

[**Frequently asked questions – First Aid for event organisers.**](#)

What is “First Aid”?

First aid is just what it reads like – first line of aid for someone whom is injured or ill. It is closely aligned with the meaning of “ambulance services” such as in NSW Legislation as the provision of “first aid for sick or injured persons”. So, first aid is the initial intervention between injury/illness and definitive treatment – Ambulance, Doctor.

Who can provide first aid?

Anyone can provide first aid in any situation whether trained or not. It is expected however, that any first aid intervention process does not exceed the skills or knowledge of the first aider – i.e. a lay person (anyone whom has no prior training in first aid) will not attempt or perform an intravenous procedure unless they have extensive experience in such. But would be expected to assist anyone to stop bleeding or remain in a comfortable position until definitive help arrives – and at least to call “000”.

First aid provision for fee or reward (i.e. providing first aid for payment, contract, donation, gift, or any other intrinsic or extrinsic reward) please refer to FAQ “Do first aid providers have to be licensed/approved?”.

Do I have to provide for first aid at my event?

It is a requirement for event organisers, irrelevant of size of the event, to provide appropriate “Duty of Care” to all persons working, visiting or otherwise engaged whom may attend or be part of the event. With this in mind it is appropriate to provide a level of emergency management in any situation. Included in this would be providing emergency first aid in case of illness or injury to persons at the event. Various governing bodies may have minimum requirements for the provision of first aid at an event – such as affiliates and association constitutional regulations, local Councils, Police - including Liquor licensing officer/s, State Government regulations and insurance companies – just to name a few.

What level of first aid am I required to have?

The level of first aid will be determined by the risk management process undertaken prior to your event. Variables - such as time, location, weather, environment, time of day, numbers of participants, visitors, duration, type of activities within the event and distances from emergency services – will all provide valuable information as to the emergency requirements for your event. Any reputable provider will be able to assist with this risk management process as part of their quoting policy.

Remember: First aid in its basic form may be the acceptable level required to run some events. The higher the risk the higher the level of emergency care.

Do first aid providers have to be licensed/approved?

NO. Under NSW Health Legislation it is NOT a requirement that any person or organisation conducting first aid for fee or reward be authorised by the Director General of NSW Department of Health.

How much should I spend on first aid?

First aid costs will be determined by the results of the risk management process. The service provided will vary in costs as skills, number of first aiders, their equipment and clinical guidelines increases with levels of first aiders – skill levels range from basic first aider to intensive care paramedics and in some cases even doctors. Quality providers will be usually more expensive than other providers due to overheads such as licenses, registrations, medical oversight, etc.

Remember: In most cases the cheapest is not always the best option. And in rare occasions, perhaps the most expensive is the same. However, irrespective of costs, the quality provider will always be the best option. You will get what you pay for!!!

Can anyone doing first aid at my event, use drugs or medications on persons who become ill or injured at my event?

To be in possession of, and, administer any medications in NSW for the purpose of providing first aid at any event for any reason, any person or organisation must be approved by license issued by the Pharmaceutical Services Branch (PSB) of the NSW Department of Health under the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods (NSW) legislation. Approvals carry specific conditions imposed by the PSB which may require specific guidelines and medical oversight.

Whilst the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods (NSW) legislation provides for possession of certain scheduled medications without a license, this approval is for use within the realms of occupational first aid workplace situation use only.

First aid training provides for suitably trained first aiders to assist other persons with administration of medications prescribed to them, and whom may have difficulty self administering in emergency circumstances.

Liability for any malpractice issues relating to administering medications by non-authorized persons during an event or activity whom have been engaged by event organisers, will fall back to the event organiser.

Can a first aid provider, provide transport of injured or sick persons from my event to hospital?

NO. Under all State and Territory applicable legislations, it is illegal to provide transport of sick or injured persons for fee or reward without the express authority of the Director General of the relevant Health Departments and/or the State Ambulance Service. Emergency transport can only be provided in this situation by the relevant State/Territory Ambulance Services.

Transport, other than by the State/Territory Ambulance Service, can be arranged and provided by the patient and/or relatives or friends at their own risk.

Am I covered for any malpractice or public injury to persons by the first aid provider at my event?

Any event organiser, representatives and/or committees are responsible for any activity being conducted under their control and authority. Therefore any first aid provision is ultimately provided under authority of the event organiser/s and is the responsibility of the event organiser/s to ensure adequate protection is afforded any person or patient whom may be attended to directly or indirectly by the approved first aid provider. There is no 100% indemnity clause for event organisers – this will be up to courts to decide if any case gets that far.

All reputable first aid providers will be adequately covered by professional and medical malpractice, and public liability insurance. You as the event organiser have the right to verify this insurance by asking for a copy of the “Confirmation of Insurance” to be produced as part of the quoting process.

It is also advised that any event organiser, committee or association seek copies of applicable licenses, accreditations, registrations and clinical guidelines before engaging any first aid provider.

Remember: It is your responsibility to ensure all providers are legal, insured and provide the applicable level of service being hired. If any activity provided by any first aid provider is illegal then any insurance policy the provider may have (assuming they have one in the first instance) will be voided by the insurer because the entity is providing an illegal service and it cannot be insured as such – e.g. if you drive your car whilst under the influence of alcohol and are charged after an accident, your motor vehicle insurer has (and most likely will) the right to determine the vehicle insurance null and void due to the illegal and reckless use of the motor vehicle. The same will occur with the first aid provider – their insurance will be gone and any claims for malpractice or other liability due to any reason will fall back to the event organiser/s.

Can a first aid provider charge for their services individually to any person they treat or attend to?

No. However a pre-determined contract for services is appropriate. It is illegal to solicit fee, reward, gift or beneficence for the provision of first aid unless expressly approved by the relevant Health Department Director.

Does having first aid provider/s at my event cover the cost of transport to a hospital by the State/Territory Ambulance Service?

No. Any costs incurred for, during and after transport of the patient by the State/Territory Ambulance Service or it’s affiliate, is charged by them at their applicable rates, either direct to the patient or their concession services, private health services or relevant ambulance insurer.