



# EMS BEST PRACTICES



## National Emergency Medical Services Week May 15—21, 2011

In this issue of the EMS Best Practices newsletter Contra Costa EMS would like to take the opportunity to shine a special light on the outstanding services provided by our EMS professionals. We recognize your commitment and the important contributions you make to our EMS System!

The motto of this year's National EMS Week, **"Everyday Heroes,"** celebrates the exceptional service being provided to countless patients every day, often under incredibly challenging circumstances. Contra Costa EMS professionals are dedicated to saving lives and limiting suffering. EMS Week gives us all an opportunity to reflect on the commitment to patient care, teamwork and selfless professionalism of our EMS System workforce—our everyday heroes.

### A Culture of Excellence...

Pam Dodson, RN, EMS Prehospital Care Coordinator

In March, representatives from CCC EMS were fortunate to be able to attend the Medic One Foundation's Resuscitation Academy Fellowship Program in Seattle. The theme was "Improving Cardiac Arrest Survival Rates One Community at a Time." The instructors were some of the most notable leaders in Cardiac Resuscitation in the Nation. What an experience! We learned that there isn't a silver bullet, but a combination of factors that lead to outstanding CPR survival rates. According to Dr Eisenberg, King County Medical Director and CPR researcher, it takes a "culture of excellence" to make the difference. This includes professionalism, uncompromising standards, high expectations, and a relentless drive to improve. If we approach each call with the qualities described by Dr Eisenberg, success will follow.

Good organizations value the experience of their workers and instill the group with a sense of mission. In Contra Costa County we are focused on patient survival and quality of life with a goal to increase our survival rate to 50%. We feel with an emphasis on high performance resuscitation we can get there. A successful EMS call, particularly a cardiac arrest call, is like a finely choreographed ballet, with all participants knowing their parts, and supporting each other's success—Expect Success!

### EMS Best Practice Is...

- ⇒ Taking care of yourself so that you are able to assist others
- ⇒ Eating healthy
- ⇒ Getting enough sleep
- ⇒ Exercising regularly
- ⇒ Acknowledging the amazing job you do by reporting exemplary care or great catches using the EMS Event Report available at [cccems.org](http://cccems.org)
- ⇒ Continuing to educate yourself on EMS best practices - Current Concepts, Bay Area Journal Club and SF Paramedic Association offer you classes in the latest in prehospital care at little to no cost.



### CPR Anytime: Thank you for your help!

The Mt Diablo Health Care District donated CPR Anytime kits to train 3,000 Mt Diablo Unified School District 9th

graders in Hands Only™ CPR, use of an AED and how to relieve a foreign body obstruction. Contra Costa EMS thanks all the providers who helped with these trainings. The students were impressed with your presence. Studies demonstrate that training young people in the life saving skill of CPR improves community bystander CPR rates over time. It empowers young people to be capable of saving a life and helps make it "ok" to do CPR when needed.



### Spread Awareness About Stroke

May is "National Stroke Awareness Month" and everyone is encouraged to help raise awareness of the risk factors and warning signs for stroke.

The EMS Agency is preparing to implement a stroke system in 2012 and all our Hospitals are gearing up for designation as stroke centers. How can you help? Share strategies to reduce the risk of stroke with your families, friends and patients.

**Know the Signs of Stroke, Call 9-1-1, Act in Time** death and disability related to stroke can be reduced.



## Making a Difference....Just a Few of our EMS Everyday Heroes!

To be a part of the effort that saves a life is very rewarding. It is not possible to acknowledge all of the EMS responders who have been instrumental in saving a life but here are some exemplary cases to help us celebrate during EMS Week.

**San Ramon Valley Fire Paramedic 34 had some help on this save.** When they arrived at the home of an 84-year-old male who, according to his wife, had been complaining of indigestion all day, the patient had a strong pulse after San Ramon Police Officer Michael Schneider had delivered a single shock with his AED. The patient's ventilations were assisted and en-route to SRRMC he began to breathe on his own. The patient's 12-lead EKG showed a STEMI. He was admitted, cooled and discharged home neurologically intact.

**AMR's Karen Wright and Patrik Neuman, and CCC Fire Engine 12's crew Jamie Smart, David Lindsey and Matthew Parkinen** arrived to find a 61-year-old gentleman unresponsive. The initial cardiac rhythm was a Sinus Bradycardia at a rate of 53. The rhythm quickly deteriorated to a third degree AV block at a rate of 20 without pulses. Quick thinking, compressions, fluid and ventilations were enough to bring this patient around and result in a great outcome.

