

# DARE-ing the young to save lives

13 Oct 2016 | Tomorrow's Medicine



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The Ministry of Health's (MOH) Unit for Pre-hospital Emergency Care (UPEC) has rolled out a new training programme called the Dispatcher-Assisted first Responder (DARE). In only six steps, it teaches participants how to help save lives when faced with a cardiac arrest. With its simple techniques, DARE is easy to learn and remember, even for young children.

About 36,000 people have been trained since the inception of DARE in 2014. To increase participation, UPEC organised a symposium on 21st September for educators and students. Following the training, the participants were encouraged to download the myResponder mobile app and be part of an important pool of people whom the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) will alert when there is a distress call for cardiac arrest cases.

Held at St John Singapore HQ, one of the key highlights of the symposium was the sharing by Japanese teachers and students on their experience with Japan's CPR education in schools.



*Cross-cultural learning on saving lives. From L to R: Mr Muhammad Luqman Bin Abdul Rahman, student from Temasek Junior College, Dr Jade Kua, Programme Director of DARE, Ms Tamae Takahashi and Mr Shigeo Maruta, teachers from Showa Daiichi Gakuen High School in Japan, Mr Yuto Miyakawa and Mr Naoki Hashimoto, student leaders from the Life-Saving Club.*

"With 70 percent of cardiac arrest cases happening at home, school-going children are often the only ones present with their loved ones. It is never too early to start them young because with proper training, they have the potential to handle a cardiac arrest situation," said Associate Professor Marcus Ong, Medical Director, UPEC and Senior Consultant, Department of Emergency Medicine, SGH.

A joint-study led by SGH has evaluated the impact of the DARE training programme. Using registry records from 3,000 patients, results showed that since the DARE was introduced, CPR from trained bystanders had jumped two-fold and that the timely intervention resulted in a five per cent increase of revived cases. The overall survival rate one month after the cardiac arrest episode was also significantly higher.

With more members of the public trained in DARE, it is hoped that more cardiac arrest victims can be saved.

“As shown in our recent study, trained bystanders tend to come forward faster to render CPR assistance when they are better prepared. It helps when a paramedic guides them remotely through the chest compression-only process. In a situation where every second counts, cardiac arrest victims often stand a better chance of survival when appropriate and prompt resuscitation efforts are given,” said Prof Ong.