

Health Ministry distributes card that guides emergency chest compressions



The CPRcard can alert a rescuer if they are performing chest compressions too quickly or deeply, and allow them to adjust the pace on the spot. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

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SINGAPORE - Even those trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) may be apprehensive about responding to an emergency, but there is now a tool that can help.

The CPRcard - the size and thickness of a credit card - is placed on a person's chest during CPR.

It can alert a rescuer if they are performing chest compressions too quickly or deeply, and allow them to adjust the pace on the spot.

The hope is to build confidence so that people will not hesitate to respond in an emergency.

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Around 4,000 cards have been given out so far at CPR training events, including some 200 at the Chua Chu Kang Health and Sports Carnival on Sunday (June 11).

The plan is to give out 15,000 in total within the next year.

The CPRcard initiative is a pilot programme by the Health Ministry's Unit for Pre-Hospital Emergency Care (UPEC).

"In the past, we had no way to know what a layperson was doing when they started bystander CPR," said associate professor Marcus Ong, who is medical director of UPEC. "This is the first peek we are getting into what is going on."

The first four minutes are crucial to the survival of someone who has had a heart attack.

CPR is necessary to ensure that there is continuous blood flow to the person's heart and brain until an ambulance arrives.