As we all know, medical emergencies within dental practices are rare; the most common problems being fainting, hypoglycaemia, choking, seizures, asthma and anaphylaxis, even rarer are cardiac problems such as angina, heart attacks and cardiac arrest.

However, despite the rarity of these problems, medical emergencies can happen at any time in a dental practice, so we all need to be prepared to deal with them should they occur and the GDC is very clear in its expectations.

- All members of staff need to know their role in the event of a medical emergency
- At least two people are available to deal with medical emergencies when treatment is planned to take place
- Members of staff need to be trained in dealing with such an action

There is also an expectation from our customers and members of the public that dental practitioners and dental care professionals are competent in dealing with medical emergencies.

Back in July 2006, the UK Resuscitation Council released recommendations regarding standards for managing resuscitation and medical emergencies for dental practitioners and dental care professionals in general dental practice.

The recommendations include the following regarding AED availability and training:
- All clinical areas should have immediate access to an AED
- Dental practitioners and dental care professionals should all undergo training in Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), basic airway management and use of an AED.

Hew Mathewson, now past President of the GDC “Welcomes these guidelines and congratulates the authors on their considerable work that has led to the publication” (March 2006).

Dealing with medical emergencies is just one of the recommended core subjects per CPD cycle with a suggested minimum number of 10 hours (defibshop.co.uk offer CPD accredited training in the use of an AED including CPR which takes four hours every 12 months and is worth four verifiable CPD points)

Suddenly Cardiac Arrest can happen to anyone at anytime and the only effective treatment is an electric shock delivered by an AED.

The time from arrest to delivery of the first shock is the single most important determinant in survival. For every minute that goes by the patient's chance of survival reduces between seven - 10 per cent.

“When the shock is delivered within five minutes of the sudden cardiac arrest, 50 percent of individuals survive,” said Deborah DiSanzo, vice president and general manager of cardiac resuscitation at Philips Medical Systems, manufacturer of the popular HS1 & FRx defibrillators.

So the question that needs addressing is “Why wouldn't your practice purchase an AED?”

They are very simple to use, with only one or two buttons to operate.

Once activated the AED will provide clear voice prompts, reminding the user to call for the emergency services and where the electrode pads should be placed.

As soon as the pads are attached to the patient the AED will monitor the patient’s heart rhythm and decide whether to deliver a shock or not.

Some machines (semi automatic) will instruct the user to push a button whilst others will deliver the shock automatically (fully automatic).

Most defibrillators also provide clear verbal instructions on how to perform CPR during that part of the rescue protocol, the Lifeline View from Defibtech even has a small LCD screen with a colour video to prompt the rescuer. How amazing is that!

Not having an AED available to use on a collapsed patient may result in a member of the dental team being challenged if it can be shown that it could have favourably influenced the outcome, especially if the action of a dental care professional differs from the recommendation / guidelines from...
such an authoritative body as the Resuscitation Council.de- 

fibrshop.co.uk offer more than 

10 different defibrillators for 

less £1,000, and if you choose to 

lease that could be as lit-

tle as £1.48 a day so again the 

question that needs addressing 

is “Why wouldn’t your practice 

purchase an AED?”

We can’t think of a rea-

son……………can you?

Lots of defibrillators to 

choose from and here are six of 

the most popular.

Cardiac Science Powerheart 

G5 Plus

The Powerheart AED G5 Plus 

is the newest defibrillator 

offered by Cardiac Sci-

cence and is available in 

semi automatic or fully 

automatic versions. “Rescue 

Coach” intuitive prompts are designed 

to guide the rescuer 

through the rescue 

process and provide in-

structions. Prices start from £1,000 + vat. 

Defibtech Lifeline (Standard 

five year battery 

option)

Defibtech Life-

line AED is a 

robust one 

piece unit 

built for 

real life 
situ-

ations. Built to US military 

standards for ruggedness and 

exceeds standards for splash 

and dust resistance.

