



Sheriff's office equips 300 deputies with AEDs

Manatee County Sheriff's Office, Bradenton, Florida

Challenge

Implement a marked patrol car Automated External Defibrillator (AED) program that includes assigning a new AED to each one of the 300 Manatee County Sheriff's Office deputies – quickly and cost-effectively.

Solution

Purchase 300 Philips HeartStart FRx AEDs, conduct train the trainer courses, and then launch a systematic training program.

Located between Tampa Bay and Sarasota, Bradenton, Florida is home to the Manatee County Sheriff's Office (MCSO). Serving a population of 318,000 residents within a 716 square mile radius, MCSO is committed to providing the highest quality of police services to those who live in, work in, and otherwise visit Manatee County. "We constantly evaluate our efforts to enhance public safety with the objective of improving the quality of life within the County," says Major Keith Stewart, Administrative Bureau, MCSO. "One of the ways we do that is by providing our deputies with the equipment and support necessary to fulfill their responsibility. So, when MCSO reached the end of the year with enough money in the budget to fund one of the many projects vying for attention, management chose to implement the only project on the list with the potential to save a life – the marked patrol car AED program."

Setting priorities

According to Major Stewart, MCSO is not new to AEDs. "A number of years ago, we instituted a small-scale AED program. We purchased six units and placed them in high-risk areas, including our training room and jail. Over time, we bought additional units and placed them in our administrative buildings and on our watercraft."

Major Stewart says the goal was to ultimately put them into the hands of MCSO patrol deputies. "Our deputies are out there day and night. It's a given that they'll either be called to a scene or happen upon a situation that requires medical attention. Arming them with AEDs made sense. Our plan was to ease into the marked car phase of the program, as budget permitted. We were thrilled when we approached our 2009 year-end with enough money to purchase an AED for each one of our 300 patrol deputies." Major Stewart says that he's amazed at how quickly it all came together but not surprised with the decision. "The value we place on life is a philosophy that comes from the top down – the AED program is a good illustration of where our priorities lie."

Choosing the right AED

Tasked with the purchasing decision, Major Stewart looked at several vendors. "We chose our existing AEDs because that's what the County EMS had at the time. This time around, I considered my options and compared vendors based on three "officer-friendly" criteria. The new AEDs had to be easy to use and they had to be easy to maintain and have a low cost of ownership. The Philips HeartStart FRx was the clear choice."

PHILIPS
sense and simplicity

“The value we place on life is a philosophy that comes from the top down – the AED program is a good illustration of where our priorities lie.”

Major Keith Stewart,
Manatee County Sheriff's Office

Major Stewart says the deciding factor was the HeartStart FRx pediatric key. “All the other models required two sets of pads, one for adults and one for children. The HeartStart FRx uses one set of pads that comes with a two-year shelf life. And the battery has a four-year life. That’s a big deal when you consider we will be multiplying our recurring costs by 300.” Major Stewart says he also kept his budget in check by avoiding add-ons. “The initial warranty on the Philips AED is very good so we didn’t need to buy extended warranties. The HeartStart model offered us everything we were looking for and more.”

After MCSO selected its AED, Major Stewart discovered that Manatee County EMS had switched to the Philips HeartStart MRx Monitor/Defibrillator. “This is a great benefit to our community,” says Major Stewart. “If our officers are first responders to a situation, EMS will be able to take over without missing a beat; they can plug our FRx pads into their MRx and even transmit critical data to the hospital while en route. The ability to facilitate such a seamless transition in a life and death situation is priceless.”

When Larry Wagner, Training Coordinator and Instructor with MCSO discovered that he would be training 300 deputies, many of whom had never used an AED, on the new Philips HeartStart FRx, he was both relieved and excited. “This is not my first rodeo with Philips,” says Larry. “I had two HeartStart AEDs at a security company where I worked prior to joining MCSO. Philips is definitely a step up from other AEDs. The HeartStart units are designed to be simple and extremely easy to use. Features like the voice coaching and the self-test will help our deputies feel confident with their new skill and new AED.”

