

# Safety Hour Discussion Pack

**Topic:** Defibrillators/Automatic External Defibrillators – First Aid

## Purpose of the discussion:

Coronary heart disease (CHD) is the leading cause of heart attacks. CHD is responsible for approximately 73,000 deaths in the UK each year, and in most cases, it can be largely prevented with a healthy lifestyle.

A heart attack occurs when the blood supply to the heart is blocked. There are approximately 103,000 heart attacks in the UK each year, and one in three of those individuals die before they reach hospital. Someone suffering a heart attack is at high risk of going into cardiac arrest.

Cardiac arrest occurs when the heart stops pumping blood around the body, and can be recognised when a casualty has collapsed, is unresponsive and not breathing normally. Unless treated immediately, this condition will result in death within minutes.

The use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) have been shown to increase the survival rate, compared to receiving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) alone. Therefore, AEDs have been installed at locations across Network Rail, and more will be introduced moving forwards.

## Would you know how to operate an AED?

### Do you know if there is an AED available in, or near, your work area?

Discussion points: Use below to plan your facilitated discussion. Remember, you don't have to have all the answers – the role of the facilitator is to create an engaging discussion where everyone identifies and commits to solutions.

Discussion points	Supporting notes
What is an AED?	<p>An AED is a device that can restore normal rhythm to the heart of someone who has experienced cardiac arrest. It delivers a shock to the heart through pads placed on the person's chest.</p> <p>AEDs should never be used instead of calling an ambulance, but with someone suffering a cardiac arrest, immediate treatment can dramatically increase the risk of survival.</p> <p><b>Do you have any experience using an AED which you can share?</b></p>
I am not a trained first aider... can I use an AED?	<p>All AEDs installed across Network Rail are designed to be used by everyone, not just first aiders.</p> <p>AEDs provide visual and/or voice prompts whilst being used, meaning a colleague with minimal, or no first aid training, can operate the AED in an emergency.</p> <p>An AED will not administer a shock unless it identifies that one is necessary. So you should feel confident that getting an AED and following the instructions it gives, <b>cannot</b> make the situation worse.</p>

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<p>How do you use an AED?</p>	<p>If someone collapses, is unresponsive and not breathing normally, it's important to <b>act quickly</b> -</p> <p><b>Call 999 for an ambulance, get the nearest AED and a trained first aider.</b> CPR should be started as quickly as possible.</p> <p><b>1. Switch on AED</b> Remove or cut through clothing to chest area – including underwired bras.</p> <p><b>2. Attach the pads to chest</b> Dry any moisture from the chest and stick pads according to diagrams on pads.</p> <p><b>3. Follow the instructions</b> Listen to and follow the instructions given by AED. Do not touch the casualty when told not to - whilst rhythm is being analysed and shock administered.</p> <p><b>Be prepared</b> - Watch the 'How to use' video on Safety Central.</p> <p><b>Further discussion</b> – Learn the signs and symptoms of a heart attack. If you think someone may be having one, don't delay - call 999 immediately.</p>
<p>Where are AEDs located?</p>	<p>For the best chance of someone surviving a cardiac arrest, an AED needs to be used as quickly as possible following collapse (ideally within a few minutes).</p> <p>You would expect to see AEDs in large working areas where there is a high footfall of people, including; corporate offices, stations and the larger depots. They should be located and stored where they are most likely to be needed.</p> <p>If you have an AED at your workplace, is it registered with your local ambulance service? This means it can be quickly identified in a future emergency.</p> <p><b>AEDs are not kept in every Network Rail location, confirm the location of your nearest one and share this with all employees working in the area.</b></p>

## For further information:

Visit Safety Central to watch a 'How to use' and 'How to maintain' defibrillators videos - <https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/healthandwellbeing/supporting-wellbeing-at-work/defibrillators-manager-support/>

Read the general FAQs - <https://3mi88p1crnlm2ttg9o2cod4h-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/General-FAQ.pdf>

Read the technical FAQs - <https://3mi88p1crnlm2ttg9o2cod4h-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Technical-FAQ.pdf>

Read the maintenance FAQs - <https://3mi88p1crnlm2ttg9o2cod4h-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Maintenance-FAQ.pdf>