

Moorabool clubs in line to get defibrillators

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THREE Moorabool sports grounds got defibrillators at the weekend as the council canvasses the option of supplying each of the shire's seven Aussie rules clubs with one of the portable first-aid devices.

The units, provided at Wallace Recreation Reserve, Darley Park and Maddingley Park, cost \$2300 each.

Mayor Pat Griffin said the collapse of Bacchus Marsh footballer Nathan Prince at the Eastern Oval on August 20 showed the need for defibrillators to be readily available.

The units were bought by the council, Ballan District Health Care, Djerriwarrh Health Services and the Ballarat and Central Highlands football leagues.

Cr Griffin said the machines were worth the expense.

"We're going to look at getting a defibrillator for every sports ground and I've suggested that we pay half the cost. So if the club can fund half, council could donate the money for the other half," he said.

"If there's a defibrillator at the ground, there's an 85 per cent rate of survival for people who have a cardiac arrest, but it's as low as 7 per cent if there isn't one there."

The portable unit uses step-by-step voice prompts to tell operators how to give cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.

It determines the required rate, automatically diagnoses the patient's condition and, if necessary, delivers a dose of electric energy to shock their heart back to normal rhythm.

Paramedic Andrew White, founder of the Defib Your Club for Life campaign, said portable defibrillators were crucial in areas like Moorabool.

"In the west, response times to defibrillation were more than 20 minutes, which is far too long.



Safety call: Andrew White wants a defibrillator at every sports club in Victoria.

"The further you are away from resources and ambulance services, the more important it becomes."

Mr White wants the state government to fund a defibrillator for every sports club in Victoria.

But a spokesman for Health Minister David Davis said the government had no plans to subsidise defibrillators or make them compulsory at sports grounds.

"Ambulance Victoria has placed 86 automated external defibrillators in key areas where large numbers gather, such as zoos, recreation centres and railway stations," he said.

-Nick Toscano