Training by design

Training 300 deputies in a timely and cost-effective manner required a clear strategy. “Our deputies are divided among three districts,” says Larry. “Each district designated one to three people to serve as trainers. Once those folks were identified, we set up train-the-trainer sessions with our local Philips representative.

“From there, we prepared a two-hour lesson plan detailing the proper use and maintenance of the AEDs, which is now incorporated into our CPR refresher

course program. As our deputies come up for recertification, they receive a four-hour training course based on AHA guidelines, and walk away with their very own AED.”

Larry says the real coup was training on the HeartStart FRx AED. “With the purchase of the 300 new Philips AEDs, we also acquired six Philips HeartStart FRx AED training models and we will be using them to train everyone.”



“Having an AED makes us true first responders in every sense of the word. It allows us to render a greater level of aid until our EMTs arrive.”

It’s a fact

- SCA is one of the leading causes of death in the United State claiming nearly 300,000 lives each year⁴
- The likelihood of a successful resuscitation decreases by 7 to 10 percent for every minute that passes without CPR and defibrillation⁵
- More people die from SCA than from house fires, HIV, firearms, prostate and breast cancer, and traffic accidents, combined^{6,7,8}
- Just over 13 percent of workplace fatalities are a result of SCA⁹
- In cities where defibrillation is provided within 5 to 7 minutes, the survival rate is as high as 45 percent¹⁰
- Nearly 70-to-80 percent of all cardiac arrests occur in the home and a majority are witnessed by someone who could potentially help¹¹



Larry Wagner (left), Training Coordinator and Instructor with MCSO, demonstrates the Philips HeartStart FRx AED to MCSO District One Deputies Gary Davis (center) and Paul Harris (right) during one of the department's first field training sessions. "Our deputies – all 300 of them – support MCSO's new AED program 100 percent and truly appreciate what it means to be assigned a Philips FRx AED."

"Our decision came down to ease of use and maintenance with a low cost of ownership – Philips was the clear choice."

Major Keith Stewart,
Manatee County Sheriff's Office



Deputy Jason Carey chooses to keep his AED close at hand. "My AED is two inches from my head while I'm driving. If I'm going to need it, I don't want to waste time digging through my trunk."

Instilling confidence

Larry's first training session was designed to test his lesson plan and included 14 MCSO graduating Agency Specifics Class deputies who were in the process of being released to field training. Deputy Benjamin Main and Deputy Jeff Herba, two of MCSO's newest recruits, were first to receive their training and their new AEDs. "Larry's training class was great," recalls Deputy Herba. "The Philips training unit gave us different scenarios, which forced us to pay attention. Sometimes we had a scenario that had different outcomes; it was very realistic."

"Now that I've gone through training myself, I would feel comfortable handing the Philips AED to virtually anyone – it's that easy to use," says Deputy Main. "The Philips AED is very straightforward. There's no messing around, trying to figure out where things are. I open up the case and I can see my infant/child key and my pads. We also have an extra set of pads, an extra battery, a razor, and a pair of scissors to use in case

we need to cut a shirt open." Deputy Main says he really appreciates the AED's voice coaching feature. "The Philips AED walks you through everything – it even provides CPR coaching. I also like how it tells you to call 911; in the heat of the moment that's a good reminder."

Deputy Herba agrees, "The medical calls can be tough because we're not EMTs. However, the AED takes us to another level; we now have the potential to make a world of difference." That said, Deputy Herba admits that he was a bit apprehensive when he discovered that he would be assigned an AED. "I was concerned that an AED would be a complex tool that would require extensive training and maintenance and add to our workload. However, the Philips model is incredibly simple to use.

"As for maintenance, you periodically check the status indicator and the battery and that's about it. You don't spend a lot of time training on it, thinking about it or

maintaining it. Plus, it's extremely really rugged. I don't have to worry about it getting banged up or damaged if I happen to sit a file box on it."

