similar to previous years. There was a slight reduction in 30-day survival both for patients with and without an initial shockable rhythm although this decrease is small and does not represent a significant change from our position in the last OHCA report.

While the lack of measurable improvement in 30 day survival is disappointing, there is cause for some optimism. Measures of the system prerequisites to increased survival have improved. In particular we saw a continued increase in the rate of bystander CPR and PAD use, which are encouraging signs of effective efforts to improve bystander involvement in OHCA by Save a Life for Scotland partners and others. More than three-quarters of a million people living in Scotland have had CPR familiarisation from SALFS partners to date, and we are well on the way to reaching our target of one million by 2026. The public launch of the GoodSAM app in 2022 resulted in a small spike in the number of volunteers signed up via SAS. The figures shown above, however, emphasise the need for many more volunteers around the country as the majority of alerts do not yet result in additional bystanders attending to help.

It is important to note that inequalities across the quintiles of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) remain. Those living in the most deprived areas in Scotland (SIMD1) are more than twice as likely to have an OHCA as those in the most affluent areas (SIMD5). Those in SIMD1 are also less likely to be alive 30 days after their OHCA event even after age, sex, initial heart rhythm and bystander CPR are taken into account (Bijman et al., 2023b). Bystander CPR rates are comparable across the socio-economic spectrum, but the disparity in the likelihood of PAD use is widening, with those in more deprived communities missing out.

As we progress to the third year of our national strategy for OHCA in 2023-24 (Scottish Government, 2021) we will continue to pursue partnerships and innovations that will improve neurologically intact survival. These will include improving access to CPR and AED using the GoodSAM app, optimising the placement of PAD in the community, and developing systems to support those affected by the aftermath of OHCA.

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Appendix

Definitions of OHCA-related terminology

Term	How the term is used in this report
Worked arrests	'Worked arrests' are OHCA that have a cause which does not involve major physical trauma and where resuscitation was attempted by the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). This number forms the denominator for all subsequent outcome calculations unless otherwise specified. There are several reasons why SAS may not attempt resuscitation including obvious death (i.e., the patient shows obvious signs of having been dead for some time) or the confirmation that resuscitation was not the patient's wish (e.g., by the presence of a 'do not attempt CPR' order as part of an anticipatory care plan).
lnitial heart rhythm	The initial heart rhythm recorded on the electrocardiogram (ECG) on arrival of SAS is important. A patient may have a shockable rhythm (i.e., ventricular fibrillation or ventricular tachycardia) which may be treatable by delivering an electric shock using a defibrillator, or non-shockable rhythm (i.e., asystole, pulseless ventricular activity, or bradycardia). The initial treatment and prognosis depend on the initial heart rhythm: survival is more likely for OHCA with a shockable initial rhythm.
30-day survival	The definition of 'survival' used in this report is survival to 30 days after the date of the OHCA. We have counted survival as the percentage of worked OHCA where patients were still alive at 30 days. Worked OHCA which were not linked to outcome data have been assumed to be deaths and included in the denominator when calculating survival rates.
30-day survivors per million	Reporting the number of 30-day survivors per million of the population is a useful measure which is not as dependent on rates of initiation of resuscitation. If we assume that the population of Scotland and the incidence of OHCA remain relatively stable, then monitoring the change in the absolute number of 30-day survivors per million is a more useful measure of the system of OHCA care than reporting changes in the proportion of patients who survive after resuscitation is attempted.
The Utstein Comparator	The Utstein templates aim to provide uniformity to OHCA data definitions. One element of this is the use of the 'Utstein

	Comparator group' (bystander-witnessed cardiac arrest with a shockable initial heart rhythm). We have referred to this group as 'patients with a shockable initial rhythm' in this report.
Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC)	Definitions for ROSC vary. The Scottish Ambulance Service records ROSC if a patient with OHCA regains a palpable pulse during resuscitation which is sustained until arrival at the Emergency Department. This includes those patients who are successfully resuscitated by members of the public using Public Access Defibrillators before the arrival of the ambulance service. The proportion of worked OHCA with ROSC is sometimes referred to as 'survival to hospital' or 'number of hearts restarted'. ROSC does not equate to 30-day survival.
Bystander CPR	The bystander CPR rate is the proportion of worked OHCA where a member of the public ('bystander') is performing CPR when the ambulance crew arrive. Here the definition of CPR is whether any chest compressions were performed with or without rescue breaths.
Public Access Defibrillator (PAD)	A PAD is an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) which is available for use by the general public in case of OHCA emergencies. AEDs are used to automatically detect an abnormal cardiac rhythm and deliver a lifesaving shock to reset and restart the heart. PAD should be located in areas where they are likely to be available to treat OHCA, well signposted and registered so that the SAS can direct a bystander to fetch one in an emergency.
The Circuit - the National Defibrillator Network	The national defibrillator network also referred to as The Circuit, was developed by the British Heart Foundation and provides the NHS ambulance services with information about defibrillators across the UK so that after a cardiac arrest, they can be accessed quickly to help save lives. Registration on the Circuit makes PAD visible to the Scottish Ambulance Service and alerts emergency call handlers that there is a PAD near to an OHCA. To stay 'active' on the database the PAD must have a named individual ('guardian') responsible for regular checking to ensure the defibrillator is 'emergency ready' if needed.

