

ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATION PROGRAM - QUICK OVERVIEW

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Heart Association has a goal of helping businesses and other facilities establish public access defibrillation (PAD) programs to reduce the time to defibrillation and improve the cardiac arrest survival rate. This overview briefly summarizes issues involved in implementing a PAD program. Detailed information in each item mentioned below can be found in the pockets of the folder (see the contents listing in the center of the folder). In providing information about automated external defibrillators, the AHA does not recommend one device over another. Information on AEDs is just a guide for making informed decisions about choosing the appropriate device for an emergency action plan. The decision to establish a PAD program and purchase the proper AED should be based on the particular needs of a company or other facility.

ELEMENTS OF A PAD PROGRAM

- 1. Training designated rescuers in CPR and how to use an AED.**
 - Anyone expected to use an AED should be trained in how to use it and in CPR.
 - The American Heart Association has developed the Heartsaver AED course, which is available through Community Training Centers in most cities (quarterly reviews are necessary).
 - The course lasts about 6 hours with participants receiving a course completion card after successfully demonstrating skills proficiency through written and performance evaluation.
 - To obtain information on course availability, call your nearest American Heart Association or 1-800-AHA-USA1.

- 2. Having physician oversight to help ensure quality control.**
 - The Federal Drug Administration (FDA) requires a physician's prescription to buy an AED.
 - The American Heart Association recommends further physician involvement to provide medical oversight of the PAD program and to help ensure the program's safety and effectiveness.
 - Obtain suggestions for identifying an physician to provide medical oversight by contacting your local EMS system or the American Heart Association.

- 3. Integrating with the local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system.**
 - Before establishing a PAD program, check with your local EMS system to determine the requirements that may apply. In some states requirements might include an application and filing a facility's plan to respond to a cardiac emergency.
 - The local EMS needs to know where AEDs are placed in a facility. The public dispatch office may be able to add the AED's location to their 911 computer screen.
 - Communicating ahead of time with the local EMS will save crucial seconds (or minutes) in a cardiac emergency, improving the chances of survival.

- 4. Using and maintaining AEDs according to the manufacturer's specifications.**

- All AEDs work in a similar fashion. However, it's important for users to be trained to use their specific device the way it was intended to be used.
- AEDs require fairly low upkeep, but regularly scheduled maintenance will ensure their "readiness" in the event of an emergency.
- Reviewing the manufacturer's maintenance agreement will provide more information on maintenance requirements.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Selecting an AED

Three manufacturers make AEDs suitable for PAD programs. Each model can be bought with different features. The three basic models are the Forerunner distributed by H-P HeartStream and Laerdal; the LifePack 500 distributed by Physio-Control; and the FirstSave distributed by SurVivaLink. Other models may become available as technology changes.

- All these devices have FDA market clearance.
- All are acceptable to the AHA.
- All have memory of its use.
- All have the capability to download use records.
- All are EASY TO USE.

A chart outlining the general characteristics of the devices and the 800 numbers for each distributor is included in the right pocket of this folder. Contact them for the name of a local representative.

Buying an AED for Your Facility

- Study the AED chart in the right pocket and other information in this packet.
- Contact the manufacturers' representatives and ask for more information about the AEDs in which you're interested.
- For each device that seems to meet your needs, ask a sales representative to meet with you to demonstrate the device, give more information and answer questions.
- Prepare your questions and other needs for your visit with the representative. Be sure to review in detail with the representative each of the features listed, plus information such as warranties, service contracts, liability coverage, etc.
- The average cost of an AED is \$3,000. This price will vary depending on how many units are purchased and the features included.

Placement of AEDs in Your Facility

- Place AEDs in central locations near a telephone where they can be easily accessed.
- Place AEDs so any victim can be reached in less than three minutes.
- Place AEDs close to the person(s) trained to respond to an emergency.
- Notify everyone of AED locations.
- When placing AEDs, consider whether trained rescuers will have to use more than one elevator. If so, locating AEDs at different levels may make access more convenient.

Legal Issues

- Many states have recently provided limited liability for lay rescuers trained to use AEDs. Some states also provide limited liability for the entity (company or other facility) that purchases the AEDs, the physician providing oversight and the persons providing training. Check to see what the law is in your state.
- Establishing a PAD program with the four elements recommended by the American Heart Association can minimize risk.

- The growing trend toward PAD programs may eventually increase liability for companies and facilities *not* prepared to respond appropriately to a cardiac emergency.