

## CARDIAC ARREST

Cardiac arrest is sudden, often unexpected and can happen to anyone, at any age (nearly half happen to those under the age of 65). It means the heart has stopped beating and it is a critical medical emergency where every second counts. Approximately 60,000 cardiac arrests happen in Canada each year. **That is one cardiac arrest every nine minutes.**

**8 in 10 cardiac arrests occur outside of the hospital walls, yet only 1 in 10 people survive.**

**Fast action saves lives.** Immediate CPR keeps the blood pumping to keep the brain and other vital organs alive. An automated external defibrillator (AED) is an effective, safe, and user-friendly device anyone can use that will shock the heart to help it restart. Survival drops significantly for every minute without an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) or Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). When AEDs are used in combination with CPR in the first few minutes, the chances of survival double.

*The following initiatives will improve health outcomes and increase survival rates for New Brunswickers who experience cardiac arrest:*

### 1. Support Education and Awareness

Education and awareness campaigns are essential to ensure New Brunswickers can recognize the signs of cardiac arrest, know what to do and act by calling 9-1-1, doing Hands-Only CPR and using an AED if one is available. Education on Hands-Only CPR and AED should also be mandatory for elementary, middle and high school students.

### 2. Improve AED Availability, Readiness and System Improvements

Legislation that includes mandatory AED registration and maintenance is needed to ensure these lifesaving devices are available, ready to use, and connected with 9-1-1. AEDs should be required in high-traffic public places, high-density residential settings, areas where higher risk activity is occurring, and rural and remote communities with longer EMS response times. Cardiac arrest response times need to be a reportable EMS performance indicator for quality improvement.