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Medical Emergency Response Ireland
VOLUNTEER ALLIANCE

HOW PREPARED ARE IRISH SCHOOLS FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY?

Presented by

**Medical
Emergency
Response
Ireland**

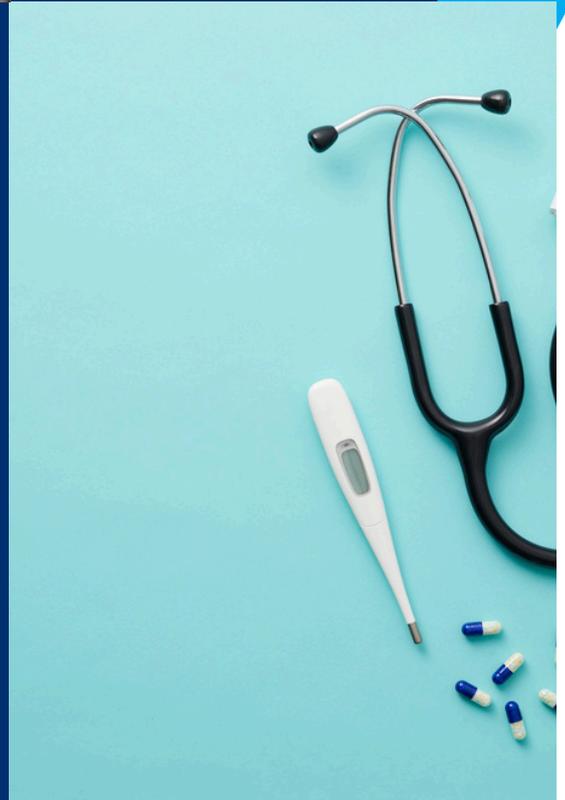


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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to make life-saving medicines and first aid training a normal part of everyday life. We believe emergency medicines should be readily available in public places, and that people should feel confident to use them in an emergency. By working with businesses, parents, schools, community & youth groups, and policy makers, we aim to build safer, more prepared communities.



ABOUT US

MER is volunteer alliance made up of doctors, healthcare professionals, people living with allergies and other medical conditions, parents, and concerned citizens who care deeply about medical emergencies and community safety. We believe increased accessibility to first aid, including auto-injectors & emergency medicines will improve health outcomes for all those impacted in Ireland.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON



Why did MER do this survey?

We decided to survey every primary and secondary school in Ireland to get a clear picture of the current state of emergency medicine in schools and to identify the key issues they commonly face. By understanding what resources schools have, what training is in place, and where the gaps lie, we can highlight the areas that need urgent attention. This information will help shape practical solutions and inform policy changes that make schools safer and better prepared to respond in an emergency.



ABOUT ALAN MORAN

Alan is co-founder of Hibernian Healthcare and is the Group Managing Director. He has overseen the growth of Hibernian from humble beginnings in 2000 to a multi-faceted business employing 20 full time staff plus a team of over 50 nurses countrywide and with access to a pool of great tutors. With a background in financial services and a Business Studies degree from DCU, Alan has always sought to innovate in healthcare services and training. Proud to be a family business, Hibernian was the first company in Ireland to provide blood drawing at home, community delivered hepatitis vaccination services, on-site flu vaccination and patient support for injectable medications. The company also pioneered vaccination training for pharmacists which has led to Irish pharmacists delivering over 5 million flu and Covid vaccines.

MER WANTS TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING 3 GOALS

Access to Medicines

1

Every day, people face emergencies where quick access to life-saving medicines can mean the difference between life and death. Yet, too often, these vital resources are out of reach, leaving families, schools, and communities vulnerable. We are working to ensure emergency medicines are available in public places when they're needed most.

Confidence to Act

2

Having the right tools is only part of the solution, people also need the knowledge and confidence to use them. Through first aid training and community education, we empower individuals to respond effectively in critical moments, turning bystanders into potential lifesavers

Building Prepared Communities

3

True safety comes from preparedness. By working with parents, schools, youth groups, and policymakers, we are modernising first aid across Ireland. Together, we're creating safer, stronger, and more resilient communities where everyone is ready to protect and support one another.

THE REASON FOR THE SURVEY

Aim:

Our aim was to gather accurate and up-to-date information on emergency first aid in schools across Ireland and to use these findings to inform policymakers and decision-makers.

