

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AED)

Definition:

Automated External Defibrillators (AED's) are specialized medical devices designed to recognize and treat certain lethal heart rhythms during a cardiac arrest. AED's provide auditory and visual prompts to assist first responders, whether they are medically trained or not, in treating an individual in a cardiac arrest. The AED delivers an electrical shock to persons only when the heart is in ventricular fibrillation or ventricular tachycardia. In other cardiac arrest situations, the heart does not respond to electric stimulus but needs medications and breathing support instead. AED's have been shown to decrease mortality when used by trained persons and used in conjunction with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). AED's are less successful when the victim has been in cardiac arrest for longer than a few minutes, especially if no CPR was provided. At the current time, an AED is located on the premises of Nokomis Regional High, Sebasticook Valley Middle School, Corinna Elementary and Hartland Consolidated. RSU 19 will be looking to purchase an AED for additional buildings in the near future. The RSU 19 school physician will provide medical oversight.

AEDs in the School Setting:

It is expected that the need for an AED in a school setting would be rare. In the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Policy Statement of January 2004, they estimate the risk of sudden cardiac arrest in high school athletes to be 0.5 – 1 per 100,000 high school athletes. It appears that the use of an AED is more likely to occur with a student or school visitor that has not yet been diagnosed with an underlying cardiac condition.

School Nurse Responsibility:

- Project Coordinator for the building in which an AED is located.
- Obtain written authorization from school physician for the purchase of AED's and approval of this policy and procedure. Ensure that the school physician will provide a case review in the event that an AED is used.
- Assure that all staff in the appropriate buildings will be trained.
- Solicit adults throughout the RSU 19 who would like to be trained and then refreshed annually on how to use the AED.
- Include local and wider EMS in the planning, implementation and location of an AED - In the event of a sudden cardiac arrest emergency, the 9-1-1 dispatcher will know if an AED is on the premises and will be able to notify the EMS system as well as the responders already on the scene.
- Identify the training needs and instructors.
- Identify the location and security/accessibility of the equipment.
- Be knowledgeable in liability issues, i.e., "An Act To Permit Automated External Defibrillators in K to Grade 12 Schools." LD 1785.
- Oversee the maintenance of the AED with a schedule and checklist.
- Oversee documentation when an AED is used.

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