

CPR**LifeLinks**

9-1-1 and EMS united to save more lives.

CELEBRATING SURVIVORS:
A TOOLKIT

Celebrating Survivors: A Toolkit

Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) is one of the leading causes of death in the United States, but initiatives like CPR LifeLinks are helping to change that. Both 911 and EMS agencies have a major role to play as the first steps in the chain of survival. Implementing telecommunicator and high-performance CPR improves a patient's chance of survival and their ability to make a full recovery and get back to normal life.

The recommendations, training materials and sample protocols in the CPR LifeLinks Implementation Toolkit equip agencies to provide early intervention in OHCA events and improve rates of survival in their communities. The effort shouldn't stop there, however. It's just as important to recognize the culture of empowerment and celebrate the telecommunicators and first responders who make a difference in their communities.

Implementing a CPR improvement program, training staff, continuously evaluating protocols and tracking patient outcomes is no easy feat. When a telecommunicator applies OHCA protocols and helps save a life, or provides the most detailed support possible to help bystanders improve a patient's chance of survival, it should be recognized and celebrated.

This supplementary toolkit provides ideas, stories and advice from agencies around the country for creating and implementing a telecommunicator celebration program in your PSAP.

CREATE A TREE OF LIFE MURAL



Tree of Life

Manatee County Communications Center in Bradenton, Florida, is making a concerted effort to celebrate telecommunicators who provide instructions to bystanders and help save lives. The acting division chief of Manatee County 911, Stacy Needham, saw the need to show the call takers the important role they play in saving people's lives. To illustrate this, the dispatch center displays a Tree of Life mural of on its walls to provide a visual representation of each life that is saved.

Noting that call takers don't often know the outcome of a call, Needham says that each leaf shows a story of success.



“ We started the tree because we wanted to be able to recognize our call takers in a visual way and with something that's easy to see as they come in to work each day. We've had such a positive response to this idea and have seen agencies in other states do similar things for their call takers.”

*Stacy Needham, ENP RPL
Acting Chief
Emergency Communications 911
Manatee County Public Safety*

Dispatch centers in Cambria County, Pennsylvania and Rock County, Wisconsin also display similar murals. They customize the Tree of Life by pinning acorns or storks to indicate a baby delivered successfully with telecommunicator support.



Download Your Own Tree of Life Template

Download the full color Tree of Life poster, a black and white Tree of Life template and various sizes of the leaf template.

[Download](#)

Download the Tree of Life artwork file to send to a professional printer.
File format: Adobe Illustrator version 24.0.3.

[Download](#)

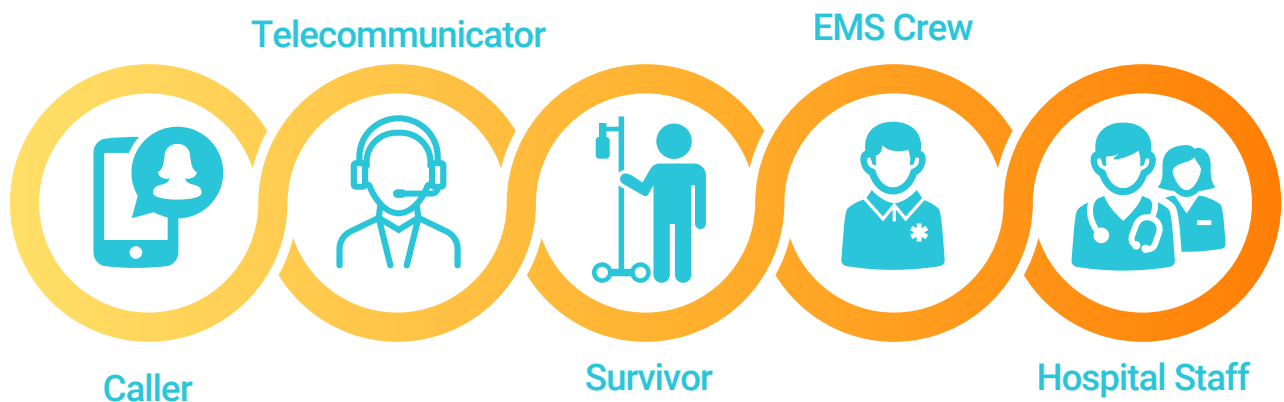
HOST A CELEBRATORY EVENT UNITING THE CALLER, TELECOMMUNICATOR AND SURVIVOR



Celebratory Event

When faced with an emergency, people of all ages know to call 911 for help. Those bystanders often play a larger role than expected in helping their friend, loved one, colleague or even stranger survive. This is especially true with sudden cardiac arrest. When a few minutes mean the difference between life and death, a telecommunicator trained to identify OHCA will instruct a caller to perform CPR.