By understanding what resources and training are currently in place, and identifying any gaps or challenges, we can provide a strong evidence base to guide future policy, improve preparedness, and support safer school communities nationwide.

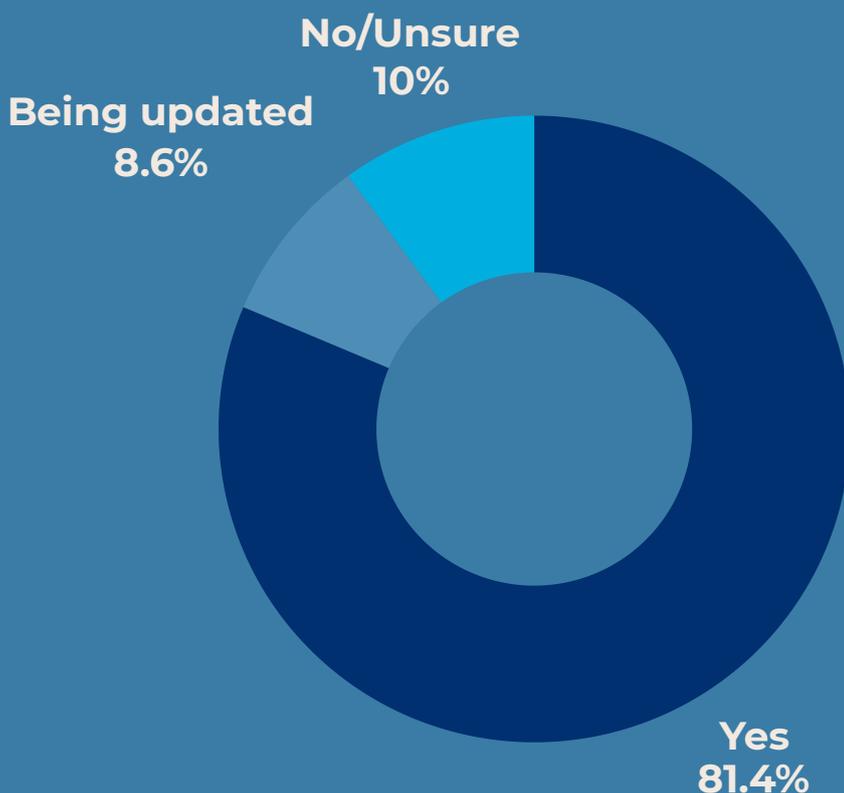
Key survey details:

- The survey was conducted in special primary schools, primary schools, special secondary schools, and secondary schools.
- **76.7%** of responses were from **primary schools** and **23.3%** of all responses were from **secondary schools**
- The survey was answered by schools representing over **100,000 students**
- The schools that responded to the survey were diverse in size, ranging from those with less than **50 students to those with over 1,000**
- The survey was conducted during **September and early October 2025**

We asked each school if they had a first aid kit, or a defibrillator, or both



We asked each school if they currently have a First Aid Policy



MER ASKED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN OUR SURVEY OF SCHOOLS

- What emergency first aid resources does your school currently have?
- Has your school received certified auto-injector training?
- Does your school hold a prescribed auto-injector (EpiPen) for a specific pupil or pupils?
- Does your school hold a prescribed inhaler for a specific pupil or pupils?
- Does your school hold a spare emergency medicine for undiagnosed pupils?
- Would your school community benefit from more resources for allergy training and dealing with emergency situations?
- Does your school currently have a First Aid Policy?
- Has CPR training been provided to your school staff?



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SURVEY RESULTS FROM THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS

1

Primary Schools

2

Special Primary Schools

3

Secondary Schools

4

Special Secondary Schools

SURVEY RESULTS FROM THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS SHOW THAT



83.5% of schools hold a
Prescribed Auto-Injector
for specific pupils



69.5% of schools hold a
Prescribed Inhaler for
specific pupils



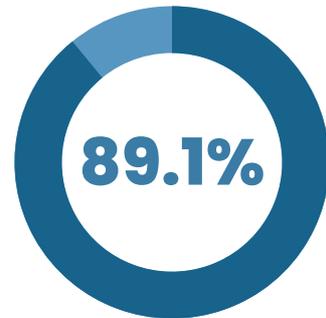
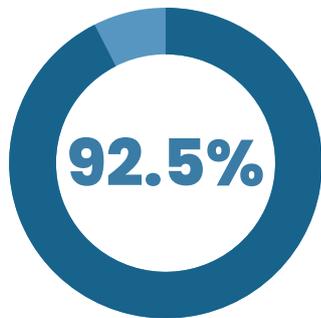
88% of schools do not have
a spare emergency
medicine for undiagnosed
pupils in their school

