
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
October 20, 2008

BC Ambulance Service

NINETEEN INDIVIDUALS RECOGNIZED FOR LIFESAVING ACTIONS

VANCOUVER—The British Columbia Ambulance Service (BCAS) held a special presentation at City Hall in Vancouver today to recognize nineteen individuals with BCAS Good Samaritan and Vital Link awards for their lifesaving actions. Mayor Sam Sullivan greeted the recipients and their guests.

“These 19 individuals exemplify the best of British Columbia - our support to those in need - whether a family member, a friend or a complete stranger,” said Health Services Minister George Abbott. “On behalf of the Province of British Columbia, let me simply say thank you for your efforts which will have an indelible impact on others for the rest of their lives.”

The BCAS awards aim to recognise the selfless acts of individuals, and promote and raise awareness of the important role members of the public can play during a medical emergency. These humanitarian acts range from individuals who have provided care and reassurance to a patient, to more heroic acts of assistance such as providing CPR to a patient in cardiac arrest.

“Even with the best trained paramedics and the fastest response times, the simple actions of members of the public during a medical emergency, can often be one of the most critical factors in a patient’s outcome,” said Dr. Karen Wanger, BCAS Regional Medical Director. “BCAS feels that it’s important to recognize their actions and assistance.”

A cardiac arrest victim is four times more likely to survive if they receive bystander CPR, however, this basic procedure is not performed in approximately 85 per cent of all cases. Eight in ten cardiac arrests occur at home and bystander CPR assistance is provided in only about 15 per cent of cases. Early recognition of a cardiac emergency by a family member, early access to medical help (calling 911) and early bystander CPR are critical to saving lives.

The award recipients were: Vivianne Allen, Vancouver; Jaron Chan, Vancouver; Tessie Dongalen, Coquitlam; Kathy Evers, Port Coquitlam; Kathleen Halonen, Surrey; Dan Hansen, Vancouver; Mario Mazza, Vancouver; Rosalynne Nicols, Nanaimo; Rick Odell, Langley; Ayesha Sana, Surrey; Mohammad Shamsi, Surrey; Mukesh Sharma, Surrey; Kaine Silvestrone, Vancouver; Kathryn Taylor, Burnaby; Cst. Victor Teixeira, Vancouver; and Cst. Dale Hemm, Vancouver. Not present: Tanya Gibson, Richmond; Gene Lefler, Calgary; and Jayne Lewis, Victoria.

Since 2007, the BCAS has awarded approximately 60 Vital Link and Good Samaritan awards to members of the public who have performed CPR or provided humanitarian assistance during a medical emergency.

-30-

Contact: Sarah Taylor
Communications Officer
250- 953-4310 or 250-213-7555