

Only a third of US state police agencies equip cars with AEDs

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Just 30 percent the nation's state police agencies reported that they equip their vehicles with automated external defibrillators, and of those, nearly 60 percent of said only a minority of their fleet have the lifesaving devices on board, according to new research from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania that will be presented today at the American Heart Association's annual Scientific Sessions (Abstract #10721).

"Putting AEDs into more state police cruisers could provide a significant safety net for people who suffer [cardiac arrest](#) on our nation's highways, where state police officers often serve as first responders," said senior author Benjamin Abella, MD, MPhil, an assistant professor of [Emergency Medicine](#) and director of clinical research in the Center for Resuscitation Science. "A number of municipal police agencies around the nation have started AED programs and been able to save lives from cardiac arrest, so there is a model and precedent on which to build."

Police agencies in all 50 states were asked to complete an online survey about their AED use. Although they reported relatively low utilization of AEDs -- which cost about \$1,000 per unit and talk users through the steps required to perform CPR and shock a patient's heart back into a normal rhythm -- training of officers in resuscitation techniques was more common. Seventy-eight percent of agencies responding said they train their officers in AED use, and 98 percent said they provide CPR training. Forty six of the nation's 50 state police agencies completed the survey.

Provided by University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine

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