



Cardiac Arrest of Football Player Fabrice Muamba Reminds Public of Universal SCA Threat, Need for Bystander CPR and AEDs

WASHINGTON, DC, (March 19, 2012) – Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) afflicts people of all ages, races, gender, and even those in seemingly good physical health, and this weekend's untimely SCA of 23-year-old Bolton football player Fabrice Muamba during an FA Cup reminds the public that SCA is a grave health threat and should be taken serious by all - not just athletic organizations, according to the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association.

SCA is an electrical disruption of the heart's natural rhythm, in which the heart stops beating altogether. Though it sounds similar, SCA is not the same as a "heart attack." SCA is widely recognized as the nation's leading cause of death, killing nearly 300,000 Americans each year - more than lung cancer, colon cancer, breast cancer and HIV/AIDS combined.

The only way to survive SCA is through immediate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and shocks administered from an automated external defibrillator (AED), yet 95 percent of victims do not survive because most SCA occurrences are not witnessed or bystanders do not intervene. Therefore, AEDs need to be available in public places and bystanders need to know CPR, how to use an AED and be willing to intervene.

Comprehensive data and exact statistics on SCA incidence and outcomes are often lacking since SCA is currently not a formal reportable condition within the medical community. We do however know that:

- Publicly accessible AED programs, particularly those in schools, are extremely
 effective. A recent study in Seattle, Washington, showed SCA survival rates of 39
 percent at schools with AEDs.
- Additionally, lay rescuer AED programs in airports, on airplanes, in casinos, and in first-responder programs with police officers have achieved survival rates as high as 49% to 75% from out-of-hospital cases of witnessed cardiac arrest in which immediate bystander CPR and defibrillation take place within 3 to 5 minutes of collapse.
- Studies show that if early defibrillation is provided within the first minute of collapse, the odds are 90 percent that the victim's life can be saved.

For educational resources and materials on the public health crisis of SCA, visit www.suddencardiacarrest.org.

<u>About the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association</u> SCAA is the nation's largest nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to increasing awareness and prevention of sudden cardiac arrest. For more information, please visit www.suddencardiacarrest.org.