

Public Access Defibrillation Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is public access defibrillation?

Public access defibrillation (PAD) means making a automated external defibrillator(s) available in public and/or private places.

What is an AED?

An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a computerized medical device that is able to check a person's heart rhythm, recognize rhythms that require a shock and use voice prompts, lights and text messages to tell the individual using the machine that a shock is advised and the steps to take to provide the needed shock.

How many AEDs do I need at my worksite?

This is usually determined by the size of your facility. In addition, if your facility is spread out or on several floors, more than one AED may be recommended. The goal of a successful AED program is to deliver a shock to a victim within 3-5 minutes of collapse. When determining where to place AEDs, use a 3-minute response time as a guide.

How can I get an AED?

AEDs can be purchased through one of several manufacturers and/or vendors. Lists manufacturers and vendors are provided in this packet.

What does training involve?

Training involves a 4-hour course in CPR and the use of an AED. A list of training organizations is provided in this packet. Local CPR/AED course information is also available at 1- 800-GIVE-CPR or on our website: cccems.org.

If AEDs are so easy to use, why do people need formal training in how to use them?

An AED operator must know how to recognize the signs of sudden cardiac arrest, when to activate the 911 system, and how to do CPR. Training also teaches the operator how to avoid potentially hazardous situations.

Am I legally liable for using an AED?

The California Health & Safety Code and Civil Code gives liability protection to those people or entities that acquire an AED and abide by the regulations and to people who are trained in CPR, who in good faith, render emergency CPR at the scene of an emergency. As awareness of AEDs grows, companies and organizations may face greater threat of liability if they are not properly prepared to respond to a cardiac emergency in a timely manner. This trend can be seen by three cases in which lawsuits were filed against companies that were not prepared.

Why can't I just buy an AED and keep it at my worksite?

AEDs are manufactured and sold under guidelines approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). To purchase an AED requires a physician's prescription for the device.

Why must there be oversight by a medical doctor?

An AED is a medical device and must be prescribed by a physician. The physician's main duties include: providing medical leadership and expertise, reviewing each incident where emergency care or treatment on a person in cardiac arrest is rendered, coordinating the program with the local EMS agency, ensuring that rescuers are properly trained and their skills maintained, and to assist in the development of an Internal Emergency Response Plan that ensures compliance with regulation requirements.

Why is notifying the local EMS Agency important?

It is important for the local EMS Agency to know where AEDs are located in the community. In the event of a sudden cardiac arrest, the 9-1-1 dispatcher will know if an AED is on the premises and will be able to notify the EMS responders as well as assure that the individuals already on the scene know that the AED is onsite assisting them when appropriate to get and use the AED.

