

Cardiac Emergency Response Drills

Conducting drills as part of your Project ADAM CPR-AED program is essential. No matter how comfortable the response team is with the knowledge gained from CPR-AED training, many glitches can and do occur when an incident arises. Mock drills help to work out potential challenges and help to alleviate fear.

Doing regular Cardiac Emergency Response Drills is the best way to find out if your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan works. Drills are beneficial for testing your communication system and your response team's readiness. Use the steps below to execute a basic School-Based Cardiac Emergency Response Drill. Advanced practice scenarios are labeled as Level I, II III and IV. Utilize the ***AED Drill Summary Checklist*** for an objective post-drill review. Drills should be performed at least 2 times annually to assure optimal performance during an actual emergency. You should consider multiple drills if you have more than one response team.

1. **Planning the Drill:**

When: Inform your team that you will be doing a Cardiac Emergency Response Drill in the next few weeks so they have time to review the Cardiac Emergency Response Plan in advance. Do not tell them exactly when you will do the drill. It is important once the drill is underway that it be clearly communicated to all involved that this is only a drill.

Who: The drill will involve your Site Champion, Cardiac Emergency Response Team, office staff and an objective observer (to record times on the Drill Summary Checklist). It is recommended a Site Champion be identified at each school to set up the drills. Determine the manner in which classes will be "covered" during a drill or true cardiac emergency if classroom teachers are on the Cardiac Emergency Response Team. All other team members should be responsible for making sure CPR and the AED are initiated promptly.

What: You will need:

- AED Training Unit
- Manikin (must be compatible with AED Training Unit)
- Cell Phone or Telephone
- *AED Drill Summary Checklist* – on clipboard with pen or pencil
- Stopwatch

Where: Location of drills should be anywhere on campus so all staff consider what they will be looking for (unresponsiveness and abnormal or no breathing) and what they will do. If students are on campus be sure they are informed beforehand about what the drill may look like and that it is only a drill.

Establish a Code: This code name will be used to initiate a response to a cardiac emergency by the Cardiac Emergency Response Team. The code should be communicated on the drill day and in a real cardiac emergency as defined in your communication plan. Encourage team members to be descriptive in addition to a code name and state there is a medical emergency in room #, teacher's name and geographic location.

Establish a Communication System: How will the Cardiac Emergency Response Team know the drill has been initiated? Choose a method of mass communication to the team (i.e. overhead announcements, intercoms, walkie-talkies, cell phones, etc.).

2. The Day of the Drill:

The Site Champion should place a manikin on the floor along with the AED Training Unit. Have the finder call the front office advising them that this is only a drill. Tell them you have an unresponsive victim and give the location. Your plan now goes into effect. The school's Cardiac Emergency Response Team should be notified using the established Code (i.e. Code Blue) using the teams established Communication System (i.e. overhead announcements, intercoms, walkie-talkies, cell phones, etc.). Your designated observer should record the times each step happens using the **AED Drill Summary Checklist**. The Site Champion gives the first rescuer to arrive (Rescuer 1) the short scenario if applicable. The AED Training Unit is already placed at the drill location ready to be swapped out with the real school AED brought to the scene. Never use the real AED pads for drills. Proceed as if this was a real cardiac arrest situation.

3. After the Drill:

Thank everyone for responding. Spend a few minutes reviewing the checklist together, noting times and duration of different steps of the response. Ask the responders for feedback and discuss suggestions and concerns. Consider whether there are any action steps needed. Were there specific communication problems? If the drill points to changes to the plan and protocol, discuss these with your Cardiac Emergency Response Team and administrator. Be sure to make the changes and communicate the changes clearly to your team. Plan another drill to test the revised plan.