

## Take Heart Australia



### The Chain of Survival

Cardiac arrest kills 30,000 Australians every year, and is three times more common than deaths from major trauma, almost four times more common than deaths from stroke, and equivalent to three quarters of all deaths from cancer. 90% of Australians who suffer cardiac arrest do not survive, so Take Heart Australia was launched in May 2014 to be Australia's preeminent charitable single-issue organisation with a mission to drive increased survival.

#### **90% of Australians who suffer cardiac arrest do not survive**

In Seattle up to 64% of cardiac arrest victims live, due to innovative schemes to promote change and improvement in the way we respond, as a community, to cardiac arrest. The whole approach to cardiac arrest in our communities, and saving the lives of our fellow Australians, is captured in the Chain of Survival.

### The Chain of Survival

In every link of the Chain of Survival, including recognition of cardiac arrest, increasing the proportion of the population trained in High-Quality CPR, expanding the coverage and distribution of automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and generally involving the community in the immediate response to these devastating emergencies. Everywhere in the world, each time a similar scheme has been implemented, more and more people survive.



The most important thing to realise is that because ambulances across Australia take a minimum of 9 minutes to arrive at a cardiac arrest, 9 out of 10 people would be dead if we rely on this as the only intervention. In fact, the most important interventions to save a life in a person whose heart has stopped all need to occur before the ambulance arrives!

## Links in the Chain of Survival



The first link in the Chain of Survival is **Recognition of cardiac arrest**. The heart has stopped when someone collapses, **does not respond** when you try to wake them up, and is **not breathing normally**.

The second link in the Chain of Survival is to **Call For Help** from 000 Emergency Services. Take Heart Australia are also promoting the GoodSAM smartphone app, which not only calls 000 but also calls local First Responders (doctors, nurses, paramedics, and first aiders) and shows you where local AEDs are close to you.



The third link in the Chain of Survival is **vital!** This is to immediately start **High-Quality Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation** or **HQ-CPR**. HQ-CPR needs to be fast, deep and most of all, constant. The only reason to stop HQ-CPR for more than a second or two is to use the AED to restart the heart.

The fourth link in the Chain of Survival is restarting the heart, or **Defibrillation**. Many patients' hearts have an abnormal electrical rhythm that means it cannot beat properly to pump blood around the body. This is called fibrillation, and the only thing that will reverse this is an electrical shock from an AED. **You cannot hurt them by using these devices as they are automatic, but you can save their life!**



## The Chain of Survival in Australia

Cardiac arrest can strike anyone, and kills people from childhood to old age. Ambulances and paramedics just cannot get everywhere fast enough to save these lives, so the responsibility is ours. **All of us!**

You cannot do anything wrong when someone is having a cardiac arrest, as they will die without your intervention; you cannot cause them harm, because anything is preferable to being dead, even having a broken rib; and you cannot get in trouble, because the Australian state and federal governments realise that anything you do is better than nothing.

Take Heart Australia, Australian communities and Australians everywhere need to learn the Chain of Survival, and to teach early recognition of cardiac arrest and HQ-CPR to everybody, and support the purchase and placement of AEDs across the Commonwealth in all public places.