



PRESS RELEASE

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Gibraltar PAD Programme

All Gibraltarians and visitors to Gibraltar will now have a better chance of surviving a cardiac arrest because of newly installed automated external defibrillators (AEDs). The AEDs are part of Gibraltar's new Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) programme which has placed 10 AEDs into the community to promote the recognition of a cardiac emergency and use the device to shock the heart into a regular rhythm. "We want to be sure we can effectively respond to any medical emergency that happens in Gibraltar. This is a life saving initiative," says Minister for Health John Cortes.

Cardiac arrest is a condition in which abnormal heart rhythms called arrhythmias cause the heart's electrical impulses to suddenly become chaotic. When this happens, the heart stops abruptly, and the victim collapses and quickly loses consciousness. Death usually follows unless a normal heart rhythm is restored within a few minutes. Defibrillation, which means delivering an electric shock to the heart, is the only known treatment to restore the normal rhythm. For every minute defibrillation is delayed, the victim's chances of survival go down 7–10 percent. The cardiac arrest data have been analysed from the last 6 years to give clear areas where an AED should be located. These figures in conjunction with known high foot fall areas have resulted in the 10 locations.

AEDs now on the market are safe and easy to use, making it possible for lay members of the public to provide rapid, safe defibrillation without any training whatsoever. A demonstration video clip is available of the Gibraltar Health Promotion Facebook site (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Health-Promotion-Gibraltar/164156683705021>).

The GHA actively encourages other individuals and companies to consider placing AEDs elsewhere in Gibraltar and will provide advice if requested.

It is estimated that establishing this Gibraltar PAD programme will help save many lives per year.

The units are now in location, and have been installed by GHA staff.

Note: Additional information is contained in the attached documents