

---

March 10, 2009 05:18 PM Eastern Time

## **Fighting Sudden Cardiac Arrest By Enabling Good Samaritans**

***Boston life save highlights value of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and laws that protect their users***

BOSTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Three Good Samaritan rescuers in Boston recently used a [Defibtech](#) automated external defibrillator (AED) to save the life of a man who collapsed from sudden cardiac arrest at the North Station rail platform. There have been many similar life saves across the country. These actions highlight the value of Good Samaritan laws, which protect rescuers from unfair lawsuits. These laws, on the books in all 50 states, have spurred the creation of public-access AED programs throughout America.

"Thousands of lives have been saved by automated external defibrillators because individuals have been able to trust their natural impulse to respond to a sudden cardiac arrest victim rather than being afraid of getting sued," said Dr. Glenn W. Laub, Defibtech CEO and Chairman of Cardiac Surgery and Director of the Heart Hospital at St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton, N.J.

The Boston Good Samaritans needed to react with a readily available AED in just a few minutes; sudden cardiac arrest victims treated with an AED within five minutes usually live while those left unattended for 10 minutes usually die, Dr. Laub explained. "Expecting EMS to arrive within 10 minutes, especially in Boston traffic, places unrealistic expectations on these professional responders," Dr. Laub wrote in a [commentary on the importance of enabling life saves with defibrillators](#).

Despite the thousands of lives saved by public access defibrillator programs, some organizations are still nervous about committing to a program's oversight, training and maintenance requirements, fearing the liability consequences if an error is made. For example, a recent Wall Street Journal article, "Why Hotels Resist Defibrillators," (Feb. 24, 2009) outlined the reservations of some hotel chains. "Yes, deploying and maintaining AEDs and training employees on how to use them requires responsibility and a degree of risk. But have hotels considered the risks of not having AEDs?" Dr. Laub wrote, in [a response to the Wall Street Journal article](#).

The Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association also questioned the hotel industry's approach to on-site AEDs. "Thousands of employers large and small have implemented programs to protect their employees and provide rapid response to workers who might suffer sudden cardiac arrest on the job. If nothing else, hotel executives who resist AEDs should think about the employee health and welfare benefits that go along with an emergency plan that involves staff CPR training and access to an AED," said Chris Chiames, executive director of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association.

### ***Value-added service helps organizations reduce liability risks***

To help organizations overcome liability risks – and thereby enabling Good Samaritans – Defibtech introduced a value-added service, [Defibtech MD](#), which helps organizations to operate AED programs that meet oversight, training and maintenance requirements.

"Just like a fire extinguisher or any other safety device, an AED must be properly maintained after it is purchased and placed into service. Defibtech MD assures that AED programs have the proper physician prescription, that they meet oversight requirements, and that they concur with government mandates," said Dr. Laub. He added that Defibtech MD also helps organizations keep abreast of training requirements and ever-changing legal precedents that impact AED programs.

"We're finding that the liability tide is shifting in favor of having AEDs," he said. Individuals have successfully sued airlines, amusement parks, transit authorities and other organizations because AEDs were not available or because employees did not receive proper AED training, he explains. "If you want to avoid liability, the answer is to have an AED program with proper oversight, training and maintenance." He added that the nation's courts have increasingly acknowledged the availability of an AED as a "required standard of care" for employees and citizens in public areas.

Medical research also has verified the effectiveness of AED programs. A 2004 study published in the New England Journal of Medicine concluded that public access to AEDs significantly improves the chances of survival from sudden cardiac arrest, which kills up to 325,000 Americans each year.

---

### **About Defibtech**

Defibtech relentlessly pursues one goal: making the best automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in the world at affordable prices. Defibtech designs and manufactures the FDA-approved Lifeline™ and ReviverR™ brand AEDs and related accessories. Defibtech's products are sold through its network of distribution partners in the United States and around the world. Defibtech is headquartered in Guilford, Conn., and manufactures all of its defibrillators in the United States in a state-of-the-art ISO-9001:2000 certified facility. For more information about Defibtech and its products, visit [www.defibtech.com](http://www.defibtech.com) or call 1-866-DEFIB-4-U (1-866-333-4248).

---