**They say it takes a village....but in EMS it takes all the links in the of Chain of Survival!** Richmond Fire Engine 67's crew, Paul Schmidt, Scott and Ron Davis arrived to find their patient in Sudden Cardiac Arrest(SCA). Family members had witnessed the arrest and were performing CPR following instructions by Richmond Dispatcher Diane Hardin. A shock was delivered using E67's AED and upon arrival of the AMR paramedics, Walt Walters and Bruce Matell, the patient was in a PEA. Compressions were continued. The patient had ROSC after returning to VF and two additional shocks were delivered. The patient was transported to Doctors San Pablo where she was cooled and discharged neurologically intact.

**Recognition of the critical nature of this child's injury** and a decision to fly her directly to Children's was instrumental in saving her life. Way to go Christina Wilson, Brian Anderson, Eric Sheffield, Greg Sawyer and Nick Sinosky.

**A thankful family assisted in the successful resuscitation of a Danville resident.**

A friend quickly called 9-1-1 when she heard a thump and saw the victim on the ground. The patient's wife, a retired RN, started CPR immediately. Engine 31 and Paramedic 31 found the patient in VF. The patient was defibrillated and CPR was continued using the Autopulse. A second shock was necessary. The patient regained pulses en-route to the hospital and regained consciousness in the ED. Stents were placed in his previously bypassed arteries and he was discharged home, "98% normal" per his wife. "At first I was concerned that they would give up on him...but they didn't" says the patient's wife about Steve Avery, Michael Bakalar, Ken Johnston, David Atkin, Paul Janisse, and John Archuleta.

**Our STEMI system at work:** East Contra Costa Fire District E 52, Ryan Pesonen and Dan Baio arrive with AMR's Justin Hamilton and Clint Simons to find a 52-year-old gentleman standing in front of a store - pale, cool and diaphoretic pointing to his chest. He had a 10 out of 10 "pressure" type pain that radiates to his left jaw. A 12-lead EKG showed an inferior wall MI. En-route the patient became unresponsive and was shocked from his run of VF. He was taken directly to the cath lab at Sutter Delta, stents were placed and he was discharged home three days later. Great job by all, especially the patient who called 9-1-1 after only 30 minutes of chest pain. If they would all do that!!

**Observed by his coworkers to suddenly grab his chest and fall to the ground this 56-year old was saved by the quick response of all involved.** Security Officer Jim Smiley at USS Posco dispatched his response team, EMTs Taunya Dearman and Jeremy DeLuca and summoned 9-1-1. Jim Harrington and John Passur began CPR. The EMTs used their AED to shock the patient. CPR was continued. When CCC Fire E 85 and AMR arrived the patient was found to have a pulse and became increasingly responsive. The patient did not remember the event, but complained of chest pain. Care was continued by Anthony Arieta, Tim Gleeson, Claudio Revives, (E85) Kenneth Petersen and Ursula Gomez. (AMR 6181) A stent was placed in his LAD and he, other than feeling "wiped out" did very well.

**Other saves...CCCE9,** Neema Mohammadizad, Russel Perkins, Daniel Rahmer and AMR Gabriel Daleharrel, Justin Enderlin took over CPR from a Pleasant Hill police officer. They delivered 2 shocks to this witnessed arrest who was admitted, cooled and woke up to do well enough to sign out of the hospital 5 days later. **El Cerrito E72** David Ciappara, John Kelleher, and Michael Cassidy arrived with AMR's Steve Herbst and Jeremy Kreiss at the 18th hole to find a victim of SCA. Bystanders were doing CPR and had delivered a shock with the AED. An additional shock resulted in ROSC. The patient was able to tell the crew about his golf game by the time they arrived at the hospital. **A field delivery of a 23-week old** could have ended sadly, but Thera Fleming and Zackery Morehouse have a lot to smile about. Their care and Kaiser Richmond's decision after stabilizing the baby to send him to CHO is being cited as the reason this young man did so well. **RHF E75** Houseman, Coleman, and Clark arrived to find CPR being done in the back of a boat. It took 2 shocks but this fisherman was conscious when Wenzel and Borg delivered him to the hospital.

**These are just a few examples of the Contra Costa County EMS System Everyday Heroes!  
Contra Costa EMS honors all our prehospital providers for a job well done!**



### Stars of Life

The American Ambulance Association Stars of Life is a special program. The program seeks to honor outstanding individuals as a thank you for

their service, their sacrifice and the inspiration they bring to all of us.

One of our own, Tom Westbrook, a CCC AMR paramedic, was chosen to receive this prestigious award. Tom will be honored in an awards ceremony in Washington DC in the first week of May.