

## **Meeting on Community Defibrillators**

### **Attendance**

Heathfield & Waldron Community First Responders (HWCFR), Cllr Ratcliffe,  
Janna Todd, Parish Clerk.

### **Background**

The first three defibrillators were from SECAMB one was provided at Mayfield Primary School one at the Woodhill Surgery and one at the Five Ashes Primary School.

Registration of the defibrillators used to be on an excel spreadsheet but now the British Heart Foundation has produced a system called The Circuit which is accessible by everyone and registers all the defibrillators around the country. SECAMB now connect to The Circuit so it is very important that it is kept up to date and so that it is known whether the defibrillators are currently online or offline.

When you phone 999, SECAMB will know whether there is a defibrillator registered on The Circuit that is within 500 metres of the incident. They will then provide the code to unlock the cabinet. Advice is that you should not ever drive to collect one. It is supposed that this is because it is too dangerous for them to condone. SECAMB operates by very set rules from which they do not deviate.

Incidents of defibrillators being removed from site and taken for personal or public use to different locations was discussed this is absolutely not allowed as obviously if someone needs the defibrillator, it will not be in situ and probably still marked on The Circuit as available online.

Defibrillators collect all kinds of data - they even will indicate how well compressions have been done. For this reason they are therefore sometimes removed from site by the ambulance crew. It is therefore important to put a luggage tag on the defibrillator to ask it to be returned to the correct site/ location with the name and contact number of the guardian. As a general rule, usually the ambulance crew unplugs the local defibrillator and plugs in their own to the pads and they are not removed from site.

### **Discussions**

#### **1. Who is responsible for the provision, prioritisation and roll out of equipment?**

Any organisation or individual can commission defibrillators - for example there is a gym in Broad Oak that has one on the exterior of their property that they maintain and register on The Circuit themselves.

Rushlake Green & Warburton Parish Councils have six. They bought these and installed them. The Parish Council pays HWCFR annually to replace the batteries and pads.

#### **2. Preferred make of machine to so stock of spare parts do not have to be duplicated.**

HWCFR are more familiar with the SECAMB preferred model Powerheart 5G but any make of machine is acceptable – they will however need to familiarise themselves with other models on how they work and the replacement pads and batteries.

Powerheart 5G defibrillators are around £1,000 and the cabinets cost around £600.

#### **3. Are all brands of defibrillator are maintained by the First Responder?**

The defibrillator outside the Rose and Crown is a Zoll 3 Automatic Defibrillator bought through the British Heart Foundation on the advice and research undertaken by a retired G.P. in The Warren; pads are usable on children and adults and spare parts are readily available. HWCFR would maintain it but will need to familiarise themselves with it.

#### **4. Who takes ownership of the routine checking of the battery and equipment?**

At the meeting The HWCFR agreed to take over the guardianship of the defibrillator at the Rose and Crown.

The defibrillator outside Woodhill Surgery was unknown to HWCFR. A site visit was made after the meeting and the HWCFR agreed to be the guardian of this defibrillator. Its pads and battery were in date so someone has been maintaining it in the past.

The defibrillators are registered on The Circuit however anybody can be allocated as the guardian of the defibrillator once it has been registered by its owner.

Whoever checks the defibrillator must make sure it is registered every three months on The Circuit. Registration includes the machine type, its location, the code of the cabinet, the expiry date of the battery and pads and the date of the last check.

The guardian of the defibrillator receives an e-mail towards the end of the 12-week period after the last check.

#### **5. Who will ensure the machines are registered every 3 months to update the national database called the Circuit?**

The HWCFR check the defibrillators and that the cabinets are dry on a 10 week basis.

The ones at the primary schools have been registered on The Circuit and are being maintained by the HWCFR.

It is unknown who has registered the one at Woodhill Surgery. (This has been investigated by [REDACTED] after the meeting and will be its guardian.) It is already registered on The Circuit.

The one at the Rose and Crown is registered under the ownership of the Mayfieldians CIC and [REDACTED] was currently the guardian but [REDACTED] has agreed to take this over.

