

AED IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

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This guide answers common questions regarding the feasibility of launching an AED Program for your organization. The guide explores:

- ✓ Benefits of an AED
- ✓ Laws & Liability in Ontario
- ✓ Budgeting for an AED Program
- ✓ How to implement an AED Program

To learn more about starting an AED program in your facility contact Heart Starters.

BENEFITS OF AN AED

An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a small portable device that analyzes the heart's rhythm and prompts the user to deliver a shock if needed. AEDs are specially designed for easy use by "first responders". Those who typically arrive first on the scene of a medical emergency.

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✓ Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) can happen anywhere, anytime to people of all ages. A lifesaving shock of electricity must be delivered quickly to restore the heart's normal rhythm and pump blood throughout the body. Defibrillation is the only effective treatment for Sudden Cardiac Arrest caused by ventricular fibrillation.

✓ In Canada 35,000 to 40,000 people die each year from Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Two of every three Sudden Cardiac Arrest deaths occur outside the hospital.

✓ The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada says the use of an AED within the first 8 minutes of collapse increases survival rates. AED programs have shown that survival rates can rise to 30 percent or

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more when an AED program is in place. Each minute of defibrillation delay reduces survival by 10%

- ✓ The best results for defibrillation occur in the first three minutes, measured from the moment the victim collapses to when the defibrillation shock is delivered. On average it takes EMS teams an average of 6 to 12 minutes to arrive. That's why having an AED readily accessible wherever groups of people gather makes good preventative sense. Unfortunately not every emergency vehicle carries a defibrillator, the only device that can treat Sudden Cardiac Arrest. This almost requires that an AED unit be on-site anywhere groups of people gather and that trained responders are available.

- ✓ Office towers, golf courses, high-rise buildings, community centers, airports, casinos, manufacturing plants, schools, and shopping malls are all being equipped with AEDs.

- ✓ The Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians is calling for widespread public access to AEDs, which has the potential to be the greatest signal advance in the treatment for Sudden Cardiac Arrest since the development of CPR.

LAWS & LIABILITY

AED units are a relatively new category of lifesaving equipment. Laws are evolving governing the use of AED units and vary from province to province but the general trend is towards making AED units more readily available to the general public.

- ✓ **Regulated Health Professions Act:** Under the law in Ontario the application of electrical defibrillation is a controlled act which a physician is authorized to perform. A physician may also designate an individual to perform defibrillation. The Red Cross Society's Medical Director oversees and approves the Heart Starters AED program. Individuals who are certified using the Red Cross's AED Provider certification are authorized to perform defibrillation.

- ✓ **Good Samaritan Law:** This law protects individuals from gross negligence if they volunteer to help others in an emergency medical situation and are not expecting payment. However those who use an

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AED should be properly trained to perform electrical defibrillation. The Good Samaritan law does not apply to lifeguards and other employees who are paid to respond to emergencies.

- ✓ **Risk Assessment:** Keep in mind a victim who has suffered a cardiac arrest from a heart attack will die without defibrillation. There is no alternative but rapid and quick defibrillation for someone with no pulse. To date no organization or individual has been the target of legal action as a result of using an AED or having an AED Program.

BUDGETING FOR AN AED PROGRAM

All AED Programs require an initial start up budget involving purchasing equipment and training responders. Ongoing costs are also required to maintain your equipment and ensure staff is prepared to respond to emergencies when they occur. Use the following checklist to help prepare your budget in launching an AED Program.

- ✓ **Equipment:** The cost of AED units and training systems varies among manufactures. They typical cost about \$5,000 per unit. Contact Heart Starters for additional information:

- ✓ **Training:** Heart Starters offers AED Provider certification as well as AED Instructor and Trainer courses for your organization.

A 5 hr. AED Provider course with student manual, equips candidates with the skills and confidence to operate an AED unit.

Ongoing in-service training is required every 90 days. Candidates review emergency procedures and AED protocols with the designated AED coordinator from your organization.

Actar D-fib Manikins to teach both CPR and AED are required for the start up and ongoing practicing of AED skills.

- ✓ **Miscellaneous:**

Pocket masks, gloves, blankets, first aid kits, replacement batteries, scissors, and extra electrodes should also be in your budget.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT AN AED PROGRAM

No two facilities or organization will implement an AED program in exactly the same way. Assign an AED co-coordinator to manage and tailor a program that works for your situation. The following checklist can help you launch your program.

- ✓ **Identify your response team:** Determining who is likely to respond in an emergency will affect how and where AEDs are mounted or stored. The size and layout of your facilities also determine how many people you will want to respond.

- ✓ **Train response team and plan for refresher training:** All responders who might use the AED should take the AED Provider course. Classes are five hours long and give responders the skill and confidence to use AEDs. Keep records of who was trained and when they need refresher courses. Some Affiliate Members have adopted the “train the trainer” approach, where staff becomes certified to instruct the training course.

- ✓ **Assess how many AEDs you will need and where to place them:** The Heart and Stroke Foundation recommends defibrillation in less than 4 to 5 minutes. Consider highly visible locations, near expected responders, close to where the largest numbers of people spend their time, where people may be subject to strenuous activity.

- ✓ **Design Policies and Procedures:** If you already have an emergency response plan, integrate your AED program into it. This should include who manages the AED Program, when the AED should be used and required training to use it, types and locations of AEDs and other equipment (gloves, masks, etc.), training and refresher training policy, process and schedule for checking and maintaining equipment, records that must be kept each time an AED is used, how to handle data recorded by the AED during use, what to do after an event such as downloading and transferring of data from the AED.

- ✓ **Promote your AED program:** An internal communication campaign will help people become familiar with your program and inform them how to alert trained responders if they witness a cardiac emergency.