

# A guide for placing a defibrillator in your community (FAQ's)

It is well known that when a person collapses and is not breathing normally their life is at risk. In many situations a person will have suffered from a sudden cardiac arrest SCA. This means that their heart has stopped beating and without urgent medical assistance and first aid treatment chances of survival are very low indeed.

Many communities have equipped themselves with defibrillators that are available for members of the public to use in an emergency prior to arrival of the emergency services. The common term used is Community Public Access Defibrillators (cPAD).

## ? What is a defibrillator or AED?

AED stands for (Automated External Defibrillator) . These are portable lightweight devices designed to be used by people with minimal or no training on someone who has suffered a cardiac arrest. The job of the AED is to analyse the heart rhythm to determine if a shock is required. If a shock is required, the AED will give clear voice instructions to guide the user through the rescue process. The AED will only shock if the person is dead!

## ? Who looks after the community public access defibrillator?

In most cases a community group such as a parish council will nominate a guardian to be in charge of checking the cPAD on a regular basis to ensure the device is rescue ready. We can supply a basic checklist that will indicate periodic checks to be done. In some cases this may be done by the local ambulance service with their agreement.

## ? Do we need to register our cPAD with the ambulance service?

Yes. Contact your local ambulance service to register your cPAD so this can be added to their system. Once registered they will have details of its exact location, cabinet lock code if applicable, guardian name/contact details and other relevant information.

## ? Who will replace the battery and electrode pads in our public access defibrillator?

This is quite a simple procedure and can be done by the nominated person who checks the AED on a regular basis. Most AED's will require periodic replacement of consumables every 2-5 years depending upon the type of AED. If there are any questions or if telephone support is required please call us on 0370 850 1186. We can also offer fully managed service agreements to support any AED.

## ? What is the procedure if our community defibrillator develops a fault and is not rescue ready?

The manufacturers provide a warranty of between 5-10 years on the AED depending on the brand. During the warranty period if a fault develops with the AED the manufacturer offers full support. Typically the manufacturer will go through some basic troubleshooting via the telephone first and if there is still a problem they will arrange collection of your faulty unit. You will usually be given a replacement unit altogether or a loan unit until your AED can be repaired.

Please note that consumable items such as electrode pads and batteries have a shorter warranty than the AED in most cases. If you require assistance please call us on **0370 850 1186**.

## **? Am I allowed to use the public access defibrillator if I am untrained?**

Yes you are. Modern AEDs today are very simple to use and give the user very clear voice prompts instructing what to do! Once the AED has been removed from that cabinet just turn it on and follow the prompts. If you are unsure of anything the emergency services call handler will guide you as required. Always remember that an AED will only deliver a shock if it is required!

## **? Can we get training in how to use the public access defibrillator?**

Yes. We offer a range of training options from basic cPAD awareness lasting 1-2 hrs through to more in-depth training suitable for workplaces that have purchased defibrillators. Contact us on 0370 850 1186 to discuss training options.

## **? How do I know where my nearest defibrillator is in an emergency?**

Firstly upon discovering that a casualty is unresponsive & not breathing normally you must call or ask somebody to call 999/112. The call handler will ask a series of questions including if there is a defibrillator available. If you are unsure as to the location of your nearest defibrillator the emergency services will inform you of the location. Please see this short video to give you an idea of how it works - [https://youtu.be/dP\\_sm23pWqU](https://youtu.be/dP_sm23pWqU)

## **? Do we need planning permission to site a defibrillator on our village hall?**

Planning permission is not usually required as this is emergency medical equipment, and is classed as 'diminimus' in planning terms. Most local authorities state planning permission will not be needed but listed building consent may be required for some buildings. If you are in doubt ask your local authority for advice first.

## **? Do I need to be insured to use the public access defibrillator?**

No. Remember to call 999/112 in the first instance and you will be covered by advice you are given. The AED will only deliver a shock to someone that is dead.

## **? Can the public access defibrillator be used on a child?**

Yes. An AED can be used on a child from 1-8 years old. Some AED's will have separate child electrode pads that need to be connected or a switch to turn it to child/adult mode. Follow advice from your 999/112 call handler if you are unsure. In the absence of paediatric electrodes/switch then the AED can still be used on a child over 1 year old.

For more information contact us on 0370 850 1186  
or visit [www.defibwarehouse.co.uk](http://www.defibwarehouse.co.uk)

