



Resuscitation Guidelines Refine Best Practice

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The Australian and New Zealand Committee on Resuscitation (ANZCOR) has released new resuscitation guidelines that are endorsed by both the Australian and New Zealand Resuscitation Councils. Of some 75 existing guidelines, 47 are replaced by ANZCOR guidelines released today. The new guidelines draw on the findings within the latest international consensus statements on resuscitation that were released in October.

The recommended approach to basic life support in Australia and New Zealand remains the same. ANZCOR continues to emphasise managing emergencies using a DRS ABCD approach, administering CPR using a compression to rescue breath ratio of 30:2, and early defibrillation.

The only change to CPR is the rate at which chest compression are delivered. This used to be given as approximately 100 compressions per minute, and is now expressed as range from 100-120 compressions per minute. Rescuers are reminded to push hard, aiming for one-third the depth of the chest with each compression.

Recommendations for First Aid and pre-hospital care have seen developments. One of these is that semi-rigid cervical collars need not be applied where a spinal injury is suspected, as managing the airway is a higher priority in life-threatening situations where resuscitation is needed. Rescuers are still encouraged to care for a suspected spinal injury, and can achieve this by manually supporting the person's head. The new ANZCOR guidelines also contain some new recommendations for resuscitation in advanced care settings. Generally these are to do with specific treatment options, medicines or equipment used.

ANZCOR recognises that it may take healthcare providers time to make the transition, but a new recommendation should not imply that practitioners have been doing the wrong thing. In providing these guidelines, ANZCOR has considered the most recent thinking about resuscitation – how it applies to Australia and New Zealand, and how best practice might be refined in light of new evidence.

ANZCOR guidelines can be found at www.resus.org.au or www.nzrc.org.nz.

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