
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

LOCAL DENTIST'S OFFICE HONOURED FOR SAVING LIFE

VICTORIA – BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) presented Vital Link Awards to a Victoria dentist and his staff for using CPR in addition to an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) that helped save the life of one of their long time patients.

“The staff at Dr Bill Hunter’s dental office ultimately helped save the patients life,” said Rick Atkinson, District Supervisor for the BCAS. “They all should be commended for not only assisting in this positive patient outcome but also for having the training and the tools ready to put into action in a medical emergency.”

On the afternoon of July 16th, 2007 Neil Cofield suffered a cardiac arrest and collapsed in the reception area while waiting for a checkup. Jillyn Shipley, Office Manager, immediately called 911 and her colleagues for help. Manon Knippel, a former nurse and dental hygienist assessed the patient’s vital signs and when she could not find a pulse she together with Dr. Bill Hunter performed CPR before applying the AED. Dr. Bill Hunter and his staff had only purchased and learned how to use the AED a month earlier.

“We’ve been lucky to know the patient for 18 years,” said Dr. Bill Hunter. “He lights up the neighbourhood with his zest for life! After 34 years of dental practice free from even a fainting, I was thrilled by the fast response of emergency services and grateful for the fact that we had recently purchased the AED machine for this type of event.”

The BCAS Vital Link Award is presented to individuals who are involved in successful cardio-pulmonary resuscitation efforts. Aside from providing some much deserved recognition, the Vital Link Award represents an important opportunity to further community awareness about the benefits of learning and using CPR.

“I’m delighted it happened here instead of on the street,” Neil Cofield said. “These people are the best in the world. You have to be very grateful, very thankful for people saving your life.”

Cardiovascular disease is the second leading cause of death and accounts for more than one-fifth of all deaths in B.C. A cardiac arrest victim is four times more likely to survive if CPR is administered while waiting for further medical care.

The awards were presented at Dr. Bill Hunter’s office on Monday October 15, 2007 with the patient in attendance who has since continued to lead an active lifestyle.

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