

Alberta Doctors' Digest

Teaching CPR at community sport events

Dr. May Choi was encouraged by the high level of participation and interesting survey results from her first rollout of “Teaching CPR at community sport events,” which was included in the 2014-15 group of Emerging Leaders in Health Promotion (ELiHP) grant program projects. She undertook round two of the ELiHP project at six community sport events from 2016 to 2018 with her 2016-17 ELiHP project co-applicants: Bachelor of Health Science graduate John Choi and Drs. Michael Bosch, Barry Congdon, Alexandra Frolkis, Benjamin Gershkovich, Michael Gozdzik, Rachel Lim, Erin Miller, Melissa Morgunov, Natalie Morgunov and William Stokes.

Dr. Choi and her team, with a new automated CPR mannequin ([Resusci Anne® QCPR](#)) and an automated external defibrillator (AED), took their CPR tutorial on the road to sport events around Calgary, such as the Zombie Race, Race for Pace, the Calgary Police Half-Marathon and the Kimmett Cup. While achieving their primary goal of reaching out to athletes, their families, friends and coaches at sport events — targeting athletes who may be at risk of sudden cardiac arrest (SCAs) due to conditions like hypertrophic cardiomyopathy – they also achieved significant exposure and education of the general public to their CPR/AED teachings.



Michael Bosch and May Choi, with Resusci Anne® QCPR, at their “Teaching CPR at community sport events” display at a community sport event. Photo credit: Dr. May Choi

“By setting up at well-attended, popular sport events, we were able to involve the spectators as well as the sport participants,” explains Dr. Choi. “Our objectives were to educate the community in how to act in the event of a cardiac arrest emergency

(including how to perform CPR/AED), to increase public awareness of SCAs and ways to stay heart healthy, and to promote professional and community leadership development in medical trainees using the LEADS framework.”

As a result of participant surveys administered with their first project in 2014, Dr. Choi had an additional goal for her second iteration of the project: to improve the quality of bystander CPR. “From surveys, we found that the accuracy of CPR performance [was] poor,” she explains. “By allowing our participants to practice on an automated CPR mannequin that gives CPR performance scores based on depth and rate of CPR, participants were able to get direct feedback. Many said they were surprised by how deep, fast and long chest compressions had to be in order to do CPR properly.”

Improvements in booth signage with this second round prompted more people to visit the booth. “People already trained in CPR stopped to chat and to see if there had been any updates to the CPR guidelines since they had certified,” says Dr. Choi. “Some were surprised to hear that bystander CPR has changed to ‘hands-only,’ others were reminded about their need to re-certify and others were prompted to certify for the first time.” In response, Dr. Choi and her team were able to provide people with the proper contacts and brochures from the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

For both her 2014-15 and 2016-17 “Teaching CPR at community sport events” projects, Dr. Choi was fortunate to work with Dr. Jeffrey Schaefer, a general internist, as her mentor.

Dr. Choi and her project team of residents and medical students appreciate the opportunities this project afforded to advocate for patients in an environment outside a hospital or clinic setting. “As trainees, we don’t often have the chance to practice our advocacy skills at the community or population level,” she explains. “The Emerging Leaders in Health Promotion grant program helped us develop our role as advocates on a larger scale as we learned to identify and strategize to meet the needs of communities or populations in the areas of disease prevention, health promotion and health protection.”

Beyond leading this CPR program twice, Dr. Choi is passionately committed to raising awareness of SCAs and bystander CPR/AED in the community, and it’s clear that this will be a constant area of dedication throughout her medical career. “Through sharing my personal experience of losing a parent to SCA, I’ve engaged my fellow colleagues and health community organizations to turn my vision into action,” explains Dr. Choi.

About the Emerging Leaders in Health Promotion grant Program

The [Emerging Leaders in Health Promotion \(ELiHP\) grant program](#) provides funding to help medical students and resident physicians conceive of and implement health promotion projects that support the development of their [CanMEDS/FM](#) core competencies, particularly health advocacy.

Jointly sponsored by the [Alberta Medical Association](#), the [Canadian Medical Association](#), [MD Financial Management](#) and [Joule](#), ELiHP projects facilitate the growth of physician leadership and advocacy skills in a mentored environment while enhancing the well-being of the general Alberta population through education, advocacy or community service.

Banner photo: (L to R) Christopher Ma, May Choi, John Choi, Benjamin Gershkovich and Michal Gozdzik. Photo credit: Dr. May