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College of MDS hosts event for Heart Rhythm Week

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The College of Medical and Dental Sciences hosted drop-in sessions for staff and students to learn Basic Life Support skills on 3, 4 and 5 June as part of this year's Heart Rhythm Week (3-9 June 2013), to raise awareness and promote better understanding of heart rhythm disorders.

The student-led group Resuscitation for Medical Disciplines (RMD) will hold practical demonstrations of key BLS techniques.

This national awareness week, hosted by Arrhythmia Alliance, seeks to promote better understanding of heart rhythm disorders. Its theme this year is 'Hearts and Goals', through which the Arrhythmia Alliance aim to highlight the crucial role that the public can play in saving lives from sudden cardiac arrest, the UK's biggest killer.

Student teachers from RMD – who already provide novel peer-led life support training within the University and a network of local schools – will hold lunchtime drop-in sessions for University staff and students to learn key life saving techniques.

These informal, hands-on sessions will provide CPR training and demonstrations of automated external defibrillator (AED) use, with visitors able to see real-time feedback on their CPR quality and learn how to recognise that a person has had a cardiac arrest.

The event will join hundreds of others across the country celebrating Heart Rhythm Week; promoting this year's theme 'Know the Difference. Make a Difference'.
The national campaign - organised by Arrhythmia Alliance (A-A), The Heart Rhythm Charity - will promote knowing the difference between sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) and a heart attack, and knowing the difference that first aid can make to the survival of a cardiac arrest victim. The theme of the week is inspired by Hearts & Goals, the A-A campaign, fronted by Fabrice Muamba, to help reduce deaths from SCA; the UK's biggest killer. With at least one in four Britons developing a potentially fatal arrhythmia, the awareness week also seeks to highlight the devastating effects of heart rhythm disorders - such as SCA, atrial fibrillation, bradycardia and tachycardia.

Bystander intervention with CPR and defibrillation with an AED (automated external defibrillator) can increase SCA survival from 5% to over 50%. Average UK survival rates are only 7%, demonstrating just how much of a difference could be made if more of us were willing to intervene and able to react to those who collapse and stop breathing because of SCA.

For more information on Heart Rhythm Week, visit **www.heartrhythmweek.org (http://www.heartrhythmweek.org/)**

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