



Surf Life Saving Australia

August 2009

Defibrillation – Updated National Policy 3.7

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Department Lifesaving / Operations	

Summary

SLSA has reissued its policy on defibrillation to include the Australian Resuscitation Council (ARC) guidelines on Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) and Automatic External Defibrillators (AED). It includes guidelines around the availability of SLS defibrillators for public use and the use of defibrillators by non-qualified members.

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Introduction

Since the introduction of defibrillation into the organisation, the frequency of defibrillator use has increased, technology has advanced and the models of defibrillators that are used have become simpler and even more user friendly. The significantly positive impact of early defibrillation on survival odds is now well known and resulted in the increase to access to public access defibrillators (PAD).

Issue

PADs are not currently standard in SLS facilities even though most clubs and services now have at least one automatic external defibrillator (AED) for patrolling purposes. In light of the beach being a location where a number of cardiac incidents occur both during and outside of service hours, it was determined that SLSA should review the organisation position on PAD and revise policy to allow it as an option for SLS facilities and services.

Outcomes

The Australian Resuscitation Council (ARC) guideline 10.1.3 states that defibrillation should ***“preferably be undertaken by trained lay people or health professionals. As trained personnel may not be available immediately, untrained bystanders should also have access to the use of public access defibrillators.”*** Therefore, for SLS services:

- If a qualified member is not present or preoccupied carrying out other duties, an alternative member may use an AED as per the device’s operating instructions.
- An untrained member or bystander may obtain access to and use a lifesaving club AED where no qualified members are present.



The policy also contains guidelines should an SLS facility, club or service wish to make an AED available for public use outside of regular service hours or set up a PAD within their facility. Clubs are encouraged to do so.



Questions

Please direct any questions regarding this circular to your state centre in the first instance. Alternatively, please contact the SLSA Lifesaving Department on (02) 9300 4000.