Someone can be trained by the first responder to check the defibrillator at the Rose and Crown. People can be allocated by the guardian to look after the defibrillator which will help the first responders as there are only currently five in the local area.

Concerns were raised on the huge responsibility for the guardian of a defibrillator. Guardians should not feel too anxious about the responsibility as defibrillators are supposed to only be a backup after 999 has been called and an ambulance is coming.

#### **6. Where are the spare pads and batteries held or where can they be sourced at short notice as the battery is very expensive?**

Pads cost £80 a set and last two to three years if unused. If they are used they are disposed of straight away. The batteries last for up to five years and cost between £450 to £600 pounds.

The expiry date of the batteries and the pads are registered on The Circuit and the first responder is emailed an alert when they're due to expire. It costs around £150 pounds a year to maintain a defibrillator based on the average costs for replacement defibrillator pads and batteries over a five year period.

There has been an issue of short supplies of batteries. Out of date pads still do work – it is just the sticky gel on the back that expires. It is therefore still possible to use the pads once they have passed the expiry date if new ordered pads have not been delivered.

There is a trust that raises money for the HWCFR and they also get financial support from SECAMB.

HWCFR recommend use of the Powerheart 5G and they can buy batteries and pads for these on a Council's behalf. They are not charged VAT if they are bought by a charity and then given to the guardian of the defibrillator.

HWCFR hold a small supply of defibrillator pads for the 5G Powerheart machine. They do not recommend getting spare batteries as these may expire before they are used.

Pads are generally delivered within three to five days so there is enough time to purchase pads once the expiry date is approaching.

**7. What is the notification procedure if a machine is used?**

HWCFR gets an e-mail as soon as SECAMB has instructed that a defibrillator should be taken to an incident. The HWCFR will then go and check the defibrillator as soon as possible and determine whether it was in fact used. It should be taken offline automatically once SECAMB has provided the code and instructed that the defibrillator is taken to an incident. As soon as a defibrillator is serviced and back in use it is put back online on The Circuit by HWCFR.

**8. Who does the annual service?**

Visits to check defibrillators are free courtesy of HWCFR.

HWCFR check all the local defibrillators about every 10 weeks.

The defibrillators must be registered on The Circuit every three months by the guardian.

HWCFR check that the cabinet is clean and water free and that the lock works. They make sure it fires up when the power button is pressed and ensure all the pads are plugged in properly. They also supply a rescue pack which contains shears (sharp scissors to remove clothing) a razor and a cloth.

There is no annual service specifically. Sometimes they have to return to the manufacturer for a reset or software update. Most of defibrillators have battery charge indicators and pads connected indicators.

**9. Who pays for the consumable items and where does this funding come from.**

They ask the Parish Councils for funds to help replacement materials or they will help them fundraise money to do this.

The Mayfieldians have funds remaining that have been raised by the public donations for batteries and pads replacement for the immediate future.

A request was made to put defibrillator reserves on the agenda of the next F&GP meeting. [REDACTED] will advise the remaining funds raised by the public. The meeting discussed these funds being used first as and when the pads and batteries expire and for the funding passing to then pass to the Parish Council once its earmarked reserves have started to accumulate.

**10. Can there be annual training on defib use/ CPR? Who provides and how would this be funded?**

The first responders can supply training to use the defibrillators and on effective CPR. They are happy to provide a demonstration for about 20 people and this can be during the day, at weekends and in evenings. The demonstration lasts 60 to 90 minutes and there is a 15 minute PowerPoint presentation. To book a demonstration contact [REDACTED]. They are free but you can donate towards them if you wish to.

**11. Are there are any additional responsibilities to those listed above?**

It is recommended to have insurance for the defibrillator only not necessarily for the cabinet.

A rescue pack has now been put in the defibrillator at the Rose and Crown.

It is important that the cabinet code is not made widely available to ensure that the defibrillator is not removed when it is not supposed to be. It is very important to phone 999 and get the code from SECAMB but the code is available in the pub.