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Clubs urged to have defibrillator

REGION - First Aid services provider St John Ambulance Victoria is urging Ararat sporting clubs to have a defibrillator machine on site following three recent deaths from cardiac arrests at local matches.

St John deputy CEO, Theron Vassiliou said St John was there to help as the summer sports season begins to roll around, and has a temporary solution for clubs while they raise funds for the life saving devices.

"Sudden cardiac arrest can happen to anyone, no matter what their age or gender. In Victoria in the last three months alone there have been three deaths from cardiac arrests during sporting events," Mr Vassiliou said.

"For every passing minute without a defibrillator shock, the chance of survival reduces by ten per cent - and with the average response time from an ambulance being nine to 14 minutes, defibrillators really do have the ability to save lives.

"Without a defibrillator close by, the survival

rate for cardiac arrest is somewhere between two and five per cent."

Mr Vassiliou said that while the ultimate goal is for all clubs to be equipped with defibrillators and have staff or parents trained to operate them, St John can provide clubs with first aid trained professionals equipped with defibrillators at every match.

"We understand there is a cost implication to clubs in purchasing a defibrillator and training parents and staff, and funds need to be raised to cover these costs.

"In the meantime, having a St John First Aid Services team onsite gives the club the peace of mind that their players and supporters have the best possible chance of survival in the event of a cardiac arrest," he said.

To find out more about the first aid services St John can offer, or to arrange for a trained team to attend your local sporting match, contact St John on 1300 360 455 or visit www.stjohnvic.com.au.