We Support Cardiac Emergency Response Plans (CERPs) in Schools and School Athletic Events

Our organizations support legislation creating readiness and preparedness in Vermont schools and athletic events for cardiac emergencies.

Each year more than 356,000 cardiac arrests occur outside of a hospital, including 23,000 in children.

Nearly 90% are fatal. Cardiac arrest is also the leading cause of death for student athletes.

CERPs can more than double survival rates from cardiac arrest by enabling a trained lay responder team to take action.

Legislation that will be introduced in the upcoming Vermont legislative session would work to turn bystanders into lifesavers, so that in the time of a cardiac emergency, schools and school athletic venues have a team that is prepared and empowered to become a vital link in the chain of survival and provide CPR and AED intervention.

So, what is a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) or Athletic Emergency Action Plan (AEAP)?

Its a written document that establishes specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in school and school sport settings, including but not limited to establishing a Cardiac Emergency Response Team, implementing AED maintenance schedules, training staff in CPR and AED usage, and practicing CERP drills. It can be stand-alone guidelines or merged with the school's existing medical emergency response plans. It also ensures every school has a plan in place, which is integrated into local EMS protocols.

With 23 cardiac arrests occurring at Vermont schools, including at football fields, in the last ten years, we know cardiac emergencies can happen and want to ensure the best possible outcomes for students, athletes, officials and visitors to Vermont schools and sports.

23,000 children experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital each year in the U.S. And in schools with AEDs, 70% of children survive cardiac arrest. That's 7x the overall survival rate for children.