SURVEY FINDINGS

School Students surveyed by the Numbers

100,000+

Findings



92.5% of schools agree that their school community would benefit from more resources for allergy training & dealing with emergency situations

89.1% of schools have had CPR training provided to their school staff

69.9% OF SCHOOLS ARE NOT CERTIFIED AUTO INJECTOR TRAINED

OVERVIEW OF LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS ABOUT ADRENALINE FOR KNOWN OR SUSPECTED ANAPHYLAXIS (PART 1 OF 2)

Work Setting

S. I. No. 449 of 2015 amended the Prescription Regulations to allow certain prescription-only medicines, including adrenaline for known or suspected anaphylaxis, to be administered by trained members of the public in emergency situations. In order for an organisation, which can include schools, workplaces and other public places, to avail of an emergency medicine without the need for a prescription, members of that organisation must complete an approved course of training regarding the administration of such medicines and the management of any adverse reaction. The Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) has established a framework for the education and training of persons to safely and competently administer this medicine to those urgently requiring care.

School Setting

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the board of management is the body charged with the direct governance of a school. Schools are required to take all reasonable precautions to provide training for teachers to ensure the safety and welfare of their pupils.



OVERVIEW OF LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS ABOUT ADRENALINE FOR KNOWN OR SUSPECTED ANAPHYLAXIS (PART 2 OF 2)

Good Samaritan

Medicines legislation, permits any person to administer any medicine to another person in accordance with the directions of a registered medical practitioner. Therefore, if a person has been prescribed a medicine, but is unable to administer it to themselves, such as in the case of an overdose, there is no legal impediment to another person administering that medicine to the patient. [Regulation 4A(1)(c) of the Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) Regulations 2003, as amended) (S.I. No. 540 of 2003)]



EMERGENCY MEDICINES IN IRELAND

In 2015, Irish law was updated to create a Medicines for Listed Organisations (MLO) framework. Organisations can register with HPRA, have people trained to PHECC standards and can hold emergency medicines without a prescription.

There are 6 medicines covered by the MLO legislation which can save a life or reduce distress in an emergency.

WHO CAN USE EMERGENCY MEDICINES?

MLO legislation allows any trained person working with or engaged by a Listed Organisation to administer a medication they have been trained on. Training includes CPR and dealing with side effects of the condition or medication used.

The types of organisations where an emergency medicine can be used are listed in the Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2015 (SI 449/2015)

Any organisation that wants to procure, store, and use an emergency medicine must register with the HPRA. The organisation will need to provide details of a person who will make sure the medicine is stored and used correctly.

The HPRA keeps a list of registered organisations. The list includes details of the emergency medicines that can be stored and used at each organisation.

ONLY 7 SCHOOLS ARE REGISTERED

THE 7 REGISTERED SCHOOLS ARE

- Ballina Primary School, **Tipperary**
- Gaelscoil Chill Dara, Primary School, Newbridge, **Kildare**
- Greystones Educate Together School, Primary School, **Wicklow**
- Our Lady Queen of Peace National, Primary School, Janesboro, **Limerick**
- Saint Laurence O'Toole's National School, Roundwood, **Wicklow**
- Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál, Primary School, Inchicore, **Dublin**
- Clarin College, Secondary School, Athenry, **Galway**



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

We want all schools to have the training and equipment needed to respond to medical emergencies. This includes ensuring staff are trained to use auto-injectors and that every school is equipped with a modern medical kit containing an auto-injector and a defibrillator. By providing the right resources and knowledge, schools can be ready to act quickly and confidently when emergencies happen.



WHAT'S NEXT?

We are calling on policymakers to support practical measures that will make communities safer. This includes ensuring schools and public places are equipped with emergency medicines and defibrillators, expanding access to auto-injectors, and integrating first aid training into everyday life.

KEEP IN TOUCH

■ [MER.ie](https://mer.ie)

■ info@mer.ie



About us

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