

Graham Charges Ahead with Making All Site Defibs Available to the Public

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Leading contractor [GRAHAM](#), in partnership with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, is urging all businesses to register their defibrillators onto the new UK-wide National Defibrillator Network to help save lives.

The Circuit: the national defibrillator network, developed by the British Heart Foundation (BHF) in partnership with Resuscitation Council UK, St John Ambulance, and the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, maps public access defibrillators across the UK. This in turn will enable ambulance services to direct bystanders to the nearest registered defibrillator if they witness somebody having a cardiac arrest in the local community.

Despite most cardiac arrests happening outside of a hospital environment (30,000 cases each year in the UK alone), less than 1 in 20 public defibrillators are used in an emergency, partly because the ambulance services do not know of their location. This leads to a lost opportunity to help save a life.

Lurgan man, Ryan Nelson (43), is one of the few members of the public to have survived an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest after receiving life-saving defibrillation at his home last August.

Speaking about his experience, Ryan Nelson said: "It started a normal Monday morning. I left to get my wife a coffee before work and suddenly collapsed on my way out. I hadn't been feeling unwell and didn't have any symptoms in the lead up – it just hit me.

"My wife and son called for an ambulance, but unfortunately the 999 operators couldn't find a community defibrillator nearby, so they instructed my son on how to perform CPR whilst we waited for paramedics to arrive."

Currently, less than 1 in 10 people survive an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, with the chances of survival decreasing by a further 10% with every passing minute.

Survival rates can be vastly improved to 50-70% however if a patient receives defibrillation within 3 -5 minutes of collapse. In Ryan's case, he waited 12 minutes.

"The helicopter emergency medical service was on the scene with a defibrillator in just twelve minutes, but my chances of survival at that point were extremely low. It took four attempts at defibrillation to resuscitate my heart because I had been starved of oxygen for so long.

"Considering the odds, I count myself extremely lucky to survive. I owe the medical team my life."

To help improve the odds of survival in the community, GRAHAM is in the process of registering over 70 of its defibrillators located across the UK, onto The Circuit.

Jane Dunbar, Occupational Health Coordinator at GRAHAM, commented: "Our mantra at GRAHAM is to deliver lasting impact in everything we do and everywhere we go – from the projects we work on to the people we work with.

"Supporting local communities is core to our business, so we're delighted to make what is potentially a life-saving contribution to our neighbours, by making all our defibrillators available to the public.

"We strongly urge fellow businesses to register their defibrillators onto the Circuit and hope that in doing so, future survival rates will be greatly improved."

Whether it's in a local pub, shopping centre or office – every defibrillator matters.

Judy O'Sullivan, Director of Innovation in Health Programmes at the British Heart Foundation, said: "We're thrilled that GRAHAM has taken the vital step of registering all 70 of their defibrillators onto The Circuit, helping to ensure ambulance services can quickly direct bystanders to a defibrillator in the event of a cardiac arrest.

"Currently, less than one in 10 people survive a cardiac arrest, but effective CPR and defibrillation can double a person's chance of survival. That's why we're urging every organisation that owns defibrillators to follow GRAHAM's example by registering their defibrillators on The Circuit. It really could be the difference between life and death."

Every second counts. Take Charge. Sign-up. Save a life.

To register your defibrillator onto the Circuit, visit: <https://www.thecircuit.uk/>

Image credit: GRAHAM