Answering the call – on and off duty

"AEDs should be standard issue for anyone who has taken an oath to serve and protect the people," says Sergeant Rick Rietz, MSCO. "My grandfather is 90 years old and has already suffered one heart attack. He visits my family on a regular basis. Knowing that my squad car is parked in my driveway and that the AED is in the trunk is very comforting." Sergeant Rietz continues, "We have deputies living all over the county. Knowing that there are 300 AEDs scattered throughout the area at any time of the day and night provides our citizens with an incredible sense of safety."

Deputy Jason Carey, a volunteer trainer for his district, agrees, "Sergeant Rietz and I have successfully trained everyone in our district on the use of AEDs, including 74 deputies.

Not only did they discover how simple the AED is to use, but they also realized how important it is to someone in cardiac arrest," says Deputy Carey. "My AED is two inches from my head while I'm driving. If I'm going to need it, I don't want to waste time digging through my trunk."

Sergeant Rietz says that for those wondering if they can afford an AED program, it comes down to how they answer one question, "The cost of a life – a civilian or an officer – what is it worth? My sheriff is determined that the lives of the citizens of Manatee County and its officers are worth more than the cost he's going to incur by outfitting us with AEDs." Major Stewart concludes, "If you find yourself in Manatee County, you can rest easily knowing that we have 300 deputies armed with AEDs and they are trained and prepared to use them."

Making a case for AEDs in law enforcement

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is one of the leading causes of death in the United States.¹ Often brought on by ventricular fibrillation, a condition in which the heart's electrical activity malfunctions, SCA can happen to anyone at anytime, anywhere. For the best chance of survival from the most common cause of SCA, a shock from a defibrillator should be delivered within the first few minutes of collapse.²

The American Heart Association estimates that 40,000 more lives could be saved annually in the U.S. alone if automated external defibrillators (AEDs) were more widely available and could reach victims more quickly.³

"The fact that each one of our 300 deputies will have a dedicated AED in the back of his or her patrol car is the mark of a progressive law enforcement agency," says Sergeant Rietz. "We're out patrolling 24 hours a day, seven days a week. On average we're covering 150 miles of highway and city streets. We cross paths with hundreds of people during our 12-hour shifts, including a large population of retirement-age folks. The possibility that we may be called upon to respond with our AED is high. It's also possible that our AEDs may go unused for years. It's quite possible that they may never be used. And that would be a good thing. The reality is we have had officers who have had heart attacks while on duty, and we have been first responders to emergency medical scenes. Now we have the tool and the potential to make a difference when it matters most."

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- 3 <http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/1243622154628FACTS%20-%20A%20Race%20Against%20the%20Clock%203-5-09.pdf>.
- 4 American Heart Association. 2010 Heart and Stroke Statistical Update. Dallas, Texas: American Heart Association, 2010, pg e13.
- 5 American Heart Association. Cardiac arrest: AHA recommendation. Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4481>.
- 6 Retrieved from <http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/reprint/CIRCULATIONAHA.109.192667v1.pdf>.
- 7 National Fire Protection Association Fire Loss in the U.S. 2008 (<http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/pdf/os/fireloss.pdf>).
- 8 Heron MP, Hoyert DL, Murphy SL, Xu JQ, Kochanek KD, Tejada-Vera B. Deaths: Final data for 2006. National vital statistics reports; vol 57 no 14. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2009. (http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr57/nvsr57_14.pdf).
- 9 Occupational Safety and Health Association (OSHA). www.osha.gov/dts/tib/tib_data/tib20011217.pdf.
- 10 American Heart Association. Cardiac arrest: AHA recommendation. Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4481>.
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"AEDs should be mandatory for first responders. I don't think you can call yourself a modern agency if you don't have them."

*Deputy Benjamin Main,
Manatee County Sheriff's Office*

"I really feel fortunate that I work for an agency that has the foresight to give us a tool like this."

*Deputy Jeff Herba,
Manatee County Sheriff's Office*

To learn more about Philips HeartStart Defibrillators and how to incorporate an early defibrillation program into your organization's safety program, visit www.philips.com/lawenforcement, or call 800-453-6860.

Please visit www.philips.com/lawenforcement



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