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## Letter to the Editor

# Author's response to Letter to the Editor 'Can the chain of survival start with environment safety for special circumstances'

Dear Editor,

As a response on the scoping review on various facets of the 'chain of survival' concept<sup>1</sup> under the guidance of the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR) Education Implementation and Teams Task Force, Yilmaz et al. (*citation of the letter by Yilmaz et al.*) proposed rescuer safety at the scene as an additional first link of the chain of survival – "environment safety". In the light of recent major car accidents and mass casualty events, the letter focusses on prevention and the protection of first responders. (*citation of the letter by Yilmaz et al.*)

While Yilmaz et al. describe general first aid measures helping accident victims rather than cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), which is the focus of the ILCOR Task Forces and the Chain of Survival, scene safety is undoubtedly the first and foremost step before tending to any victim, regardless of the kind of emergency. Therefore, safety of the rescuer is an integrated part of Basic Life Support and first aid courses worldwide, and assessing scene safety is part of standard operating procedures in professional emergency medical systems (EMS).<sup>2</sup> Self-protection and situational awareness have seen an additional boost in popularity during the recent COVID-19 pandemic<sup>3</sup>, and rightly so. As suggested before, first responders embedded in a system should be professionally cared for<sup>4</sup>, including education in scene safety.

Further tangible impact on rescuer safety could be achieved through mandatory first aid and CPR training in driving schools as promoted by the European Resuscitation Council on a European level,<sup>5</sup> mandatory CPR education for school children as promoted by ILCOR and the "Kids Save Lives" program,<sup>6</sup> or mandatory workplace CPR trainings for employees. Currently, first responders educated and alerted by EMS systems are trained in scene safety and self-protection, but mandatory first aid and CPR training can ensure a larger proportion of the population are trained in scene safety before responding.

The recently proposed concept of a 'chainmail of survival' offers an opportunity to add such important links as rescuer scene

safety.<sup>1,7</sup> However, there is a need to ensure messaging for first responders to cardiac arrest is succinct, concise and to-the-point. To reach consensus on enlarged chains of survival would be the task of international organizations such as ILCOR or regional resuscitation councils to deliver uniform suggestions in the upcoming 2025 guidelines updates.

## Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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