

14th July 2009



The Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Commended Charity 2003
Healthcare and Medical Research
Charity Awards

Suite 6, Churchill House
Horndon Park
Station Road
West Horndon
Essex
CM13 3XD
Tel: 01277 811215
e-mail: info@sadsuk.org
www.sadsuk.org

Dear Prime Minister

Re: AEDs in Schools – epetition response

Thank you for the response to the above epetition regarding the request of the charity to bring forward a strategy to make Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) available in schools.

SADS UK is aware of the excellent initiative to put AEDs in places where there is a high risk of cardiac arrest. Professionals in the field of resuscitation are only too pleased that SADS UK are putting AEDs into schools as they understand this action will save lives. In fact last year a 36 year old teacher was saved by a defibrillator donated by SADS UK and its prompt use by his colleagues.

Schools are often the hub of the community used for many activities, including further education, clubs and sports events. It is known that sports can induce cardiac arrest in people who are susceptible. There is also the possibility that being struck with a blunt object such as a cricket bat or ball in the chest could cause commotio cordis causing cardiac arrest and speedy defibrillation is needed in these instances.

As stated in our petition, an American Heart Association study published last year shows that for every 111 schools, on average there is likely to be one cardiac arrest on a school premises each year. Defibrillators are not expensive and for a school of 1200 children, £1 per child would cover this potentially lifesaving equipment.

Patrons: Dr G Michael Vincent, Professor A John Camm, Professor Richard Sutton, Kanu Nwankwo
Professor Bob Lewin, Sir Stanley Odell, Bill Tidy MBE - Cartoonist, Mark Jones

Registered in England and Wales No. 5679989. Registered Office: 22 Rowhedge, Brentwood, Essex CM13 2TS
Registered Charity No. 1113681

SADS UK believes that PCTs and local authorities should receive guidance from Government, directing them to provide AEDs to schools. We believe the reasons above give adequate evidence that this equipment and training must be put in place.

You briefly mention the possibility of population screening by ECG checks. However as you are aware the National Screening Committee have evaluated this on several occasions and their findings show that ECG screening is not currently viable. This is another reason why defibrillators on school premises are crucial.

Until a cardiac arrest occurs many people are unaware that they have a heart condition. SADS UK believes the Government has a duty of care to our children and other people who work at schools to put this equipment in place.

Yours sincerely

Anne Jolly

Patrons: Dr G Michael Vincent, Professor A John Camm, Professor Richard Sutton, Kanu Nwankwo
Professor Bob Lewin, Sir Stanley Odell, Bill Tidy MBE - Cartoonist, Mark Jones

Registered in England and Wales No. 5679989. Registered Office: 22 Rowhedge, Brentwood, Essex CM13 2TS
Registered Charity No. 1113681