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Hilton Head, SC – Bystander CPR

Bystander Recognition Program for Sudden Cardiac Arrest in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

BRIEF BACKGROUND

Historically, Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue did not formally recognize bystanders who intervened in sudden cardiac rescue attempts — especially considering the amount of effort placed into training citizens in CPR and AED. The reality: bystanders needed an opportunity to talk about the incident to gain closure. Additionally, it was meaningful for survivors to say, “Thank you” to those who assisted.

STEPS TAKEN

Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue created a checklist for cardiac arrest management. Scene supervisor duties were updated to include serving as a family liaison and collecting names and contact information for bystanders who assisted with CPR or deployed a publicly available AED. Bystander rescuers also received a letter of recognition from the Fire Chief.

CHALLENGES

Initially, there were challenges obtaining the requested information, as bystanders were hesitant to share it. However, once it was accepted as a normal part of the process, bystanders were more receptive to the process.

RESULTS

The data uncovered previously unrecognized connections between bystanders and cardiac arrest survivors. In one instance, both had sons around the same age who were officers in the U.S. Army and attended West Point around the same time. In another situation, the bystander’s name was Rosemary which was also the survivor’s late mother’s name. These connections seemed meaningful to those involved.

The new process also allowed for the maintenance of a running PowerPoint presentation that catalogs saves, including pictures of survivors, CPR performers, timelines of events and CPR analytics.

OUTLOOK

PulsePoint was launched in June 2019, and Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue is looking forward to implementing Verified Responder to further enhance the program.

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