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Singapore – Community Training Update

DARE: The Dispatcher-Assisted First REsponder Program in Singapore

BRIEF BACKGROUND

Immediate CPR and defibrillation are the most critical therapies for victims in cardiac arrest with ventricular fibrillation, and the AED shock should be delivered within the first few minutes of an arrest. A Singapore Civil Defense Force (SCDF) medical dispatcher provides support during the resuscitation process in an emergency call. However, lack of training and confidence in resuscitation are common barriers to bystander CPR and AED usage, leading to inadvertent delays.

STEPS TAKEN

The Dispatcher-Assisted First REsponder (DARE) program in Singapore was rolled out in 2014, aiming to encourage more people to perform CPR and use an AED on cardiac arrest victims when the situation arises. The three key messages of the program:

1. Call 995 and stay on the line
2. Push hard and fast
3. Use an AED

Unlike a four-hour CPR and AED certification course, DARE was condensed into a simplified one-hour training session. The curriculum featured both a scenario-based video and a hands-on practice sequence. Participants learned to dial 995, stay on the line with the medical dispatcher, perform hands-only CPR as directed and use an AED (with voice prompts) until medical help arrived.

CHALLENGES

Challenges lie ahead in extending program coverage to the greater community to further improve bystander CPR and AED rates.

RESULTS

Since the program launch in April 2014, Singapore has seen a steady increase in the national bystander CPR rate from 42.8% in 2013 to 56.4% in 2016, and bystander AED rates from 2.5% in 2013 to 4.6% in 2016. This resulted in an improved Utstein survival rate from 15.2% in 2013 to 23.4% in 2016. The overall survival rates also improved from 4.2% in 2013 to 6.5% in 2016. The DARE program was credited in helping to achieve these numbers. Other positive outcomes included:

- **Creation of preschool “training”.** To generate awareness and spark younger children’s interest in CPR+AED training, the DARE team introduced storytelling geared to preschoolers using a new DARE children storybook. With colorful illustrations and simple text, the book was created as part of a publicity campaign to encourage parents, caregivers and preschool teachers to read and learn along with the children. Preschoolers also had the opportunity for a fun, hands-on experience with manikins, learning how to do CPR to help save a heart with their hands.

- **Equipping primary and secondary students.** In 2017, the Ministry of Education successfully implemented the simplified CPR+AED program, modeled after DARE, for primary (theory-based) and secondary (theory- and practice-based) schools.
- **DARE for tertiary students and staff.** Since 2017, the DARE program was successfully implemented by the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) as part of its freshmen orientation program, training 21,000+ first-year students. Students and staff from many other educational institutions have also benefited from DARE training.
- **DARE training for the public and various institutions.** Ongoing efforts were made to promote community responsiveness and educating the public on the importance of CPR+AED training. The DARE team continues to conduct training for ministries, statutory boards, private and public organizations, and educational and religious institutions.
- **DARE national publicity campaign.** In 2018, a successful national campaign resulted in the development of the new DARE (DARE-Learn CPR) app, an education-based application, and production of the DARE Hero video, as well as multiple roadshows to create greater awareness.

OUTLOOK

As DARE trainings continue to be made more accessible, there are also plans specifically advocating child and infant CPR among caregivers. To ensure that trainings remain relevant and engaging, they continue to gather feedback from participants and trainers to review and enhance their methods.

CONTACT

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com./daretosaveaheart/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3dRj8dfb5M> (publicity video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjsD7y7skhM> (skit)

DARE App: Search for 'DARE-Learn CPR' (available on Google Play and Apple Store)



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