

Celebrate CPR's Anniversary by Spreading the Word

By Jenifer Goodwin

The Golden Anniversary of CPR is a golden opportunity for EMS organizations to share the importance of learning the lifesaving technique with their communities.

Whether it's organizing a mass CPR event, bringing CPR into your local schools or teaching CPR at health fairs and other community events, EMS professionals have the expertise and the resources to take a

leading role in educating the public about the importance of bystander CPR, according to Dr. Tom P. Aufderheide, president of the Citizen CPR Foundation and a professor of emergency medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.



And while the public is key, so are hospitals. Optimizing cardiac arrest survival also requires having hospitals that can serve as cardiac resuscitation centers able to perform therapeutic hypothermia, and provide immediate cardiac catheterization and high-quality ICUs for neurological care, electrophysiology testing and implanted cardiac defibrillators.

In many ways, EMS is uniquely positioned between the two, Aufderheide said. With both medical expertise and community contacts, EMS responders can step up to be leaders in efforts to increase bystander CPR rates, place AEDs in public places and make sure patients are headed to the right facilities. "EMS can motivate all of these other aspects of the community, from bystander CPR to promoting optimal care," Aufderheide said.

EMS professionals can get more involved through national organizations, (see below) many of which have local chapters or are seeking to start more local chapters, dedicated to improving cardiac arrest survival.

The Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation's mission is to educate the public about sudden cardiac arrest and promote the importance of bystander CPR and AEDs in public buildings.

The SCA Foundation also has the first national online survivor network, with members in nearly every state who participate in raising awareness and supporting others through the healing process. Call (724) 934-0034 or send an [email](#) for information. EMS professionals can visit the website for resources or to share their views and suggestions in the discussion forum. EMS professionals can also let survivors know about the National Survivor Network and work with local schools on a video contest to win an AED. This year's winner, a high school in Connecticut, worked with local EMS personnel on the video.

The Citizen CPR Foundation promotes community-wide programs to enhance bystander CPR and puts on a biannual conference during which resuscitation professionals—instructors, practitioners and researchers—come together for learning, inspiration and networking and to train more in bystander CPR. Call (703) 538-1791 or send an [email](#) for more about getting involved.



The Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association is a patient-based advocacy organization that educates the public about sudden cardiac arrest and personal risk factors, and motivates the public to respond in case of a witnessed cardiac arrest. EMS professionals can volunteer as chapter leaders or assist in public awareness campaigns. Call (866) 972-SCAA or send an [email](#) for more information. SCAA also has cardiac arrest and CPR fact sheets available on their website that can be used in developing your own educational materials.

The ACT Foundation endeavors to bring CPR training into high schools across Canada. ACT partners with local groups to raise funds for manikins, and with local EMS medical directors, who serve as medical directors for the high school programs. Since 1994, ACT has taught the four-hour Heart Savers CPR course to an estimated 1 million students. For information on getting involved or starting a similar program in your area, call Executive Director Sandra Clarke at (613) 729-3455 or send an [email](#).