



PRIMARY AUTHORITY ASSURED ADVICE

FIRST AID PROVISION OF DEFIBRILLATORS IN THE WORKPLACE

If you require further information and the full version of this advice and guidance, please contact the Primary Authority via the Primary Authority Register or email bfffprimaryauthority@wakefield.gov.uk

THE PRIMARY AUTHORITY WOULD NOT BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS WHICH CHALLENGE THE ADEQUACY OF THIS POLICY.

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Introduction

Guidance Document on Provision of Defibrillators in the Workplace

Primary Authority Advice is issued by Wakefield Council to The British Frozen Food Federation that the guidance document regarding Provision of Defibrillators in the Workplace complies with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the requirements of the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981

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The British Heart Foundation (BHF) notes that around 60,000 people in the UK suffer a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) away from a hospital environment each year. Speed is critical in responding to such an event; the BHF advises that to give the casualty the best chance of survival, emergency resuscitation should begin within four minutes of initial collapse.

There is no specific legal requirement for employers to provide defibrillators in the workplace. The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 require the employer to provide, or ensure that there are provided, such first-aid equipment and facilities and people as are adequate and appropriate in the circumstances for enabling first aid to be rendered to employees if they are injured or become ill at work.

Employers have no obligation to provide first aid for members of the public. However the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) strongly recommends that employers include the public and others on their premises when making their assessment of first-aid needs.

The responsibility for deciding whether to provide a defibrillator and train staff in its use lies with an individual organisation. A decision should be made after conducting a well-documented risk assessment at the site in question. If you provide an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) then you should take account of the following:

- First aid training - where an employer decides to provide a defibrillator in the workplace, those who may need to use it should be trained. Training can provide additional knowledge and skills and may promote greater confidence in the use of a defibrillator. First Aid at work (FAW) courses do not cover their use. The Resuscitation Council (UK) should be consulted for suitable training and information regarding their use.
www.resus.org.uk
- Maintenance - the AED would be classed as work equipment under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER). You must therefore maintain the equipment (including servicing and replacement parts) and train people in its use.



- Insurance - where first-aid provision is intended to cover both employees and nonemployees, employers should check their liability insurance covers all the activities of first-aiders.

L74 (Third Edition, published 2013 – reissued with minor amendments in 2018) 2013 First aid at work: The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l74.pdf> provides guidelines on what should be considered when assessing first-aid needs. To supplement this, the Resuscitation Council and BHF also provides guidance.

Important factors to consider when deciding to install an AED include the following:

- the age and health profile of the workforce;
- the number of people working on site;
- the type of activities undertaken (e.g. physical exertion);
- the anticipated timescale to respond to an incident on site (i.e. utilise AED to deliver a shock – where possible five minutes. Consider the number(s) and location(s) for AED. For every minute it takes for the defibrillator to reach someone and deliver a shock, their chances of survival reduce by up to 10%.
- the realisation that emergency ambulance response cannot guarantee immediate treatment to the casualty and the ability to perform defibrillation within the 3-5 minute objective timescale.



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