



“TURN ME ON, I’LL TELL YOU WHAT TO DO”

PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE CONFIDENCE TO USE AN AED

Heart of the Nation launched a slightly cheeky campaign today aimed at educating the community about the role of an Automated External Defibrillator (or AED) in cardiac arrest situations, so that they understand an AED is something that anyone can use without any training whatsoever – just turn it on, and it will tell you what to do. It is hoped that this message will increase bystander confidence and willingness to use an AED when someone is not responding and not breathing normally.

Sudden cardiac arrest affects around 26,000¹ Australians each year, and has a survival rate of just 6%² to hospital discharge. One thing that has been proven to increase survival rates is the use of an AED in conjunction with calling triple zero and starting CPR.

Heart of the Nation CEO, Greg Page, said, “Early defibrillation by an AED, which any untrained community member can use, can increase survival rates drastically. When someone collapses due to a cardiac arrest (unconscious and not breathing normally), they rely upon community members to act rapidly, while waiting for paramedics to arrive to help save their life. An AED becomes the team leader, talking to responders and telling them exactly what they can do to give that person the best chance of surviving”.

Data from our own ambulance services in Australia supports the message that rapid access to an AED can increase survival rates, with Ambulance Victoria reporting a survival rate as high as 67%³ when an AED is used within the first 3 minutes from the patient’s collapse.

It is crucial that people understand that when it comes to sudden cardiac arrest, any attempt at resuscitation is better than none, and the role an AED plays is vital to giving the patient the best chance of surviving. Unfortunately, they are only used by community members in around 8%⁴ of cases before paramedics arrive. Accessibility to an AED, and bystander confidence to use one are two key issues with regard to this devastating statistic.

“As a paramedic with over 25 years experience, I turn up to cardiac arrests, and see people doing CPR, which is great, but we also notice a lot of the time there may be an AED nearby and no one has had the confidence to use it, or have been unable to access it. The difference it can make is staggering, and all you have to do is turn it on”, says **Kevin McSweeney, Head of Education and Training with Heart of the Nation**.

Being able to locate and access your nearest AED is part of Heart of the Nation’s mission, and they provide a national AED registry for all Australians to register their AED.

The Heart of the Nation app is a free resource that allows you to find the nearest AED that is registered with Heart of the Nation, as well as to register your AED if you have one. The app also allows users to call 000 from within the app, as well as notify nearby responders who may be able to retrieve the nearest AED from a location on the app. This can really help cut down time to be able to access an AED if someone can bring it to you while you do CPR.

To find out more about this public education campaign and where your nearest AED could be, visit www.heartofthenation.com.au

KEY MESSAGES

- Heart of the Nation is an initiative of a national registered charity and social enterprise, Our National Heart Pty Limited, and is the charity established by Greg Page, the original Yellow Wiggle after surviving his own sudden cardiac arrest.
- Rapid access to an AED can result in at least quadrupling the survival rate⁵ when used by community members prior to the arrival of paramedics.
- An AED is perfectly safe to use, even without formal training you are unable to mis-use it, as it talks to you and tells you exactly what to do to help save a life. It becomes the team leader and makes all the decisions for you.
- An AED is the thing that will (in most cases of sudden cardiac arrest) result in resuscitation – CPR alone is not enough to restart the heart – that is the job of the AED, and the sooner the heart is restarted, the more chance there is that the patient will not only survive, but survive with a better outcome.

DOWNLOAD THE HEART OF THE NATION APP FROM THE APP STORE OR GOOGLE PLAY