The Lifeline AED is lightweight at only 
	two kg, pads are pre-

connected (adult or paed-

iatric) and is also 

available in 

semi au-

tomatic or fully 

automatic 

versions. 

“Rescue 

Coach” intuitive 

prompts are designed 

to guide the rescuer 

through the rescue 

process and provide 

instructions. Prices start from £16.00 + vat.

Medtronic Lifepak CR Plus

Medtronic Lifepak CR Plus 

is available in either semi 

automatic or fully automatic 

versions.

It is designed to be used by 

the minimally trained res-

cuer with the semi au-

tomatic version only 

requiring three steps to 

a potentially life 

saving defibria-

tion shock whilst 

the fully auto-

matic version 

only requires 

the rescuer 

to apply the 

pads. Prices start from 

£1,295 + vat.

Heartsine Sa-

maritans PAD

The only UK 

manufactured 

defibrillator on 

the market this fan-

tastic defibrillator 

only uses three simple 

icons and verbal 

instructions, the Samari-
tan PAD will clearly guide the 

rescuer through each step. The 

Samaritan PAD is activated by 

pressing the green on button. 

The pads and battery pack 

are packaged together (one ex-

piry date to track) and the unit 

prompts the rescuer visually 

and verbally. Prices start from 

£799 + vat.

Zoll AED Plus Lay Respond-

er

The Zoll AED Plus is the only 

AED on the market which 

offers a full rescue 

capability providing the 

rescuer with feedback to 

assist in CPR and 

is aimed at both basic life sup-

port users and healthcare pro-

fessionals. The AED Plus is 

easily distinguishable by its 

lime green colour and use of 

a single electrode rather than 
	two. Zoll were recently award-

ed the national defibrillator 

contract from the British Heart 

Foundation. Prices start from 

£1,000 + vat.

Medtronic Lifepak CR Plus

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and verbally. Prices start from 

£799 + vat.

Philips / Laerdal Heartstart 

First Aid HS1

A compact semi automatic unit 

aimed at individuals trained 

in basic life support but who 

would be expected to use 

the equipment infrequently.

Clear calm voice instruc-

tions guide the rescuer through 

each step of defibrillation in-

cluding CPR coaching.

CPD Accredited AED / CPR 

training

defibrshop.co.uk offer CPD ac-

credited training in the safe use 

of the defibrillator you choose 

to purchase and CPR.

Our experienced trainers 

come to your practice to train 

your staff in as little as two 

hours if you choose our e-learn-

ing option for the theory ele-

ment of the course. If you prefer 

pure instructor led training the 

course lasts up to four hours 

and cost the same only £300 + vat. If ordered at the same 

time as you purchase your de-

fibrillator.

Email Paula Leech or Mar-

garet Green for a full copy 

of the Resuscitation Council 

Guidelines and to register for 

our newsletter and information 

on defibrillator special offers 
savealife@defibshop.co.uk or 
call 0845 071 0830

About the author

David Howarth is the Managing Di-

rector of defibshop.co.uk the UK’s 

number one online distributor of de-

fibrillators, consumables and CPD 

verifiable training. Established in 2005 

defibshop offers impartial advice on 

which defibrillator best meets your 

company’s needs and budget, and re-

mains the only distributor of every 

manufacturer’s defibrillators in the 

UK. The defibshop website is the most 

comprehensive resource for defibril-

lators on the web and it includes, 500 
degree images, full technical specifica-

tions, comparison tables, videos, cost 
of ownership over five years graphs 

and latest news articles.

Are you equipped for an emergency?

Saving minutes, saves lives

Dental Defibrillator Package – Quote reference RF269 for special offer 

Includes free carry case, rescue ready kit, 2 sets of adult pads & 1 set of paediatric pads

For further information, contact: 

BOC Healthcare Customer Service Centre, Priesty Road, Worlesey, Manchester M28 2UT, United Kingdom 

Phone 0161 930 6010, bochealthcare-uk@boc.com, www.bochealthcare.co.uk or www.boclifeline.co.uk

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