

Local Government Insurance Trust

RISK MANAGEMENT BULLETIN

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Automated External Defibrillator

Every year, nearly 350,000 people die suddenly from cardiac arrest. Approximately two-thirds of those lives lost could have been prevented if an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) was made available.

The AED is a device used to deliver an electrical shock through the chest wall to the heart. The AED has built-in computers that allow the device to determine if the patient's heart rhythm is "shockable" or not.

In American Heart Association Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) classes, students are taught about the links in the "Chain of Survival". The chain of survival is designed to optimize a patient's chance for survival from cardiac arrest. The links include early notification, early CPR, early defibrillation and early advanced cardiac life support. Recently, more companies have begun to purchase AEDs and install them in public places.

In 1999, a new law went into effect that permits a business, organization, association, etc. (authorized facility) that meets certain requirements, to set up a program whereby someone suffering a cardiac arrest on the authorized facility's premises can receive AED treatment on-site by appropriately trained non-medical personnel before the arrival of emergency medical services personnel. The law is intended to apply to a broad range of circumstances: an authorized facility may be a single organization located at one place or a business that operates at several locations (sites).

The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MEIMSS) is the state agency mandated by state law to be responsible for implementing the new law and authorizing facilities in Maryland, meeting the necessary requirements to participate in the program.

Sponsoring Organizations



LGIT's Risk Management Department would like you to consider the following questions before you decide to buy an AED:

Training

Who is going to conduct training and when will it be held?

Who will be trained?

Medical Director

Who is your Medical Director?

Policy and Procedures

What do your policies and procedures manual include?

Is the manual reviewed annually or after an incident occurs?

Please contact Lisa Myers, MIEMSS Office of Program Development 410-706-4740 to obtain an AED Program packet of requirements that are necessary to have an AED in your facility.

The above suggestions may not eliminate all liability risk, but should help in reducing and managing your entities exposures. These suggestions are made from a Risk Management perspective. Final language of any agreements should be reviewed by your entity's counsel.

This bulletin is intended to be merely informational and is not intended to be used as the basis for any compliance with federal, state or local laws, regulations or rules, nor is it intended to substitute for the advice of legal counsel.