



15 October 2025

SPC staff step up to save a life

Two Suffolk Primary Care (SPC) staff who stepped in to save a man's life after he collapsed in the street in Newmarket have appealed for the patient to get in touch.

Stacie Harvey (right) and Donna Rutherford, who work at Oakfield Surgery, stumbled across the emergency in the town centre last month after enjoying a meal out together.

They immediately offered help after seeing a man clutching his chest as his friend – who was on the phone to the ambulance service – propped him up. Shortly afterwards, the first man collapsed. He had no pulse, had stopped breathing and was unresponsive.

Stacie immediately began chest compressions while Donna – who is pregnant – supported the man's head and put the phone onto loud speaker so that the pair could take instructions from the ambulance control room.

They continued to work together to check for a pulse and clear the man's airways after he vomited blood, in total giving chest compressions for more than 12 minutes. The man then started breathing again just as an ambulance pulled up.



“Giving chest compressions wasn't easy at all,” said Stacie, who is an operations supervisor. “I was very conscious that Donna is pregnant so I didn't want to ask her to take over, but it was getting to the point that I couldn't have continued for much longer so was very relieved when the man started breathing as the ambulance arrived.

“We had our basic life support refresher training at work in December. I never thought I’d remember it in a real-life situation, but obviously it was embedded in the back of my mind when I needed it. We’re so pleased we were able to help and put our training to good use. Now we’d really like to find out what happened to the man after he was blue lighted to hospital.”

Donna, who is a medical secretary, added: “I feel we were in the right place at the right time. It’s amazing all the things that run through your mind when the adrenaline takes over – it was a surreal experience that I hope we never have to repeat again.”

James Cucchiara, managing director of SPC, said: “We are really proud of Stacie and Donna for springing into action to help save the man’s life. It underlines just how important it is for everyone to complete basic life support training if they can. Stacie and Donna’s story just shows you never know when you may need it.”

The incident happened between 10pm and 11pm on Friday 19 September and the two men involved were called Stan and Gary. Anyone with any information can email SPC.feedback@nhs.net

Ends

Suffolk Primary Care is an innovative partnership of GP surgeries in Suffolk which together care for around 70,000 patients. Its doctors and practice staff share resources and work together to ensure patients can receive high quality healthcare.

More information is available at <https://suffolkprimarycare.uk>