



Media Release

Friday, 9 October 2020

Cockburn ARC staff recognised for brave actions in pool rescue

Taking affirmative decisive action to save someone's life is not a position many would relish, but for the highly trained staff at Cockburn ARC the reality of their roles at a busy public facility is that they must be prepared for this eventuality at all times.

Today, six Cockburn ARC employees have been recognised at the Royal Life Saving WA 2020 Bravery Awards for their immediate actions to save the life of an ARC member, in the vital first minutes after the onset of a heart attack.

The member was swimming laps in the centre's 50m outdoor pool about 2.50pm on 15 June when Lifeguard Adam Anistino (23) observed them in difficulty at the pool's shallow end.

Adam immediately radioed a code blue medical emergency and entered the water, towing the swimmer 5m to the pool's edge.

Fellow ARC team members, Operations Team Leader Rhiannon Keel (32) and Duty Manager Jennifer Littlejohn (44) helped Adam remove the swimmer from the water with the help of two members of the public.

Four minutes later at 2.54pm, Rhiannon, Adam and Lifeguard Tamila Andreeva (19) began CPR and oxygen resuscitation and prepared the Automated External Defibrillator (AED), while Jennifer delivered the AED's first electric shock.

The team continued three rounds of CPR and the patient regained consciousness and began breathing in time for the arrival of ambulance and police services to take over the emergency response.

The patient was transported to hospital for open heart bypass surgery and is continuing their recovery.

Cockburn ARC Operations Coordinator Sarahjayne Whiteley (35) and Swim School Supervisor Tayliah Zimmer (35) provided secondary support during the rescue, calling



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emergency services and evacuating the facility which had just started to get busy as Swim School members arrived for their afternoon sessions.

Tayliah supported first responders and relayed information to staff and emergency services until paramedics arrived.

Sarahjayne provided fresh equipment to first responders, managed the facility's emergency response, treated staff for shock and provided secondary care for first responders following the incident.

Jennifer recorded the patient's condition throughout and provided support to her fellow first responders.

Sarahjayne said the team's quick response prevented the swimmer from going into cardiac arrest.

"The centre is extremely proud to again see how regular routine staff emergency training is not only necessary, but a benefit to the ARC and Cockburn community at times like these," Sarahjayne said.

As primary responders, Adam, Tamila, Jennifer and Rhiannon all received a Gold Star Bravery Award while second responders Sarahjayne and Tayliah received Bravery Commendations.

It is the second time Rhiannon has received a bravery award. She was recognised in 2018, along with fellow ARC staff Pete Delaney, Sam Hendry, Josh Wood, Andrew Macray, Michael Pinkham and Stuart Mack. The team rescued a woman from the pool after she experienced a mental health crisis at the facility.

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