FIRST RESPONSE TO A MEDICAL EMERGENCY IN COMMON AREAS INSIDE OF AN AHS FACILITY OR OUTSIDE WITHIN CLOSE PROXIMITY

OBJECTIVES

• To provide clear guidance to Alberta Health Services (AHS) staff, physicians and volunteers when a medical emergency occurs in common areas inside of an Alberta Health Services facility or outside within close proximity of an Alberta Health Services facility.

• To provide direction that all Alberta Health Services facilities will ensure processes are in place to support the implementation of this policy.

APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, Students, Volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary).

ELEMENTS

1. Alberta Health Services is responsible for assisting with medical emergencies arising in common areas inside an AHS facility and outside within close proximity of an AHS facility.

   1.1 Alberta Health Services will establish facility specific processes to clarify medical emergency accountabilities and responses, including designating First Responders at each site for the purpose of response to medical emergencies in
common areas inside an AHS facility and outside within close proximity of an AHS facility.

2. Facility Processes

2.1 Each AHS facility will have processes for managing a medical emergency in common areas inside of the facility and outside but within close proximity of the facility.

2.2 Staff, physicians, volunteers, and designated First Responders shall respond to medical emergencies in common areas inside an AHS facility and outside within close proximity of an AHS facility in accordance with the following:
   a) facility specific processes;
   b) their respective skills and training;
   c) And applicable governing professional body standards.

2.3 All AHS facilities shall ensure that they have access to an AED and a portable first aid kit.

2.4 Alberta Health Services facility processes shall incorporate the following:
   a) communication resources (e.g. reception, switchboard, local resources, staff);
   b) First Responder processes that will ensure medical assistance will be provided when:
      (i) it is safe for both the provider and individual receiving medical emergency assistance;
      (ii) the individual providing assistance in a medical emergency is doing so within the scope of their training, practice, and skill level; and
      (iii) The medical emergency assistance provided may be solely waiting for further assistance from an internal AHS resource identified as a First Responder or EMS/911.
   c) Code Blue activation, if applicable;
   d) Emergency Services involvement (e.g. EMS, Fire, Police);
   e) transportation of the individual;
   f) available treatment at site, if applicable (e.g. Emergency Departments/Urgent Care Centres);
g) any governing professional body standards, Code of Ethics/Code of Conduct relevant to First Responders providing assistance during a Medical Emergency;

h) first aid kit (in accordance with this policy and WHS); and

i) Processes for documentation of responses to medical emergencies.

3. First Responders

3.1 Each Alberta Health Services facility shall designate individual(s) as First Responders for the purposes of medical emergency response. These designations may occur as often as required.

3.2 First Responders shall receive facility appropriate training and education, such as first aid, pertaining to adults, children and infants.

DEFINITIONS

**Code Blue** means a cardiac arrest or medical emergency in which medically trained personnel are dispatched to aid a person undergoing/experiencing a cardiac arrest.

**Close Proximity** means physically close to an Alberta Health Services facility whereby staff could reasonably be expected to respond to a medical emergency.

**Common Areas** means a non-clinical area within an Alberta Health Services facility where treatment of patients does not normally occur (e.g. cafeteria).

**First Responder** means an Alberta Health Services staff member who has been trained in First Aid and has been specifically designated to respond to an emergency situation within or in close proximity to an Alberta Health Services facility.

**Medical Emergency** means an injury or illness that is acute and poses an immediate risk to a person's life or health. These emergencies may require assistance from another person. Medical emergencies involve immediate onset of symptoms, including pain, severe enough to lead a prudent layperson with an average knowledge of health and medicine to reasonably believe immediate medical attention is needed.

REFERENCES

- Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:
  - Emergency Response Codes Policy (#1132)
- Alberta Health Services Resources:
  - Workplace Health and Safety First Aid Code of Practice (#WHS-COP-03)
  - Workplace Health and Safety First Aid Plan
  - Workplace Health and Safety Supplementary First Aid Information for Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses
- Non-Alberta Health Services Documents:
First Response to a Medical Emergency in Common Areas Inside of an AHS Facility or Outside Within Close Proximity

- Emergency Medical Aid Act (Alberta)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (Alberta)

**Version History**

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