



Suffolk Accident Rescue Service

Registered Charity Number: 1168764

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UPDATE FROM SARS



“My first contact with Suffolk Accident Rescue Service took place on a relatively calm autumn afternoon. A SARS doctor was the first clinical responder to a roadside incident in which my car, collided with a tree. I sustained numerous life-threatening injuries, including several fractures to my femur, pelvis, and elbow, a ruptured spleen that was subsequently surgically removed, and collapsed lungs. These injuries left me in an induced coma for two weeks. Yet I was unmistakably lucky in my accident. The rural location of the collision underlines the essential importance of an organisation like SARS. The extensive local knowledge and wide-ranging clinical skills of SARS responders can be the difference between life and death.”

Former SARS patient, Harry Richardson.

Harry’s story is not unique, each year there are hundreds of patients across Suffolk who benefit from specialist care provided by SARS volunteers. Our responders include Consultants in Emergency Medicine, Consultant Anaesthetists, Critical Care Paramedics and Advanced Clinical Practitioners. Their additional skills mean that they can use equipment and administer drugs which are not normally found on frontline ambulances. A SARS team or solo responder can undertake complex procedures which would not normally be possible outside the hospital environment. These can be truly lifesaving interventions as well as reducing the chances of patients suffering permanent disability. Over the last year, SARS responders have been mobilised over 450 times. This represents more than one call a day despite the challenges of the ongoing pandemic. Calls attended included road traffic collisions, cardiac arrests, falls, sporting incidents, psychiatric episodes and stabbings. Interventions undertaken by SARS responders included anaesthesia, sedations, surgical procedures and advanced airway management. The most critical patients were often accompanied by a SARS clinician to hospital to ensure they remained stable throughout.



SARS teams and solo responders are mobilised to life-threatening incidents across Suffolk

Suffolk Accident Rescue Service



SARS receives no central government or NHS funding and we rely on voluntary grants and donations to maintain and expand our clinical resources. SARS clinicians have been volunteering in Suffolk since 1972 and your support ensures that they can continue to have a positive impact on time-critical patients within the local community. Our solo network of 14 clinicians volunteered over 6,000 hours of on-call coverage, in 2021, responding to over 335 calls for assistance in numerous locations across Suffolk. Our mobile critical care team vehicles SMED20, SMED26 and SMED27, which carry doctor and paramedic teams, were mobilised to nearly 150 incidents with regular shifts taking place throughout the year.



“My husband suffered a sudden cardiac arrest at home, SARS was one of the first on scene. We were completely stunned when we later found out that SARS responders volunteer in their own time. There are no words to express how grateful and thankful both my husband and I are.”
Bernie Cleland, 2021

RECENT EXPENDITURE

Considering the extreme pressure many charities have faced over the last two years, we are pleased to report that your donations have helped us cover our running costs throughout this very challenging period. They also helped us equip a new rapid response vehicle, set up a new solo responder and take on new team clinicians who are now crewing on our team vehicles across the county. This represents a significant increase in our resources which has enabled us to directly benefit many more patients over the last 12 months. We are very thankful to all our supporters, particularly our local councils who have historically supported SARS on an annual basis.



SARS clinicians undertaking advanced prehospital training in 2021

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2022 – 23 STRATEGIC AIMS

SARS invests the funding that we receive on projects that will help us benefit more patients and improve their outcomes. This financial year we have a target of raising at least £200,000 to allow us to invest in equipment and training which will maintain and expand our clinical resources. This includes taking on new team responders to increase the volume of shifts we are providing in East and West Suffolk and also a significant investment in advanced monitoring equipment. As we celebrate our 50th year of operations we want to ensure that we have a new generation of SARS clinicians who can carry on this vital work for many years to come. Finally, we need to maintain an essential stock of critical equipment and spares, particularly our key assets such as monitoring equipment and vehicles. These items of kit cost many thousands of pounds but are essential to our work as they facilitate those advanced interventions which are helping us save lives and improve patient outcomes across Suffolk.

We are truly grateful for any support you can give us. We hope that you and your communities stay safe.



For further information, please contact us at SARS HQ, admin@sars999.org.uk, 01359 244186. Our annual report can be found on the charity commission site, [charity number 1168764](#).

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