

Man owned defibrillator that saved pupil's life

By Olivia Kelleher
Monday January 28 2008

THERE have been calls for defibrillators in all schools after it emerged the machine which saved a teenager's life was privately owned.

Daniel Ross (15) from Drimoleague, Cork, collapsed last Friday after he completed a cross-country run at Midleton CBS as part of the South Munster Cross-country Championships.

Fortunately, first-aid practitioner Robert Baily was on site with his own defibrillator, which he had recently bought.

He used it to revive Daniel, who was brought by ambulance to Cork University Hospital.

Daniel, who is a pupil of Maria Immaculate Community College in Dunmanway, was initially critical but he has since stabilised and was last night described as "comfortable". It is hoped he will make a full recovery.

Daniel was one of 500 pupils taking part in the east Cork event. His brother Andrew and sister Amy were also there.

Heartbeat

Mr Baily, of Midleton, revived Daniel with the defibrillator after he found him slumped on the ground with no perceptible heartbeat.

He said CPR should be a mandatory subject in secondary school.

He argued that CPR and general first-aid should be taught in transition year in every school.

Mr Baily, who is a professional first-aid practitioner, has also been campaigning for more widespread availability of defibrillators in the Cork area.

"I bought my own defibrillator last November and bring it along to any of these type of events.

"There are very few (defibrillators) in east Cork in particular and I have been campaigning about that with the increase in Sudden Adult Death Syndrome and so on.

"My thoughts are with Daniel's parents and his brother and sister and I hope he makes a full recovery. In cases like this it is about early CPR, early access to an AED and then advanced care."

Mr Baily paid tribute to the efficiency of the ambulance service, saying they were on site within minutes.

He also said the help of PE teacher Rose O'Sullivan and the arrival of Dr Hugh Doran had proved vital in the resuscitation of the teenager.

Loss

His call for more defibrillators was backed by the mother of a 16-year-old boy who died from Sudden Adult Death Syndrome (SADS).

Brid Manning lost her son Robert on August 31, 2002, when he collapsed in the garden of the family home in Cratloe, Co Clare.

Robert was playing rugby with his brothers when he slumped to the ground. He died in hospital a short time later after all efforts to revive him failed.

Mrs Manning has raised €37,000 to buy defibrillators and facilitate CPR training for sporting clubs.

Each Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) costs from €1,200 to €2,000.

Mrs Manning insists defibrillators should be made mandatory in shopping centres, GAA centres, schools and nightclubs.

- *Olivia Kelleher*