Following the recovery process, an event uniting the caller, telecommunicator and survivor is a great way to celebrate everyone's efforts. Such events can also include the first responder on scene, the EMS crew who took over CPR activities and the hospital staff who continued care after transport.



Some agencies provide a small plaque for the caller and similar recognition for the telecommunicator and first responder. Celebrating such stories helps increase awareness about the important role that telecommunicators and callers play before EMS arrive.





Below is a sample email to a family seeking interest in joining such an event:

Celebratory Event

Hello,

First, we would like to thank you for your heroic efforts in the recent save you helped make possible when conducting CPR. Your efforts literally helped to save a life. As a token of our appreciation, we would like to invite you join a small celebration at the 911 call center with the telecommunicator who helped guide you through your life-saving efforts, along with the [police officer, fire fighter, EMT] who arrived on the scene during the emergency and continued the work you started.

Please let us know if you are interested in joining a celebration, when you are available, and we will coordinate with personnel who will be on site.

Thank you again.

*Sincerely,
Name
911 Agency*

RAISE COMMUNITY AWARENESS THROUGH MEDIA



Media

Every person involved in a sudden cardiac arrest emergency plays a significant role - from the survivor who was resuscitated and their grateful loved ones, to the individual who called 911 and the telecommunicator who guided them through the CPR process. It's a story that should be celebrated to inspire others and unite the community.

Engaging local media to help bring awareness to the ways public safety and the community work together to save a life is a great tool for celebrating successes, rewarding the hard work of participants and educating the public – who may be the next bystander to place a 911 call.

Options to consider include:

- Issue a press release congratulating the caller and telecommunicator on a job well done and share the steps they took to ensure a life-saving outcome
- Invite journalists to attend a survivor event or ceremony an agency is hosting
- Email a specific journalist (who covers public safety, healthcare or other related issues) to share an individual save story as a lead-in to an in-depth article about how the PSAP and EMS are working together to improve OHCA responses, including information about local agency survival/save rates in comparison with national averages

Whether covered by local broadcast news or written about in the town paper, media coverage of a survivor story or event can:

- Lend credibility to the work of an agency and its personnel
- Build trust between public safety and the community
- Educate the public on what to do in a sudden cardiac arrest situation

Click here to download a customizable press release template to share a save story. If including information about the survivor, of course, it's important to request permission from the family before sharing publicly.

[Download](#)

RECOGNIZING LIFE-SAVING PERSONNEL



Recognizing Personnel

The dedicated work of public safety professionals, whether within the PSAP or at the scene, should be recognized among peers and the community. That's why Deschutes County 911 in Bend, Oregon, makes sure its telecommunicators know they're appreciated year-round. For each save their telecommunicators help initiate, they award a "Lifesaving" pin and share the save story in a weekly email update to colleagues. The telecommunicator's name and date of the save is also posted to a public bulletin board.

The dispatch center also hosts an annual banquet with staff and their families to honor all the lives their personnel helped save. Some of the call recordings are shared and reflected on as a reminder of the impact telecommunicators can have when someone is experience one of the worst days of their lives.

"It tends to be an emotional experience that leaves our staff's family members with a deeper appreciation for what their loved ones do every day."

*Megan Craig
Training Manager
Deschutes County 911*

Appreciation—no matter how it's shown—is a meaningful way to remind people of the true difference they make.

Click here to download a customizable certificate of appreciation that can be printed and presented to personnel involved in saving a life or making a difference.

[Download](#)

Start Celebrating Successes Today

Identify the right recognition efforts for your agency. Start small by downloading and printing the certificate template, or hire an artist to begin creating a wall mural. The choice is yours.

Collaborate with members of your community and nearby agencies. A host of additional information about CPR LifeLinks including case studies, training programs, videos and presentations are available at

https://www.911.gov/project_cprlifelinks/index.html.

