

# Asia's first kiosks for learning hands-only CPR launched in Singapore



Mr Amrin Amin, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Home Affairs tries out the new CPR kiosk located at Toa Payoh HDB Hub on Sept 29, 2018. ST PHOTO: SYAMIL SAPARI

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SINGAPORE - Members of the public can learn more about cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) at eight CPR kiosks unveiled on Saturday (Sept 29), the first such booths in Asia.

The Singapore Heart Foundation, in collaboration with the Singapore Resuscitation and First Aid Council (SRFAC), launched the self-learning kiosks to raise awareness of the life-saving skill.

Cardiovascular disease is a leading cause of death in Singapore where, on average, more than 2,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur every year. The victim's chance of surviving decreases by around 7 per cent for every minute that passes, the Singapore Heart Foundation said in a press release.

The bystander response rate to such cardiac arrest cases currently stands at 54 per cent in Singapore, the foundation said. It hopes to increase the response rate with the CPR kiosks, which were launched in commemoration of National Heart Week/World Heart Day 2018.

Each kiosk lets users try CPR by using their hands to perform chest compressions on a mannequin's torso. There are short, written instructions as well as an informational video. The mannequin's head lights up with the right depth and rate of chest compressions.

In hands-only CPR, the mouth-to-mouth resuscitation in conventional CPR is eliminated.

"There's evidence that using hands alone is life-saving. (Some) people are not comfortable with mouth-to-mouth," said Professor Terrance Chua, chairman of the Singapore Heart Foundation.



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Prof Chua said each kiosk was intended to be a "taster" so that more people would be encouraged to sign up for certification courses in CPR and AED skills. An AED, or automated external defibrillator, is a portable device to send an electric shock to the heart to try and restore its normal rhythm.

The eight CPR kiosks are located in "high-traffic" areas, such as universities and cinemas, and there are plans to put more at 13 other locations, Prof Chua said.

The kiosks are located at Chevron House, National Heart Centre Singapore, National Institute of Education (NIE), Northpoint City, Singapore Institute of Management, Singapore Institute of Technology, The Cathay Cineplex and Toa Payoh HDB Hub, where the launch was held on Saturday.

Mr Dhiyab Alsharki, 31, director of a company that sells yogurt, was among those who tried his hands at a kiosk yesterday (Sat).

"Within two minutes, I can have an understanding of CPR. Everyone should have this knowledge," he said.

In a speech at the launch, the guest-of-honour, Mr Amrin Amin, senior parliamentary secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health, noted that 17 people died every day last year (2017) from heart diseases and stroke, accounting for 30 per cent of all deaths in the year.

Mr Amrin, the member of parliament for Sembawang GRC, said: "The risk factors leading to heart disease and stroke are well-studied and many of them such as obesity, sedentary lifestyles and poor eating habits are preventable if we can make healthier choices in our daily lives."

In a survey, whose key findings were unveiled at the launch, the Singapore Heart Foundation found that some Singaporeans were reluctant to take steps to decrease their risk of heart disease.

While eight out of 10 of those surveyed had a good knowledge of the disease, more than half of the respondents were unwilling to change their lifestyles or believed that they were not at risk of it.

This was in spite of the fact that the survey found that six out of 10 Singaporeans faced the risk of being overweight or obese, making them more at risk of heart disease and health problems. One out of three did not participate in any form of exercise or physical activity outside of their regular job.

A thousand Singaporeans between the ages of 21 to 75 took part in the Singapore Heart Foundation survey.

Prof Chua noted that the survey also showed that only 37 per cent of respondents could identify diabetes as a risk factor for heart disease.

The Singapore Heart Foundation, together with Diabetes Singapore and pharmaceutical firm Boehringer Ingelheim have unveiled the For Your Sweetheart Singapore campaign to help raise awareness of the link between diabetes and heart disease.

The campaign's ambassadors are Left Profile artiste Michelle Chong and her father, Mr Steven Chong, also known as Papa Chong, who has been living with both condition for more than 30 years.

Michelle Chong said: "It was just after my A Levels when my father had his triple bypass surgery. My sister and I were pretty shaken up... At that time, we were not aware that diabetes and heart disease were closely linked. It is my hope that this campaign will help people with diabetes and their loved ones get the right support."