

SIMCOE COUNTY STUDENTS RECEIVE LIFESAVING TRAINING IN CPR AND HOW TO USE A DEFIBRILLATOR

More than 6,500 students to be trained annually

Barrie, ON – This March, Simcoe County youth are being empowered with lifesaving skills thanks to the launch of the ACT High School CPR and Defibrillator Training Program. The program comes to Simcoe County through a unique partnership between the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation and its provincial partners, the Government of Ontario and The Ontario Trillium Foundation, lead community partners the County of Simcoe, the Elston Foundation, the Optimist Club of Barrie and TransCanada Corporation, along with many community partners.

This launch sees more than 6,500 Grade 9 students from 24 high schools in the Simcoe County District School Board and the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board empowered to save lives every year.

The ACT High School CPR and Defibrillator Training Program is built on a strong community-based model of partnerships and support, whereby ACT helps communities find local partners who donate CPR and defibrillator training mannequins, defibrillator training units, teacher training and curriculum materials that schools need to set up the program. Teachers then teach CPR and how to use a defibrillator to their students as a regular part of the curriculum, reaching all youth prior to graduation.

The Hon. Aileen Carroll, P.C., MPP Barrie believes, "Valuable time can be lost at the scene of someone in a cardiac arrest if there are not trained people available to administer CPR or use the portable defibrillator on site. Programs to train secondary school students and other citizens to assist in these situations are a valuable investment."

Seventy-two physical education teachers have been trained as CPR and defibrillator instructors for their students. Four hundred and eighty (480) mannequins and 52 defibrillator training units have been donated to schools. The students will take their lifesaving skills to their current and future families in the communities of Alliston, Barrie, Bradford, Collingwood, Elmvale, Innisfil, Midland, Orillia, Penetanguishene, Stayner and



Tottenham.

"The County of Simcoe is pleased to see this step taken in the training of our young people across this region," says County Warden Cal Patterson. "County Paramedics are already strong community partners in the training and education needs for CPR and defibrillation efforts as we have a number of programs in place to help residents. We also have a partnership with area schools so this new effort dovetails nicely and we congratulate the ACT Foundation for its efforts in Simcoe County."

The ACT Foundation is a national charitable organization dedicated to establishing CPR as a mandatory program in every Canadian high school. ACT's health partners who are committed to bringing the program to the Simcoe County and to all high schools across Canada include AstraZeneca Canada, Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada, Pfizer Canada and sanofi-aventis. The Foundation has already established the CPR program in more than 1,500 high schools and more than 1.7 million youth across Canada have been trained to date.

"The Ontario Trillium Foundation continues to be impressed with the work the ACT Foundation is doing across the province," said L. Robin Cardozo, CEO of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. "Building healthier and more vibrant communities through our grant making policies is one of our

primary goals and I believe the ACT Foundation's CPR program, now being introduced in Simcoe County, will continue to further this objective."

Eight in 10 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur at home. Early CPR, combined with early defibrillator can increase survival rates for cardiac arrest victims by up to 75%, according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

"Bystander CPR and Public Access Defibrillation are the only way to provide care without any delay for sudden cardiac arrest patients. This important training will help save lives in the Simcoe region," states Dr. Paul Hoogeveen of Sunnybrook Osler Centre for Prehospital Care and Medical Director for Simcoe / Muskoka.

"We are thrilled with the support of ACT's partners. Without them, this lifesaving program would not be possible," says ACT Foundation Executive Director Sandra Clarke. ACT's many community partners include: Alliston Lions Club, Collingwood Progress Club, Elmvale & District Lions Club, Kempenfelt Rotary Club, Knights of Columbus – Laurier Council, Midland Civitan Club, Penetanguishene Lions Club, Quota Club of Orillia, Rotary Club of Alliston, Rotary Club of Collingwood, Rotary Club of Orillia-Lake Country, Royal Canadian Legion – Penetanguishene and Stayner & District Kinsmen Club.

To learn about some of ACT's rescue stories, visit www.actfoundation.ca.