

Statement -Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2022 passes through SA Parliament

Wednesday, 30 November 2022

The Council of Ambulance Authorities (CAA) works hard on behalf of its member services - the statutory ambulance services in Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, to help reduce the cost of lives that are lost by out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

Cardiac arrest is a sudden, unexpected cessation of heart function that occurs when there is an electrical disturbance in the heart that causes it to stop beating altogether, interrupting blood flow to the brain. The medical emergency can be a result of a drowning, drug overdose, heart attack, massive trauma such as a car crash or a number of different medical conditions.

Today the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2022 passed through SA Parliament. The bill mandates more Automated External Defibrillators (AED) in our communities. When a person goes into cardiac arrest, it is vital that those around them know to call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance, start performing CPR as soon as possible and utilise an AED which will shock their heart. These steps are crucial to occur whilst awaiting an ambulance, without them the chances of survival drop by 10% with every minute that passes.

“We still have work to do in building the network of AEDs in the community to one where they are easily accessed, and people are comfortable and confident in both knowing when to seek one out and how to use it.” Says David Waters, Chief Executive of The Council of Ambulance Authorities.

CAA facilitates the Restart a Heart campaign which raises public awareness on these three simple steps that can save lives. We encourage the addition of AEDs in the community alongside education on how to use them. This will go a long way towards a future where more than 1 in 10 will survive an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

We are pleased to see the Automated External Defibrillator (Public Access) Bill passed in SA Parliament and would like to acknowledge and thank the Hon Frank Pangallo MLC for his hard work in introducing this Bill and persisting with it for the last few years to get it passed today.