Health Board Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Regional NHS Health Board							
A&A	NHS Ayrshire & Arran							
во	NHS Borders							
D&G	NHS Dumfries & Galloway							
FI	NHS Fife							
FV	NHS Forth Valley							
GG&C	NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde							
GR	NHS Grampian							
н	NHS Highland							
LA	NHS Lanarkshire							
OR	NHS Orkney							
LO	NHS Lothian							
SH	NHS Shetland							
ТА	NHS Tayside							
wi	NHS Western Isles							

Glossary of Terms

ACC	Ambulance Control Centre						
BHF	British Heart Foundation (www.bhf.org.uk)						
Bystander	A lay person involved in assisting someone with OHCA						
Cardiac arrest	A condition in which the heart suddenly stops pumping blood around the body						
Chain of Survival	The sequence of events required for the best chance of survival after OHCA						
сні	Community Health Index (see https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/glossary-of-terms)						
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus						
CPR	Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation: chest compressions with or without rescue breaths delivered to a person who has suffered a cardiac arrest						
Defibrillation	The administration of a controlled electric shock to the heart in order to reset a normal heart rhythm						
ECG	An electrocardiogram (ECG) is a simple test used to check the heart's rhythm and electrical activity. Sensors attached to the skin detect the electrical signals produced by the heart each time it beats						
GRA	Global Resuscitation Alliance (www.globalresuscitationalliance.org)						
Health Board	Healthcare services in Scotland are the responsibility of 14 regional National Health Service (NHS) Boards that report to the Scottish Government. Health board areas are aligned with the area of each local authority that they serve.						
Heart Attack	Damage caused by a clot in the arteries supplying blood to the heart muscle — requires emergency treatment in hospital						
Non-shockable rhythm	Cardiac arrest may be accompanied by pulseless electrical activity or asystole — these are not treated with defibrillation						
онса	Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest						

PAD	Public Access Defibrillators. AEDs (Automatic External Defibrillators) which are available in the community for use by the public before the arrival of the ambulance service.							
Presenting Rhythm	The first ECG rhythm recorded at an OHCA.							
ROSC	Return of Spontaneous Circulation. Here, we record ROSC if a patient with OHCA has a pulse on arrival in the Emergency Department.							
RRG	Resuscitation Research Group at the Usher Institute in the University of Edinburgh (www.rrg.scot)							
SAS	Scottish Ambulance Service (www.scottishambulance.com)							
Save a Life for Scotland	SALFS is a campaign which brings together the work of a range of partners committed to saving lives by changing the way we think about OHCA in order to get Scotland CPR ready (www.savealife.scot)							
Shockable heart rhythm	The heart rhythm in cardiac arrest may be Ventricular fibrillation or ventricular tachycardia — these are both treated by immediate delivery of an electric shock using a defibrillator							
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. (https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/glossary-of-terms#s)							
SMR01	Standardised Mortality Ratio 01: a record of episodes of inpatient care							
The Circuit	The national defibrillator network, developed by the British Heart Foundation							
UCD	Unscheduled Care Datamart							
Utstein	Internationally recognised criteria for uniform reporting of cardiac arrest							
Utstein Comparator	Bystander-witnessed cardiac arrests with a shockable initial heart rhythm							
VF	Ventricular Fibrillation: a condition in which there is uncoordinated contraction of the heart muscle, which may be corrected by early defibrillation							
Worked Arrests	'Worked arrests' are OHCA that have a cause which does not involve major physical trauma and where resuscitation was attempted by the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS)							

Data tables

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
All Incidents	2632	2992	2982	3258	3136	3398	3321	2860	2916	2991	3136	3161
Incidents matched	2301	2688	2671	2913	2848	3132	3080	2697	2780	2896	3033	3050
Data Linkage %	87.4%	89.8%	89.5%	89.1%	90.8%	92.1%	92.7%	94.3%	95.3%	96.8%	96.7%	96.4%
Bystander CPR	883	1120	1088	1275	1382	1544	1686	1692	1711	1886	2006	2014
Bystander CPR %	38.4%	41.7%	40.7%	43.7%	48.5%	49.3%	54.7%	62.7%	61.6%	65.1%	66.1%	66.0%
PAD Use	70	67	54	74	86	105	123	158	207	185	241	298
PAD Use %	3.0%	2.5%	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%	3.3%	4.0%	5.9%	7.4%	6.4%	7.9%	9.9%
ROSC	362	463	459	561	575	639	737	869	858	738	838	872
ROSC %	15.7%	17.2%	17.1%	19.2%	20.1%	20.4%	23.9%	32.2%	31.0%	25.5%	27.6%	28.5%
30 Day Survivors	188	227	225	253	238	289	285	339	309	224	301	290
30 Day Survival %	7.1%	7.6%	7.6%	7.8%	7.6%	8.5%	8.6%	11.8%	10.0%	7.5%	9.6%	9.1%

