

## **Fire Services Department** **“AED Anywhere for Anyone” Programme**

### **Brief**

#### **Background**

Administration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) with the aid of an automated external defibrillator (AED) is the most effective way to rescue cardiac arrest patients. In a bid to enhance the efficiency of saving the lives of such patients, the Community Emergency Preparedness Division (CEPD) of the Fire Services Department (FSD) has been vigorously exploring ways to improve the accessibility of AEDs for public use in cardiac arrest cases. It is in this context that the CEPD launches the “AED Anywhere for Anyone” (AAA) Programme in June, 2021. The programme, which is led by the FSD with support from various government departments, as well as public and private organisations, aims at incrementally increasing the number of AEDs to be set up across the territory that can be readily accessed anywhere by anyone. On top of that, the programme sets out to encourage and educate the public to locate and use an AED as quickly as possible in case of emergency. The objective is to expedite life-saving treatment and put the lives of the public under even better protection.

#### **Content**

Under the programme, the FSD has taken lead to install AEDs outside over 100 fire stations and ambulance depots across the territory for public emergency use. The department has also put up an AED sign on over 600 FSD vehicles usually equipped with an AED. With the image of the character “Anyone” incorporated in the design, this AED sign on FSD vehicles is intended to help spread the message that “Anyone can use an AED” and reassure the public that fire personnel stand ready to provide immediate assistance with the use of AED during emergencies.

In sync with the programme is the launch of an FSD-developed online information platform, named “Centralized AED Registry for Emergency” (CARE). In the initial stage, the platform collects, and makes available for public use, details of over 900 AEDs scattered throughout Hong Kong, which are provided voluntarily by participating government departments and organisations. CARE is designed to facilitate timely public access to information of AEDs available for use when situation warrants.

CARE is an open online information platform. The public may access the site anytime, anywhere directly via browsers of mobile phones, computers or other mobile devices without the need to download any apps or software, or register in advance. Participating organisations are free to login anytime to update information of their AEDs in terms of the locations, numbers and available time.

In regard to concerns about the public's ability to perform first aid, it should be noted that AEDs are designed for use by members of the general public. Anyone, with or without training in operating an AED, can perform first aid on patients simply by following the audio and/or graphical prompts from the AED.

The FSD also renders immediate support to people performing first aid. When responding to 999 emergency calls, personnel of the Fire Services Communications Centre will instantly provide callers with appropriate "post-dispatch advice" over the phone. Callers may follow the advice to perform first aid on the patient at once, making the best use of the golden hour before the arrival of the ambulance crew.

Separately, the FSD provides an array of courses and talks on CPR and the use of AED to members of the public. The courses come in flexible and multiple modes. Interested parties, be they individuals, groups or organisations, are invited to visit the FSD website to prepare for possible emergency situations.

To bolster the official launch of the programme, the FSD will roll out a number of engaging and diversified promotional activities, games and events around the theme of "popularisation of AED in the community" in collaboration with participating organisations for public involvement.

### Participating Organisations

The success of the "AED Anywhere for Anyone" Programme hinges on the participation of different stakeholders in the city. It is the FSD sincere wish that people from different sectors can join hands to weave a community-based safety net for the protection of cardiac arrest patients by incrementally boosting the number of AEDs available for public use across the territory, contributing to the CARE online information platform and promoting the message of "Anyone can use an AED".

Ever since the planning stage of the programme, the FSD has been privileged to have received support and valuable advice from stakeholders of various sectors. To date,

participating groups and organisations include the Auxiliary Medical Service, Airport Authority Hong Kong, MTR Corporation Limited, Hong Kong Jockey Club, Hong Kong Disneyland, Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, Sik Sik Yuen, Pok Oi Hospital Board of Directors, Yan Chai Hospital Board of Directors, Hong Kong Red Cross, Hong Kong St. John Ambulance, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Chinachem Group, Nan Fung Property Management, New World Property Management Company Limited, Savills Property Management Limited, Kai Shing Management Services Limited, etc. (in no particular order).

### Way Forward

The FSD will continue to liaise with and call on other government departments, as well as private and public organisations to join the programme and install more AEDs “Anywhere for Anyone”. The department will also continue to explore other associated supporting measures and feasible collaborations with suitable organisations.

In terms of public engagement, the FSD will sustain its work to raise public awareness and enhance their abilities in emergency preparedness through promotion and education. The department will also earnestly seek ways to promote interaction among community volunteer rescuers and their involvement in emergencies.

### Work of the CEPD

The FSD established the CEPD in 2018 on account of the need to enhance the awareness, abilities and supporting measures of the community in emergency preparedness and to equip the general public with the proper knowledge to respond to emergencies or contingencies. The CEPD is specifically tasked with formulating and implementing strategies on community emergency preparedness, in addition to providing relevant education and organising promotional activities in the community. One of the key missions of the CEPD is to raise public awareness in cardiac arrest, CPR and AED.

Ends

June 16, 2021