

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

3rd May 2024

Jean Ganthment

RE: DEFIBRILLATORS

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about improving access to defibrillators in public places. I have read your comments with interest.

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) causes 100,000 deaths in the UK each year and there are 60,000 incidents of SCA each year in community settings. I know that using a defibrillator within three minutes of a cardiac arrest can improve a person's chances of survival by as much as 70 percent.

That is why the 'NHS Long Term Plan' (LTP) stated an ambition to establish a national network of community first responders and AEDs will help to save up to 4,000 lives each year by 2028. To support this goal, the Government has launched the Automated External Defibrillators Fund, which will provide £1 million to expand the number of defibrillators in community spaces across England. Priority will be given to areas where defibrillators are most needed, such as places with high footfall or vulnerable people. Local organisations can express their interest in applying to the fund by completing this form: <https://rb.gy/smm4h>.

Better provision of defibrillators and increasing the number of people trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation could help save more lives of those who have a cardiac arrest outside a hospital setting. The Circuit - a national database of defibrillators - has been set up by the British Heart Foundation and other charities to help ambulance services to identify the nearest defibrillator during an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. I therefore join the Government in encouraging organisations to consider purchasing a defibrillator as part of their first-aid equipment, so that more lives can be saved in future.

I have also been reassured by my colleagues in the Treasury that they are aware of the calls to remove VAT on AEDs. It is worth noting that VAT reliefs can be applied on purchases made by local authorities and voluntary contributions, but in these cases the AED is donated to eligible charities or the NHS.

I further understand that the Government keeps all taxes under review, including VAT. However, I understand that the cost of relieving VAT on defibrillators is uncertain owing to the lack of data on purchases of defibrillators and associated apparatus, and on purchasers who are able to reclaim the VAT on these purchases.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Pursglove'.

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE