

STAFF BULLETIN

Staff Role in Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Decisions



What is appropriate to implement the rule for do not resuscitate?

A do-not-resuscitate order (DNR) is a legal medical directive, which indicates that an individual does not want cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in the event that their heart stops or they stop breathing. CPR includes chest compressions, rescue breaths and the use of a defibrillator to administer an electric shock to the heart.

People who choose to create a DNR or where a DNR has been put in place by a person's legal representative, usually have a terminal illness, a serious medical condition or are near the end of their life.

Medical staff and others who support people with serious illness will be informed where a DNR is in place, however EALT staff, particularly those who work with people in the communities, are unlikely to be provided with this information, unless they are specifically informed by the individual or a close family member.

In the event of a medical emergency at a community venue, an event or any other public place operated by EALT, the first priority must always be to save a life. A 999 call must be made immediately and staff who are first aid trained, should proceed to provide first aid assistance, including administering CPR as appropriate.

However, if staff have been made aware that a DNR is in place, or should a family member disclose this information to staff administering first aid at the time of the emergency, staff should immediately stop resuscitation attempts and relay this information to the emergency services as soon as possible.