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On January 30, 2018, Killarney Municipal staff and citizens jumped into action when a local resident suffered a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) while playing hockey at the community arena. The quick action of each of these people quite definitely saved the life of this gentleman.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) was initiated by some of the bystanders, while others retrieved the Automatic External Defibrillator (AEDs) supplied through Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) program, funded by the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and placed in the Community Building by the Municipality of Killarney.

CPR was continued, and the AED was used to facilitate defibrillation. “This event is an example of why we were so focused at getting into the PAD program”, said DSB Board Chair Les Gamble, adding that “the quick actions of those around and proximity of the AED created the opportunity to save a life, and that is exactly what these people did”.

Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Paramedics arrived on scene within minutes of the event and determined that the patient had a return of spontaneous circulation, resulting from the bystanders’ actions. Paramedics managed the patient’s ventilatory status and continued stabilization and treatment while transporting him to Health Science North, in Sudbury.

Manitoulin Sudbury DSB in conjunction with community partners has successfully purchased and deployed over 140 AED’s within the area over the course of the last 10 years. This program had been made possible through donations from the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario, the Provincial and Federal Governments, and Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB.

Paramedic Services Chief Robert Smith stated that the rapid actions of those involved directly contributed to a life being saved, and their actions should be commended. He added that immediate initiation of CPR and rapid use of the AED are paramount to successful outcomes. We are all very proud.

According to the Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation, every year, about 40,000 Canadians experience a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA); one victim every 12 minutes. SCA can strike without warning, affecting people of all ages and all degrees of fitness. When treating sudden cardiac arrest, speed of intervention is essential. If CPR and early defibrillation can be initiated in the first few minutes of a cardiac arrest, survival rates can reach up to 75%. Each passing minute leads to a reduction in survival by 7% to 10%. As witnessed in this incident, teaching Canadians CPR and deploying AEDs through public access defibrillator (PAD) programs has the potential to save thousands of lives.

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