

Metro EMS Adds Device to Aid Cardiac Patients

By Jessie Halladay

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In an effort to enhance cardiac care, Louisville Metro EMS has rolled out a device aimed at improving the effectiveness of cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

The small device, called a ResQPOD, attaches to a face mask or tube used by medical personnel to help cardiac-arrest patients breathe during CPR. The plastic device prevents air from entering the chest at the wrong time, thus improving blood flow to the heart.

EMS spent about \$29,000 on the devices and has about 360 of them for immediate use. The ResQPOD is the latest of several devices and innovations unveiled by EMS in the past few years. In March 2007, the service began using the King airway, a tube that blocks the esophagus and allows air to flow into the lungs.

The agency also has begun using electronic reporting systems that can wirelessly transmit patient information to hospitals while the crew is en route.

"Everything working together works to increase chances of survival," said Dr. Neal Richmond, director of EMS.

Last year, EMS got about 1,200 reports of people suffering from cardiac arrest. That doesn't include those who go into cardiac arrest once under EMS care.

In the past year, the service has also put an emphasis on training people in CPR in their homes. Officials have been distributing kits that teach CPR with a DVD and a small practice mannequin. Richmond said the agency is working with Jefferson County Public Schools to expand its efforts.

"This should be a city where as many people as possible are trained in CPR," Richmond said.

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