

In This Issue:

- ◆ Heart Attack & Stroke: Do You Have an Emergency Response Plan in Place?
- ◆ Mental Health Matters

**Heart Attack & Stroke:
Do You Have An Emergency Response Plan in Place?**

Heart attack, stroke, and sudden cardiac arrest are potential risks at all worksites, regardless of the type of work. By creating an emergency response plan for your worksite, you and your employees can be better prepared to handle medical emergencies and help save a life.

In 2009, heart disease and stroke caused 26% of all deaths in Maine. A heart attack or a stroke can happen to anyone at any time. Would you or your employees know what to do if this happened one day at work? Only 15% of Maine adults can identify all the symptoms of a heart attack and 23.1% actually know the symptoms of a stroke and to call 9-1-1.

Below are some things to consider while developing policies and procedure:

- Involve employees in the planning process
- Talk with local EMS or fire and rescue to know about how long it will take for help to arrive (for all worksite locations) during an emergency
- Provide training for employees on how to respond to life-threatening emergencies
- Provide education on how to recognize a heart attack and stroke and the need to call 9-1-1 as soon as possible
- Provide CPR training to employees

Another medical emergency to consider is sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). SCA happens when the heart suddenly stops beating without any warning. When this happens, blood flow stops to the brain and other body organs. If not treated within minutes, the person will die. The best way to get the heart pumping again quickly before help arrives is to use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).



An AED works by sending an electric shock to the heart to try and restore its normal rhythm. They are safe, easy to use, and can be lifesaving. Serious consideration should be given to keeping an AED at your worksite and providing training for employees.

For more information:
[OSHA - Best Practice Guide: Fundamentals of a Workplace First-Aid Program](#)
[Maine Heart Health](#)

Employer Success Story

McArthur Public Library, located in Biddeford, has taken steps to develop policies to support healthy eating. Some examples of what they have done include:

- Honor system healthy snack basket
- Created .25, .5, 1 and 2 mile walking routes through downtown for employees to use on breaks and promoted to library patrons

McArthur library has also recently expanded their library collection to include recreation equipment such as:

- Snowshoes for kids and adults
- Bird-watching book and binoculars
- Fishing poles

McArthur Public Library has made healthy changes that not only helps their employees but members of their community. Keep up the good work!

January Health Observances

- ◆ [Cervical Health Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [National Glaucoma Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [National Stalking Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [Thyroid Awareness Month](#)

February Health Observances

- ◆ [American Heart Month](#)
- ◆ [National Wear Red Day](#) (6)
- ◆ [National Donor Day](#) (14)



Mental Health Matters

Mental illness will most likely affect you at some point in your life. One in four adults experience mental illness in a given year. If you don't experience it personally, you will likely know one of the 61.5 million Americans that do, whether it is a friend, family members, or coworker.

Many will face challenges in their workplace and are often misunderstood, shunned, or underutilized.

The Impact of Mental Health

- Serious mental illness costs Americans \$193.2 billion in lost earnings per year
- Mood disorders such as depression are the third most common cause of hospitalization for adults ages 18-44
- People living with mental illness have an increased risk of having chronic medical conditions

The Business Case for Mental Health

Mental illness and substance abuse annually cost employers \$80-\$100 billion in indirect costs alone. The majority of people with mental illness will improve with appropriate diagnosis, treatment, and ongoing monitoring.

When employees receive effective treatment, the result is:

- Lower total medical costs
- Increase productivity
- Lower absenteeism and presenteeism
- Lower disability costs



Investing in a mentally healthy workforce is good for your business and employees.

For more information:

- [Partnership for Workplace Mental Health](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#)
- [Maine Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services](#)
- [Mental Health First Aid](#)

Do you want to highlight your worksite in a future newsletter or have questions that you want Maine CDC staff to answer? Please send your worksite success story or questions to Meredith Backus at meredith.backus@maine.gov

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Ask Us

Question: I would like to purchase an AED for my workplace. Where can I purchase an AED?

Answer: We recommend you contact your local EMS. They can help you find and purchase an AED. Plus, it will be great for them to know you have an AED on hand if you need it.

If you are in rural location, you may qualify for a free AED. MCD Public Health along with the Maine Cardiovascular Health Council has been awarded a grant to purchase and place AEDs into rural areas after proving defibrillation and 'hands-only' CPR training.

To learn more & fill out an application visit: <http://www.mainecardiohealth.org/RAED.html>

Additional Resources

