

Defibrillator training now part of curriculum

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By Jessica Lovell, Guelph Tribune

Local Grade 9 students will soon be learning more than just CPR as part of the life-saving training they get in their phys-ed classes.

Thanks to a new program, launched last Friday by the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation, the students will now also receive training on how to use a defibrillator.

“We’re insuring that we have generations of kids that know what to do in an emergency and how to pull the defibrillator off the wall and use it,” said ACT Foundation operations manager Jennifer Boissoneault.

“We’ve had hundreds of lives that have been saved thanks to the ACT program,” Boissoneault said at a demonstration held Friday at Guelph Collegiate to launch the program locally.

Since 1999, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) has been a part of the mandatory Grade 9 physical education curriculum, but now the foundation is working to add defibrillator training to that curriculum, she said.

Local schools that will benefit from the program are Centennial Collegiate, Guelph Collegiate and Bishop Macdonell high school, together with high schools in Shelburne, Orangeville and Fergus.

In all, seven schools will receive 210 training mannequins and 28 defibrillator training units to train an estimated 1,700 youth each year.

The ACT foundation is a charitable organization dedicated to empowering youth to save lives, Boissoneault said. The defibrillator program is being launched in partnership with the Ontario government, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Hydro One, local service clubs, and AstraZeneca Canada, Pfizer Canada and Sanofi.



Tribune photo by Jessica Lovell

Guelph Collegiate students Charlotte Hopkins (front), Jodre Datu (left) and Roshni Patel demonstrate a situation that might call for a defibrillator during a launch event for a defibrillator training program in local schools.