

# BASICS Northern Ireland Newsletter



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND GROUP  
OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR IMMEDIATE CARE

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## Welcome to BASICS Northern Ireland



Mr. Andrew Robb, FRCS, BASICS NI Secretary, at the recent PHECC course in Derrynoid Training College.

BASICS Northern Ireland is a voluntary team of doctors who specialise in pre-hospital emergency care, that is, providing skills usually only found in the emergency department of hospitals at road traffic collisions, major disasters and other emergencies.

The group is affiliated to BASICS UK, the body that represents emergency teams, such as the London HEMS helicopter response team.

BASICS teams in the UK have been involved with the 7/7 bombings as well as the Paddington Rail disaster and many motorway pile-ups.

All the doctors in the team have undergone specialist training with BASICS education and are accredited by BASICS UK to attend emergencies.

Some of the team doctors are trainers with BASICS UK and earlier in 2008, the first BASICS Pre Hospital Emergency Care Course (or PHECC as it is known!) was held in the Derrynoid Rural training College with local BASICS team members forming part of the faculty.

BASICS doctors work in very close collaboration with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. Some BASICS doctors are senior medical officers in the Ambulance Service.

BASICS doctors are paged by the Ambulance Service to attend incidents and can assist paramedics on the scene as well as bringing special medical skills into the field. They can advise the Fire and Rescue Service about medical care of people who are trapped in cars and need extrication.

The BASICS team in Northern Ireland is currently very small with around a dozen members, but we

are keen to recruit more members and train doctors in Northern Ireland on how to deal with emergencies that they may come across when driving along or off-duty.

We hold informal training days, such as the exercise with Dungannon FRS in the article below on page 2.

Many of the team members are involved with providing medical cover for sporting events in the Province such as the North West 200 and Ulster Rally and we are always happy for doctors who wish to see what pre-hospital care is all about to join us.

The best way for doctors to gain the necessary skills and accreditation is to undertake the training provided by the 3 or 5 day long PHECC course (see the bottom of the page for web link to BASICS UK).

We are also very happy to provide medical input to training exercises with PSNI and NIFRS and have been involved with recent Railway and Airport Major Incident Simulations.

Contact us via any of the e-mail addresses you see in this newsletter.

**The Editor**

## RTC Training with Crescent Link FRS, L'derry



### Pay your tax or else!

Cars confiscated for non-payment of road-tax may end up helping emergency services train to save lives

Dr John Purvis, BASICS NI team member, recently joined the award-winning RTC team at Crescent Link Fire Station, L'derry during a training session.

Volunteers played the role of victims trapped inside their cars whilst the fire crews practiced their initial approach to the incident and medical assessment of the victims.

A variety of life-threatening injuries were simulated with gusto by the volunteers who groaned their way convincingly through the

episode.

The team at Crescent Link have won National and International awards at competitions where RTC rescues are simulated and Dr. Purvis was impressed with the teams professionalism and rapid recognition of potentially fatal problems.

"It was a pleasure to work alongside a team on top form", said John, "The team here have spent a lot of time thinking about the medical priorities of RTC victims as well as fire and safety aspects"

### Office Bearers 2008

Chair : Dr. Nigel Ruddell  
Secretary: Mr. Andrew Robb  
Treasurer: Dr. John Purvis

### Correspondence

"Broadwater"  
59 Soldierstown Road  
Aghalee  
County Armagh  
BT67 0ET

### E-mail to BASICS NI

basics.ni@btinternet.com  
john@johnapurvis.co.uk

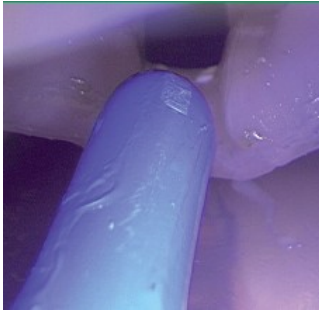
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### Web Links

British Association For Immediate Care: [www.basics.org.uk](http://www.basics.org.uk)

## Gum Elastic Bougie: One of Anaesthesia's best kept secrets



### Gum Elastic Bougie

Device used in Grade 2 view where there is an incomplete view of the vocal cords and standard ET tube use is difficult

This is the title of an article written by Dr John Hinds (member of BASICS Northern Ireland) and Dr P Michalek, both based in the Anaesthetics department of Antrim Area Hospital and published in the **Journal of Paramedic Practice Vol 1, Issue 1**.

The authors quote the recommendation in JRCALC guidelines 2008 that 'When pre-hospital tracheal intubation is undertaken, a gum elastic bougie should be available routinely'.

Despite this advice, the bougie has not been universally available among ambulance services in the UK—up to a third do not include the bougie as part of their airway management strategy.

The article then goes on to discuss the history of the device and technique for use. The authors highlight the problem that occurs in the pre-hospital trauma patient when it is impossible to extend the patient's neck for a good view of the vocal cords—the bougie is an

ideal way to get access to the trachea without full extension in a patient with cervical collar in place.

When the gum elastic bougie is correctly positioned in the trachea, 'clicks' should be felt as the bougie passes over tracheal rings, and a 'hold-up' encountered as the bougie passes into the narrowing airways.

Overall, the article is of great interest and practical advice to all pre-hospital medical practitioners.

## SUNDAY THE 16TH NOVEMBER WAS WORLD REMEMBRANCE DAY FOR ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISION VICTIMS



### Hidden Hazard

Careful examination of the scene revealed some hidden hazards for emergency personnel.

## Nine Car Pile-up on A4 (Practice!)

Drivers travelling along the busy and dangerous A4 between Dungannon and Ballygawley are unfortunately used to the sight of a RTC, but on Sunday 16th November, things were not quite what they seemed!

