

8 Is there a doctor in the house? Medical provision at live events

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Introduction

Event organisers have a duty of care to their attendees that extends to making suitable provisions for their health, safety, and welfare. Organisers are also responsible for ensuring their event does not create unnecessary extra demand on local healthcare services. However, alongside these basic principles lies a complex array of risks, particularly concerning the provision of medical care. This chapter delves into the intricate realm of risk attitudes, specifically regarding medical provision at events within the United Kingdom.

The existing guidance to event organisers and medical providers focuses on medical facilities that reduce the impact on local community health services. The effects of events on their environment is important and has been the focus of research (Spaepen et al., 2023). However, much still needs to be done to explore how organisers and the event medicine industry assess medical risks to determine the level of provision. Concerns about how event medical providers operate have been raised with local authorities by the Care Quality Commission (Garlick, 2020). These concerns highlight a need for a more structured and consistent approach to medical needs assessments. While currently unregulated, the prospect of regulation further emphasises the case for a greater understanding of how organisers assess medical requirements.

Practitioner guidance includes *The Purple Guide* (Event Industry Forum, 2023), *The A Guide* (National Arenas Association, n.d.), and *The Green Guide* (Sports Grounds Safety Authority, 2018a). Each of these guides emphasises the responsibility of the event organiser or venue operator to conduct a risk assessment of the event and make provisions for suitable medical cover. However, all guides refer generally to risk assessment rather than providing specific instructions or advocating a particular approach to assessing risk. *The Purple Guide*, which in the UK has become one of the most recognised guidance documents, explicitly moved away from a calculated approach to an individualised risk assessment approach when the Event Industry Forum updated the guide in 2013.