Summary of worked OHCA by year

30-day survival by health board, 2022-23

Health board	Worked arrests	30-day survival	30-day survival %	Survival per 100k	
Ayrshire & Arran	245	22	9.0%	6.0	
Borders	77	5	6.5%	4.3	
Dumfries & Galloway	103	7	6.8%	4.7	
Fife	253	17	6.7%	4.6	
Forth Valley	210	23	11.0%	7.5	
Grampian	298	32	10.7%	5.5	
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	630	61	9.7%	5.2	
Highland	176	13	7.4%	4.0	
Lanarkshire	365	26	7.1%	3.9	
Lothian	454	48	10.6%	5.3	
Orkney	10	0	0.0%	0.0	
Shetland	13	1	7.7%	4.4	
Tayside	258	28	10.9%	6.7	
Western Isles	20	1	5.0%	3.7	

Number of worked arrests by SIMD

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
SIMD - 1	26.3%	25.6%	26.5%	26.1%	26.8%	27.2%	25.9%	26.6%	26.8%	27.1%	26.7%	26.2%
SIMD - 2	24.4%	24.1%	22.3%	23.9%	24.3%	23.2%	23.1%	24.2%	24.3%	23.9%	24.0%	23.0%
SIMD - 3	19.4%	19.6%	20.8%	20.1%	18.8%	20.2%	21.2%	18.3%	19.5%	19.9%	20.8%	20.9%
SIMD - 4	17.0%	16.5%	16.8%	16.9%	16.8%	16.5%	17.0%	17.5%	16.4%	16.5%	15.6%	16.0%
SIMD - 5	12.9%	14.3%	13.6%	13.0%	13.4%	12.7%	12.7%	13.5%	13.0%	12.7%	12.9%	13.8%

30-day Survival by SIMD

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
SIMD - 1	7.8%	7.5%	7.5%	6.6%	6.8%	7.7%	7.9%	11.0%	8.9%	6.3%	9.8%	7.8%
SIMD - 2	6.2%	7.7%	8.2%	8.3%	7.0%	8.1%	7.8%	12.2%	11.7%	7.5%	10.2%	8.3%
SIMD - 3	8.8%	7.0%	7.3%	9.9%	6.8%	8.6%	9.0%	11.9%	11.0%	6.3%	10.1%	9.5%
SIMD - 4	6.4%	8.5%	6.4%	6.3%	9.5%	10.0%	9.8%	10.5%	9.6%	7.9%	9.1%	8.2%
SIMD - 5	6.6%	7.9%	8.6%	7.2%	9.1%	8.8%	9.0%	14.3%	12.7%	11.2%	8.0%	13.5%

Bystander CPR by SIMD

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
SIMD - 1	36.9%	38.7%	38.0%	43.4%	46.9%	48.5%	54.5%	62.6%	63.2%	63.2%	63.0%	65.7%
SIMD - 2	40.0%	38.0%	36.6%	41.1%	47.3%	50.1%	53.2%	62.5%	58.2%	65.3%	63.9%	66.2%
SIMD - 3	35.6%	43.7%	44.7%	48.1%	50.2%	50.3%	53.4%	60.5%	60.5%	66.2%	67.6%	64.1%
SIMD - 4	37.4%	46.6%	43.2%	43.2%	50.6%	49.6%	55.6%	63.8%	61.8%	66.0%	70.4%	65.8%
SIMD - 5	42.4%	43.7%	41.8%	42.4%	49.2%	47.1%	58.1%	64.5%	65.6%	65.1%	67.8%	67.3%

PAD deployment by SIMD

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
SIMD - 1	3.2%	2.2%	1.3%	1.6%	2.2%	2.8%	2.6%	3.6%	4.0%	3.9%	5.2%	6.2%
SIMD - 2	3.6%	1.4%	1.0%	2.9%	2.2%	3.2%	3.8%	4.1%	4.6%	4.4%	7.8%	7.7%
SIMD - 3	2.3%	2.8%	3.1%	2.8%	3.8%	4.9%	3.9%	5.7%	10.9%	9.5%	10.4%	12.6%
SIMD - 4	2.7%	2.0%	2.9%	3.1%	3.4%	2.8%	6.0%	9.7%	11.8%	9.9%	8.9%	14.7%
SIMD - 5	2.7%	4.6%	2.0%	2.4%	3.9%	3.0%	4.6%	8.0%	9.8%	6.3%	7.7%	10.3%