

# Media Release

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## **LeBa Surfboardriders Club to receive life saving defibrillator**

Working in conjunction with St John Ambulance Australia (NSW), NRMA Insurance is continuing its commitment of helping to provide a safer local community by sponsoring the allocation of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to LeBa Surfboardriders Club.

The sponsorship is part of **Project HeartStart Australia**, which aims to increase public access to defibrillation in the event of Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA). SCA is Australia's biggest killer, taking the lives of approximately 25,000 people every year. The most successful treatment for SCA is defibrillation within a few minutes of the event.

The goal of **Project HeartStart Australia**, which was launched in 2004, is to have defibrillators available at more public events – particularly in regional areas where ambulances may not be as readily available. St John (NSW) is working with NRMA Insurance to place approximately 50 AEDs in the community, a total of 117 since the programs inception.

According to St John (NSW), Chief Executive Officer, Sean Gavin, defibrillation is the best chance people have of surviving a sudden cardiac arrest.

“The current survival rate from SCA outside a hospital remains low. If someone receives defibrillation within the first three minutes of having a sudden cardiac arrest, their chance of survival improves dramatically. It really does make a significant difference.

“AEDs really are the safest and most effective way for members of the public to save the lives of family, friends and co-workers from SCA. They are a critical step in the ‘chain of survival’ for a sudden cardiac arrest victim,” said Mr Gavin.

According to St John (NSW), many of its first aid volunteers have access to defibrillators at major events and as a result have had many successes in resuscitating a SCA casualty who would have otherwise become another statistic.

“Lives have certainly been saved because of the availability of AEDs, and with the generous sponsorship of NRMA Insurance, we are able to continue the wide-spread introduction of AEDs into the community through **Project HeartStart Australia**,” said Mr Gavin.

NRMA Insurance Ballina & Lismore franchisee, Paul Wyatt, said the insurer was proud to be supporting such an important initiative.

“Safety is a big issue for our business. As part of Australia's leading insurance group, we believe it's our responsibility to help the community reduce risk and be safer,” said Mr Wyatt.

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“Helping the community reduce injuries and save lives is good for our customers, the broader community and our own people.”

Victoria Mackie, of LeBa Surfboardriders Club, is thrilled to be receiving the AED and added, “having an AED among our first aid equipment helps us provide a safer beach for the local community. It is comforting to know that people can access this incredible life-saving device should the situation arise.”

The LeBa Surfboardriders Club AED presentation will take place at the Club on 28 November at 4.30pm at the Ballina NRMA branch, 166 River St, Ballina.

## **Media enquiries and further information:**

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