



Richard M. Flynn  
Commissioner

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY**  
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**BUREAU OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** NH School Nurses  
NH School Administrators  
NH SAU Superintendents

**FROM:** Sue Prentiss, Bureau Chief  
Janet Houston, EMS for Children

**DATE:** December 9, 2004

**RE:** Public Access Defibrillation Programs in Schools

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Many of you may have seen or heard news reports about schools around the country implementing Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) programs which provide for rapid defibrillation of heart attack victims. Interest in school based PAD programs has resulted from many schools being used as a gathering site for large community events and in these circumstances, the likelihood of defibrillator usage is increased. In addition, interest has peaked due to recent technological modifications made by certain defibrillator manufacturers that make it possible to use an automated external defibrillator (AED) on a child under the age of 8 years old.

In response to recent inquiries, the Bureau of EMS and the EMS for Children Project at Dartmouth Medical School have developed the attached document to help schools and communities identified issues that should consider prior to implementing such a program.

Early CPR and defibrillation are major determinants of successful resuscitation from cardiac arrest. When defibrillation is used by the public in an urban setting with widespread knowledge of CPR and a rapid EMS response, short-term survival rates of adult victims have been shown to increase. Although the adult survival rates are promising, there is a need for more research about the long-term survival rates of these patients and the cost effectiveness of PAD programs. Currently, a multi-community study is underway to learn more about the efficacy and cost effectiveness of PAD programs on the adult population and results should be published in 2 to 3 years.

With this in mind, we urge you to share the enclosed information with your school officials, community leaders, local physicians, and EMS providers to determine if a school based PAD program is appropriate for your school.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact William Wood, Preparedness Coordinator 603-271-4615, (from within NH only - 1-888-827-5367 X 230) or email [bwood@safety.state.nh.us](mailto:bwood@safety.state.nh.us)

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