

Hoci Cymru

First Aid Guidance



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1. Purpose of this Guidance

Hoci Cymru is committed to supporting safe, welcoming and well-prepared hockey environments across Wales. This guidance sets out the minimum first-aid expectations and recommended good practice for affiliated clubs, coaches, team managers, volunteers and event organisers.

This guidance is intended to support clubs in planning safe hockey activity. It does not replace legal duties, medical advice, venue requirements, safeguarding procedures, or emergency service guidance.

2. Core Principle

Every organised hockey activity should have appropriate first-aid provision in place. This should be based on the nature of the activity, the age and number of participants, the venue, access to emergency services, and the level of risk involved.

MINIMUM EXPECTATION

At least one appropriately trained first aider must be present at every organised training session, match or club hockey activity.

3. First-Aid Needs Assessment

Clubs should complete a first-aid needs assessment for their hockey activity. This should consider:

- the type of activity taking place;
- the number and age of participants;
- whether the activity is training, match play, a festival, tournament or camp;
- whether the activity involves junior or vulnerable participants;
- the location of the pitch or venue;
- access to emergency services;
- availability of a telephone and mobile signal;
- location of the nearest Automated External Defibrillator (AED);
- ambulance access points;
- previous injuries or incidents;
- whether additional provision is needed for higher-risk activity.

First-aid arrangements should be reviewed at least annually and whenever there is a significant change to the activity, venue or risk profile.

4. First-Aid Training

First-aid training should be appropriate for the role and activity. As a minimum, clubs should use certified emergency first-aid training that is current, delivered by a competent provider, and includes practical CPR and AED awareness.

Hoci Cymru recommends that first-aid training is renewed at least every three years. Clubs should keep a record of who holds a valid first-aid qualification and when it expires.

Where possible, training should include sport-relevant content such as:

- CPR and AED use;
- sudden cardiac arrest;
- concussion and head injuries;
- bleeding and wound care;
- fractures, dislocations and soft-tissue injuries;
- asthma and breathing difficulties;
- anaphylaxis and allergic reactions;
- shock;
- seizures;
- heat and cold illness;
- safe emergency response procedures.

5. First-Aid Kits

A suitable first-aid kit should be available and accessible at every hockey activity. The contents should be based on the club's first-aid needs assessment and should be checked regularly.

Clubs should ensure that:

- first-aid kits are clearly identifiable and easy to access;
- items are in date and replaced after use;
- sterile items remain sealed;
- first aiders know where the kit is stored;
- away teams know what provision is available at the host venue;
- additional equipment is considered for tournaments, festivals, camps or remote venues.

6. Medical Emergency Action Plan

Hoci Cymru strongly recommends that every club has a Medical Emergency Action Plan for each regular venue. The plan should include:

- venue name and full address;
- postcode and What3Words location, where available;
- nearest vehicle access point for an ambulance;
- any gate codes or access restrictions;
- location of the nearest AED;
- location of the first-aid kit;
- location of the nearest A&E or urgent care facility;
- who will call 999;

- who will meet and direct the ambulance;
- who will manage the rest of the group;
- parent/carer contact process for junior players;
- incident recording process.

The plan should be shared with coaches, team managers, captains, welfare officers and other relevant volunteers.

7. Concussion

If concussion is suspected, the player must be removed from play immediately and must not return to play that day.

IF IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT

Players with suspected concussion should follow current UK grassroots concussion guidance and seek appropriate medical advice. Return to hockey should be gradual and should not be rushed.

8. Sudden Cardiac Arrest

A sudden cardiac arrest can happen in sport. Clubs should ensure that coaches, team managers and first aiders know how to recognise a possible cardiac arrest, call 999, start CPR and access an AED as quickly as possible.

Clubs should identify the nearest AED for each venue and include it in the Medical Emergency Action Plan.

9. Recording and Reporting Incidents

Clubs should record injuries, first-aid treatment and significant incidents. Records should be factual, secure and handled in line with data protection requirements.

Serious incidents should be escalated through the appropriate club, venue, safeguarding, insurance or Hoci Cymru reporting process as required.

10. Higher-Risk Activity

Additional first-aid planning may be required for:

- junior festivals;
- large tournaments;
- camps;
- representative activity;
- remote or unfamiliar venues;
- activity where emergency service access may be delayed;
- events with large numbers of participants or spectators;
- activity involving players with known medical needs.

In these settings, clubs and organisers should consider additional first aiders, a dedicated medical lead, a more detailed event medical plan, AED access, emergency vehicle access, and communication arrangements.

11. Club Checklist

Before each season, clubs should check that:

- a first-aid needs assessment has been completed;
- at least one trained first aider is available for each session or match;
- first-aid certificates are in date;
- first-aid kits are stocked and checked;
- AED locations are known;
- Medical Emergency Action Plans are in place for regular venues;
- concussion guidance has been shared;
- coaches and team managers understand what to do in an emergency;
- incidents are recorded appropriately.

12. Hoci Cymru Statement

Hoci Cymru expects all affiliated clubs to take reasonable steps to provide safe hockey environments. Appropriate first-aid provision is a key part of this responsibility.

Clubs should plan ahead, assess their risks, ensure trained support is available, and make sure everyone involved knows what to do in an emergency.