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Middle East and North Africa Leisure & Attractions Council

LET'S TALK SAFETY - AUGUST 2024

EVERY SECOND COUNTS: EMPOWERING LEISURE ATTRACTIONS TO SAVE LIVES WITH EMERGENCY FIRST AID

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In the vibrant world of leisure attractions, where fun and excitement abound, emergencies can still occur without warning. Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is a critical condition that strikes swiftly and without discrimination. With over 3.5 million cases globally each year, the importance of preparedness cannot be overstated—especially in bustling environments like amusement parks, entertainment centres, and attractions. The chance of survival can increase dramatically, to over 70%, with immediate response and early defibrillation within the first three to five minutes of collapse.



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SCA differs from a heart attack, where blocked blood vessels cause damage to the heart muscle. Instead, SCA is an electrical malfunction that stops the heart from pumping blood, often leading to collapse and unconsciousness. In these moments, the response from bystanders can be crucial. Unfortunately, only about 10% of individuals who suffer SCA outside of hospitals survive, largely due to delays in receiving life-saving treatment. The leisure industry, with its large crowds and dynamic settings, must be equipped and ready to handle such emergencies.



Entertainment venues can prepare for these critical moments by ensuring that **Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)** are readily available and easily accessible. AEDs are user-friendly devices that guide users through the process of delivering a potentially life-saving shock to the heart. They are designed for public use, even by individuals with minimal training, and are often equipped with built-in safety mechanisms. The presence of AEDs in locations like theme parks, cinemas, stadiums, and museums can mean the difference between life and death.





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Being prepared goes beyond just having the equipment; it's about fostering a culture of readiness and confidence among staff and visitors. The "Chain of Survival" is a concept that highlights 5 critical steps:

- Recognising cardiac arrest and activating emergency response
- Performing CPR
- Providing rapid defibrillation
- Offering advanced life support
- Ensuring integrated post-cardiac arrest care



For leisure attractions, this means training staff to respond quickly and effectively, having clear emergency protocols, and educating visitors about the importance of swift action.

When the unexpected occurs, every second counts. The average response time for emergency services can range from 18 to 25 minutes, but survival rates decrease by 11% with each passing minute without defibrillation. By equipping their spaces with AEDs and ensuring that staff are trained in CPR, leisure attractions can significantly improve outcomes for victims of SCA. These measures not only protect guests but also reinforce a venue's commitment to safety and well-being.





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In a place designed for joy and entertainment, the ability to save a life becomes an invaluable asset. The vision is a society where no one succumbs to a sudden, treatable medical event—especially in environments meant for relaxation and fun. By taking proactive steps, the leisure industry can ensure that it is not only a place for excitement but also a safe space where everyone can feel secure. Remember, every second counts, and together, we can save lives.



Disclaimer:

The advice shared above is based on a high-level view of best practices when providing Emergency first-aid at leisure attractions. It is however important that you speak with and follow the recommendations of the local authorities and regulations in the countries that you operate. Their guidelines will help you to create your own best practices when emergency first-aid at attractions to ensure your rules and responsibilities outlined meet the requirements of your individual country, and the regulations and recommendations of your local authorities.



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Fun Fact: Ben often gets mistaken for Mr. Incredible from the Disney films and is frequently asked to sign autographs!