Eight fire appliances and control vehicles, along with 3 BASICS doctors (Drs MacSorley, Purvis and Reaney), the PSNI body recovery and identification team and the Fire Victims Support Unit attended a 9 car simulated pile-up with 17 victims in a lay-by beside the busy road.

Live, simulated casualties were treated by the teams and passing traffic was carefully shepherded past the spectacle by PSNI teams who handed out Road Safety advice and leaflets.

The exercise was also an opportunity to test the skills

of a group of Fire and Rescue Personnel known as "First Person on Scene—FPOS" These firefighters have received additional training in immediate assessment and treatment of potentially life-threatening conditions and can be identified by a logo on their helmets (white cross on green background).

The BASICS doctors found it particularly useful to have team members with extra skills available especially since many of the casualties were P1 or P2 category; the most severely injured.

The doctors initially found themselves having to triage and treat multiple casualties and close co-operation was needed to prioritise those patients who needed urgent extrication from the variety of overturned and up-ended vehicles.

Patients were transferred

to a Casualty Clearing Station near the pile-up for management by the Medical Commander, Dr. Fred MacSorley before dispatch.

Fred commented "The initial assessment of the scene by the first doctor to arrive (Dr. Stephen Reaney) and the Fire Incident Officer really made things easy for us— the whole incident, which extended over hundreds of yards, was broken up into three manageable sectors so that everyone knew what they had to deal with".

After the Incident, all services went back to Drumglass High School, Carland Rd, Dungannon for debrief and an excellent lunch provided by the school catering staff.

NIFRS Group Commander Billy Orr, in charge of the exercise, commented that all those involved had learnt how to make a difference.



**Fred sorts it out**  
Dr Fred MacSorley at the Casualty Clearing Station (Left) and just some of the devastation (Right)



## Lights, Camera, Action

BASICS work can sometimes lead in you unexpected directions as I discovered after a film production company approached BASICS NI for medical advice regarding an up and coming BBC production, "The Occupation".

The production is based in Iraq during its occupation by coalition forces and tells the story of two British army medics in the thick of it.

I was duly despatched to The Painthouse Studio in Belfast's Titanic quarter to

take on the role of medical advisor for the shoot.

My role involved liaising with the make up artists regarding the portrayal of injuries, answering the director's queries and demonstrating the proper use of everything from iv giving sets, cannulae and field dressings to the actors as appropriate.

I was involved with scenes such as the aftermath of an improvised grenade explosion and the arrival of casualties at the Basra Hospital after an attack.

I was greatly impressed by the meticulous attention to detail shown in the whole process as well as the amount of time involved in repeated takes and the use of different camera angles.

I will look at television in a different light after my experience!!

The entire experience was very enjoyable and I had the opportunity to rub shoulders with James Nesbitt, lead actor in the show, which will probably be screened in 3 parts on the BBC in March 2009.

**BASICS NI  
MEMBER  
DR. AIDAN  
MCMENAMIN  
DESCRIBES A  
SOMEWHAT  
UNUSUAL  
ASSIGNMENT**

## How does a BASICS doctor get called to an incident?

In Northern Ireland, BASICS doctors are activated by pager. NI Ambulance Service sets off the pagers across the Province so that the nearest doctor can attend.

Pagers are usually activated for multi-patient road collisions, lorry versus car etc, major incidents,

prolonged entrapments and when special pain relief or anaesthetic drugs are required. Sometimes a paramedic on scene might request assistance directly.

If it is not clear from the initial information received if a BASICS doctor is required, pass any new information back to ambulance control

so that a decision can be made about activation.

Most BASICS doctors in the Province drive under **green doctor's lights** rather than "blues and twos". Sometimes they travel in NIAS Rapid Response Vehicles alongside paramedics making a useful team.



# BASICS Northern Ireland



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**Personal Protective Equipment**  
Dr. John Apps, BASICS UK member, demonstrates some of the personal protective equipment required to safely attend road traffic collisions. The cool mirror shades are model's own

*BASICS NI hope you have enjoyed our first Newsletter. We aim to publish an edition quarterly and are keen to include anything that would appeal to pre-hospital medical practitioners. Please contact the editor if you have any material for publication including details of courses or lectures. We would also be happy to publicise results of audits, interesting case studies or personal reflections in the pre-hospital field.*

*Please feel free to distribute this newsletter to any of your colleagues in the pre-hospital emergency services, hospital A and E services, road safety groups, potential sponsors or any organisation interested in improving the outcome of road traffic collision victims.*

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*Thank you for your support*

*Editor, Dr. John Purvis, Treasurer, BASICS Northern Ireland. E: [john@johnapurvis.co.uk](mailto:john@johnapurvis.co.uk)*

## BASICS EDUCATION UK PHEC Courses 2008/9



One of the best ways for Healthcare Professionals to get training in pre-hospital emergency medicine is to attend a 3 or 5 day training course run by BASICS. There are several courses held throughout the year and many are in Madingley Hall, a medieval manor house just outside Cambridge. This rather sumptuous setting combines the medieval splendor of its banqueting hall and lounges with a thoroughly modern accommodation block and bar. Successful completion of the course and examination earns you a certificate from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.



**PHEC Course at Madingley**  
Held in a Tudor manor hall, the Madingley PHEC course combines lectures, skill stations and outdoor practical teaching

### **3 day Courses in 2009**

16-18 January 2009	Holiday Inn, Coventry
2 - 4 February 2009	Madingley Hall, Cambridge
23 - 25 March 2009	Madingley Hall, Cambridge

Further details can be obtained from the BASICS website:

<https://www.basics.org.uk/education.html>

Or contact [Tracy](#) at BASICS education on +44 1473 218407