

SHOCTOBER IS DEFIBRILLATOR AWARENESS MONTH

Cardiac Arrest Survival Foundation

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Sudden cardiac arrest is a silent killer: it can happen to anyone, anywhere and at any time or age. It kills between 23,000 and 33,000 Australians each year, more than breast cancer, shootings and road crashes combined. That's about two busloads of people dying every day.

That's why the Cardiac Arrest Survival Foundation, Australia's first charity dedicated to reducing needless deaths from out of hospital cardiac arrests, has declared *Shoctober* to be defibrillator awareness month. Defibrillators provide automated heart rhythm analysis, voice commands, and deliver a shock. When the heart stops beating, a defibrillator can shock the heart back to normal rhythm. But every minute that passes without a heartbeat reduces your chance of surviving by 10 per cent. Unfortunately, research shows about 75 per cent of sudden cardiac arrests happen away from a hospital, with a survival rate of just 6 per cent. Increasingly, the time taken for an ambulance to reach you through traffic means help may arrive too late.

According to the Chair of the Cardiac Arrest Survival Foundation, Dr Donald Dingsdag, even an untrained passerby with access to a defibrillator might have helped prevent a death. Yet there is scant distribution of defibrillators either at workplaces or in public spaces. And unfortunately, even when a defibrillator is present, there have been fatalities from malfunctioning or poorly deployed devices: US research has linked 1150 deaths to defibrillator failures over 15 years. In Australia, the number of deployed defibrillators is unknown.

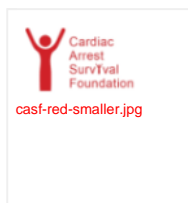
A non-legislative national policy body called the AED Deployment Registry believes however, that saving lives should not be left to chance. The AEDDR is lobbying for improved access to defibrillators in workplaces and public spaces, such as on public transport, at schools, sports facilities and in shopping centres. Guidelines for the proper deployment of defibrillators known as *The Defibrillator Deployment Guidelines* are available on their website at www.aeddr.com.

Have your workplace, club or school show its support for Shoctober by ordering a DefibMat, an easy to use training tool that simulates the use of a defibrillator while you watch a five-minute video called *Survive In Five*. Find out more about running a defibrillator awareness programme this Shoctober at www.shoctober.org.au

For more information or interviews, contact: media@cardiacarrest.org.au Ph: 02 9498 8837
or go direct to:

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Images



Attachments

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