

# Community Concerns

## Saving Cardiac Arrest Victims

(NAPSA)—Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), a malfunction of the electrical rhythm of the heart, can strike anyone, at any time—but you can lead the way to save a life.

### The Problem

Without CPR and an electrical jolt from an automated external defibrillator (AED) to restore normal rhythm to the heart, an SCA victim is likely to die. In the U.S. alone, 424,000 people of all ages experience SCA each year—more than 1,000 per day—and nine out of 10 of them die. In fact, the number of people who die from SCA every year is roughly equivalent to the number of people who die from Alzheimer's, assault with firearms, diabetes, HIV, house fires, motor vehicle accidents, suicides and breast, cervical, prostate and colorectal cancers combined.

Surviving SCA is largely dependent on how quickly a victim is defibrillated. For each minute that CPR and treatment with an AED are delayed, survival declines by 7 to 10 percent. Irreversible brain damage can happen within four to six minutes. After 10 minutes without treatment, few victims survive.

### Saving Lives

Fortunately, many communities are taking action to protect their residents from SCA. Working with EMS services and community resources, they set up early defibrillation programs that place lifesaving AEDs in strategic locations throughout the community, within reach of citizen responders. These citizen responders can begin CPR and use an AED on an SCA victim within three to four minutes of collapse, while EMS is on the way. Survival rates in these communities are as high as 75 percent, compared to the 7 percent survival rate without such programs.

### Teaming Up For Wider Protection

Concerned citizens who want to make their communities safer can set up their own early defibrillation programs. Working together,



**Strategically placed defibrillators and properly trained citizens may save lives.**

local EMS, citizen responders, and government and business leaders can develop a strategic community plan. The plan helps identify locations where AEDs are needed—for example, airports, community centers, shopping malls, city buildings and sports complexes. The plan also identifies how many AEDs are needed per location by taking into account how much time it would take EMS to reach a victim. Community members interested in training to become citizen responders are identified and included in the plan.

### Help Is Available

Resources are available for community leaders who wish to develop an early defibrillation program. They can get detailed guidance on strategy and implementation to make the process move quickly and effectively. For example, Philips Healthcare, the worldwide leader in AEDs, has advised numerous communities in setting up such lifesaving programs.

### Communities Helping Themselves

Quick response to SCA by a trained citizen responder using an AED may make the difference in someone's life. A local early defibrillation program may save the life of a neighbor, a co-worker, even a family member. You can get more information by contacting Philips Healthcare at (800) 453-6860 (mention ad code 11131).