

UNEXPECTED HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Background

A timely and effective response to unexpected health emergencies is essential to ensuring a safe school environment. Unexpected health emergencies can occur without warning and require immediate action to improve survival outcomes by providing critical intervention before emergency responders arrive. Ensuring that schools are equipped and prepared to respond supports student and staff safety at school, enabling school communities to focus on learning and well-being while increasing confidence and security.

The purpose of the operational procedure is to ensure that all schools within the district are prepared to respond effectively and promptly to unexpected health emergencies, including cardiac arrest and opioid overdose.

Definitions

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is a portable electronic medical device used on a person experiencing sudden cardiac arrest, a condition where the heart unexpectedly stops beating.

Naloxone

A medication that can reverse the effects of opioid overdose, including fentanyl. It is a safe medication with no abuse potential. Naloxone works within minutes to restore breathing and consciousness by ejecting opioids from receptors in the brain.

Procedures

1. First aid attendants are required to maintain certification, participate in training, and respond to emergencies using AEDs and naloxone.
2. **Availability & Location**
 - 2.1 All schools and school district offices shall have automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and naloxone kits as part of their standard first aid kit.
 - 2.2 AEDs must be located in a conspicuous, unobstructed area within the general office at each site to ensure visibility and accessibility.
 - 2.3 Naloxone kits will be integrated into the standard first aid kits available at each site.
3. **Training & Certification**
 - 3.1 First aid attendants will be provided with training on the use of AEDs and naloxone kits.
 - 3.2 Training kits are available for sign-out from the education centre for all first aid Attendants.
 - 3.3 AED training will be specific to the units deployed across the district and comply with WorkSafeBC standards.
 - 3.4 Qualifications for AED use must be renewed every three years.

- 3.5 Custodians will receive training on AED and naloxone use to support outside user groups utilizing school facilities.

4. Inspection & Maintenance

- 4.1 AEDs will be regularly inspected by each site's health and safety committee to ensure operational readiness.
- 4.2 Replacement parts for AEDs are available through the education centre and are kept in stock at all times.
- 4.3 Naloxone kits will be checked regularly as part of first aid kit inspections to ensure they are complete and within expiry.

5. Procurement & Replacement

- 5.1 The district's health and safety office is responsible for the procurement, distribution, and replacement of AEDs and naloxone kits.
- 5.2 Any damaged or expired components must be reported immediately to the health and safety office for replacement.

Reference: School Act, Sections 88(1) and 168(2)(t)
Support Services for Schools Ministerial Order (M149/89)
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations

Related OPs: [OP 125 Health and Safety of Students and Staff](#)
[OP 342 Student Illness or Injury at School](#)