

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED)

Background

The Division believes in ensuring a safe and healthy environment for students, staff and others at division properties and will support the use of **Automated External Defibrillators (AED)** on its premises to be used in emergency situations by trained individuals.

It is widely accepted that the use of AED programs will increase survival rates in workplaces and communities with situations of sudden cardiac arrest. An AED is considered the most effective treatment for sudden cardiac arrest. Early defibrillation alternating with CPR is paramount to increase success for victims of sudden cardiac arrest. Defibrillation (*ideally within the first 3 to 5 minutes of cardiac arrest*) will dramatically increase survival rates for victims.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance and information regarding the use, management and administration of the Division's AED program. The AED procedure will raise awareness and therefore increase positive outcomes for victims of sudden cardiac arrest.

Procedures

1. Approval

Alberta Health Services (AHS) guidelines provide some basic considerations for deciding whether to host an AED. Considerations may be based on location/response considerations, populations and activity. The Safety Coordinator will make final decisions to allow a defibrillator at a division worksite. High school locations are generally considered appropriate host sites typically because they are often hubs for community use especially hosting larger sporting events and are at greater risk of having a victim of sudden cardiac arrest. Any cost associated with the purchase of an AED will be the responsibility of that location's budget.

2. Device Specifications

All defibrillators must be Canadian Safety Association (CSA) approved and will be maintained according to the manufacturer's guidelines. Defibrillators will be housed in an alarmed cabinet and marked with a sign. Defibrillator supplies should include: barrier devices, razor, scissors, drying pads and gloves. The Division will work towards consistency with equipment makes and models to help keep training and understanding the equipment as simplified as possible. The Safety Coordinator will keep records of specifications and serial numbers for each approved AED purchased or donated to schools.

3. Location

3.1 The location of the AED will be determined after a site assessment has been performed by the Safety Coordinator.

3.2 The AED will be placed in a selected and approved area where it is:

3.2.1 central and easy to locate

3.2.2 near physical activities and public gatherings and visible to high traffic areas

3.2.3 near higher risk areas like a gymnasium when possible

3.2.4 near a phone when possible

- 3.2.5 marked with universal signage
- 3.2.6 kept in an alarmed cabinet
- 3.2.7 accessible when school is being used (*accessible to sporting teams and coaches or outside user groups as per school facility rental agreement*).

4. **Maintenance and Testing**

4.1 All equipment and accessories necessary for support of medical emergency response shall be maintained in a state of readiness. Specific maintenance requirements include:

4.1.1 The Site Occupational Health and Safety Representative will be responsible for *the documented* monthly visual maintenance check (inspection) of the AED using **Form 162-1**. *The completed monthly inspection form shall be sent to the Safety Coordinator via safety@brsd.ab.ca. Blank inspection form copies shall be kept in the AED cabinet.*

4.1.2 The Safety Coordinator will register all AED's with the online AHS PAD Program, and will register as the lead PAD Coordinator to monitor the program and ensure inspections are being completed.

4.1.3 The AED host site will be responsible for typical maintenance costs which will include pad and battery replacement. If the current defibrillator is not considered effective according to changes announced by a Health Canada recognized standard, or if there is a manufacturer recall, the defibrillator will be removed. Notification to building users will be given, and signs and cases removed unless the equipment is replaced with an effective model.

5. **Training**

In Alberta, having special training to use a defibrillator is not mandatory, however it is strongly recommended. Training in the use of an AED will be provided to voluntary staff through first aid certification or CPR/AED specific training. A list of trained personnel will be posted at the site and will be kept up to date. While specific training is important, these devices are designed to be simple and once turned on, will provide verbal instructions and advise rescuers of what to do. Always call 911 if a defibrillator is needed. The AED will be accessible to all facility users.

6. **Standards of Use**

Access is authorized for emergency response situations that may become life threatening. The use of an AED can be applied at the time of cardiac arrest.

7. **Notification of EMS**

When EMS arrives at schools involving a medical emergency, school administration will inform any medical personnel that there is an AED onsite. Once schools are registered with the AHS PAD Program then the location of the device will be available to responders through 911 dispatches.

8. **Communication**

Notification of new defibrillators in the community school will be messaged through school newsletters. The supervisor or school administrator will ensure the life-saving devices are introduced to staff and students. Communication of the policy can also be done through information on the facilities user agreement. Outside user groups will be encouraged to have AED certification.

9. **Volunteer Responders**

Volunteer responders often possess a varied degree of training in emergency medical response. The extent to which these volunteer responders shall act will be appropriate to their training and experience. Anyone can provide voluntary assistance to victims of medical emergencies. The Division will not maintain training records for outside facility users or for the many individuals that volunteer within the school division on any given day. The Division will not be responsible to provide emergency response for outside users of the school division facilities.

10. **Medical Oversight**

The Province of Alberta has legislated that it is not a medically delegated act to use or keep an AED; however AED training organizations certification will be overseen by the Alberta Medical Director. The Safety Coordinator will work with the AHS PAD Program to have defibrillators registered and will have the equipment serviced as per manufacturer recommendations. Schools will be responsible for maintaining the equipment with oversight from the Safety Coordinator. Services beyond regular inspection and maintenance of an AED will be provided by a competent organization arranged by the Safety Coordinator. If the equipment has been used or does not appear to be working, contact the Safety Coordinator immediately.

11. **Post Incident**

11.1 Review

11.1.1 Incident and AED data will be downloaded from the AED by the Site Occupational Health and Safety Representative and reported to the Safety Coordinator. The Safety Coordinator will enter the information into the AHS PAD Program within 48 hours of occurrence.

11.1.2 A copy of the AED Sudden Cardiac Arrest Report Form will be submitted to the Safety Coordinator who will then submit the information to AHS.

11.1.3 The Safety Coordinator will ensure that the AED used is serviced and in a state of readiness according to the manufacturer’s recommendations.

11.2 Cardiac arrest can be traumatic for responders and it is recommended that they see school division counsellors and/or contact the Employee and Family Assistance Program.

12. **Legal Liability**

AEDs designed for use by the public pose little risk of liability to those who use them for the purpose of providing emergency medical assistance. These devices are unlikely to cause harm since they are not designed to work when a heartbeat is present. In addition, *The Emergency Medical Aid Act in Alberta* states that persons who provide emergency medical assistance are not liable for damages, injuries or death they may cause in doing so unless it is established they were grossly negligent.

The *Emergency Medical Aid Act* is the name given to the Alberta “Good Samaritan” legislation. First aiders must understand that if they use reasonable skill and care to the level of first aid that they have been taught, they need not fear legal action.

References: Alberta Health Services PAD Program
Saskatchewan School Boards Association Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) Guidelines for Schools
Work Safe Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Automated External Defibrillators in the Workplace

Related APs: Healthy School Communities and Workplaces (AP 190)

Forms: Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Inspection - Monthly (162-1)

Amended: September 2021