

Element 3 of a PAD Program

Integrating With the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System

The Emergency Medical Services system in each community is ultimately responsible for delivering emergency care. To make a Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) program most effective, the EMS system should be an active partner in planning a program and in the follow-up of any emergency within the program.

During the planning phase, the EMS system should be contacted to discuss these issues:

1. Any state or local requirements for establishing a PAD program.

In some states, law requires entities establishing a PAD program to apply or register with the state and/or local EMS. This process may include filing a “plan” for your program to include provisions for training, physician oversight, notification of the EMS and maintenance of the AEDs.

In other situations the EMS may simply want to know that an AED is on the premises.

In any case, there’s benefit to making the EMS aware of a PAD program. In some areas the 9-1-1 dispatch system can record the presence of an AED in the caller-ID fields of their computer system. This lets the information be relayed by dispatchers to the responding EMS personnel. With this information, the EMS responders will be better prepared to work with the lay rescuers and to appropriately take over treatment of the victim. Dispatchers can also tell callers in a facility who don’t know that an AED is on the premises that one is available.

2. Possible sources of a physician to provide medical oversight for a PAD program.

The EMS Medical Director in some areas is willing to provide physician oversight to PAD programs established in high-risk areas of

their community. Even if that’s not the case, the EMS system may know emergency physicians who are available to be involved with PAD programs. Other possible sources of overseeing physicians are identified in the previous section.

3. Sharing event documentation after using an AED.

The PAD program plan should include “downloading” the information on the “event” from the AED and giving it to the EMS. Depending on the AED used, this information is recorded on a removable data card or can be obtained by connecting the AED to an off-site computer via modem. This process is important so that complete records are available to include in outcome data for the entire community.

