



How to Plan and Execute Cardiac Emergency Response (or AED) Drills

Doing regular AED drills is the best way to test your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan, your communication system and your response team's readiness. Use the steps below to execute a basic AED drill. Utilize the AED Drill Checklist for an objective post-drill review. Drills should be performed at least once per year to assure optimal performance during an actual emergency. However, you should consider multiple drills.

Planning the Drill:

When: Inform your team that you will be doing an AED drill in the next few weeks so they have time to review the Cardiac Emergency Response Plan in advance. Do NOT tell them exactly when you will do the drill. Ensure that the team member who would normally communicate with EMS does NOT call 911 unless pre-arranged, and be sure it is clearly communicated that this is only a drill.

The team's first few drills can take place at a time where the building or location are not being normally utilized to build confidence. A few examples of these times are before or after normal hours. Once the team is comfortable, it is recommended a drill take place during a day where normal services are offered to make for a more realistic situation.

Who: The drill may involve your Cardiac Emergency Response Team, office staff, and a recorder (to record times on the Drill Summary Checklist during the drill). If multiples sites are involved, Project ADAM recommends a Site Coordinator be identified at each location to set up the drills. It is important that the recorder is present on scene and next to where the manikin and AED Training Unit are placed so they can accurately complete the checklist as the drill occurs. Determine the manner in which responsibilities will be covered during a drill or true cardiac emergency if staff are away from their responsibilities as part of the Cardiac Emergency Response Team. All other team members should be responsible for making sure CPR and the AED are initiated promptly.

What you will need:

- Manikin – If your organization does not have access to this equipment, consider reaching out to your local EMS/Fire organization, hospital or other community partners to see if a loaner is available.
- Radio/walkie talkie/other communication devices for team members and office staff

- AED Training Unit (compatible with manikin) – If your organization does not have access to this equipment, consider reaching out to your local EMS/Fire organization, hospital or other community partners to see if a loaner is available.
- AED Drill Checklist – preferably on a clipboard with a pen or pencil
- Stopwatch or cell phone to track time.

Where: Drills can be anywhere on the building or location so all staff can practice and identify what they will be looking for (unresponsiveness and abnormal or no breathing) and what they will do. If staff, clients, or members are present, be sure they are informed beforehand about what the drill may look like and that it is only a drill.

Establish a Code: This code name will be used to initiate a response to a cardiac emergency by activating the Cardiac Emergency Response Team. The code should be communicated on the drill day and in a real cardiac emergency as defined in your communication plan. Encourage team members to be descriptive in addition to a code name and state there is a medical emergency in room or geographic location. For example, Code AED, Room 320, Ms. Jones' room, English hallway or Medical Emergency Response Team to Room 103. Some ideas to consider include putting an AED symbol on your evacuation plan showing AED locations and the code to activate your organization's emergency response plan, making a condensed version of your plan for the back of staff ID badges or to place on/near each classroom phone.

Establish a Communication System: How will the Cardiac Emergency Response Team know the drill has been initiated? Choose a method of mass communication with the team (i.e. overhead announcements, intercoms, walkie-talkies, cell phones, etc.). Consider dead zones for cell phones in the event service is unavailable in certain parts of your building.

The Day of the Drill:

Who will participate?

- Site Coordinator
- Recorder (to record times on the Drill Summary Checklist during the drill)
- Cardiac Emergency Response Team
- Finder (pick someone that isn't on the team to find the manikin)

The Site Coordinator should place a manikin on the floor along with the AED Training Unit with the recorder standing next to the manikin, checklist and pen in hand. Have the finder call the front office advising them that this is only a drill. Tell them you have an unresponsive victim and give the location. Your plan now goes into effect. The Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT) should be notified using the established Code (i.e. Code Blue, Code AED, Medical Emergency Response Team, etc.) using the team's established communication system (i.e. overhead announcements, intercoms, walkie-talkies, cell phones, etc.). Your Recorder should document each step as it happens using the AED Drill Checklist. As part of the drill, a team member will arrive with an AED(s). Place the AED(s) to the side as the AED Training Unit will be used for the drill. Never apply the real AED pads for a drill. Proceed as if this was a real cardiac arrest situation.

CERP Drill Checklist

Date/Time: _____ Organization/School: _____ Drill Location: _____

Participants/ Cardiac Emergency Response Team Members who attended the drill:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

RESPONSE ACTION	YES	NO	Time
Victim unresponsiveness was determined	YES	NO	
Office was notified	YES	NO	
Cardiac Emergency Response Team was notified	YES	NO	
EMS/911 was called	YES	NO	
Cardiac Emergency Response Team arrived	YES	NO	
Possible SCA identified and CPR was started immediately	YES	NO	
AED arrived at the scene	YES	NO	
AED pads were placed appropriately and immediately on the victim's bare chest	YES	NO	
Team followed all prompts from the AED	YES	NO	
Team used proper CPR body mechanics throughout response	Yes	NO	
Use of organization's chosen CPR barrier device	YES	NO	
Someone met and directed EMS	YES	NO	
Crowd control took place	Yes	NO	
Office obtained necessary information for EMS call			
Drill was completed in our goal time of under 3 minutes "Completed" meaning AED was applied and used within 3 minutes. Drill can continue through cycles of AED use & compressions to practice switching roles.	YES	NO	
If drill was not completed within the goal time of under 3 minutes, please document completion time.			

Evaluating Your Program

After each drill, the team should debrief; use the following questions to guide you:

1. What went well during this drill? Were some components easier than others?
2. What could have gone better? How can these issues be addressed by the team or organization leadership?
 - a. Some things to consider:
 - i. Were there barriers to delivery of the AED to the scene quickly?
 - ii. Is there additional learning or training that the team needs?

After drills, the CERP can be reviewed and updated based on the experience and feedback from the team. We recommend organizations/schools review all drill checklists and post arrest reviews when reviewing the CERP annually.