

# 100 new defibrillators earmarked for York

BY TERESA LATCHFORD  
Staff Writer

York Region is one step closer to being a safer cardiac region.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, in partnership with the Al Palladini Legacy for Life Fund and PACE Polo for Heart, announced a donation to fund 100 automated external defibrillators and related training in York Region, foundation CEO Rocco Rossi told York Region council earlier this week.

York Region Emergency Medical Services will take on the initiative through its Heart Alive public access defibrillation program and the life-saving devices will be installed in facilities across the region over the next two years.

"Our goal was to place 1,000 units across Ontario in five years when we started the Restart A Heart, Restart a Life and Chase McEachern Tribute Fund, but we underes-

timated ourselves," Mr. Rossi said.

"In less than two years, we have contributed 2,000 across the province."

The device works by automatically analysing the heart rhythm after adhesive pads are placed on the patient and if it detects a problem, it will allow the user, with the push of a button, to administer an electrical shock to restore a normal heart rhythm.

Between 35,000 and 40,000 people in Canada die of sudden cardiac arrest each year with 7,000 occurrences in Ontario alone, according to the foundation.

Survival rates for a victim of cardiac arrest outside of a hospital is only 5 per cent and with each minute without medical attention, the survival rate decreases by 7 to 10 per cent.

The average EMS response time is more than nine minutes, he said.

"You only have 10 to 12 minutes to

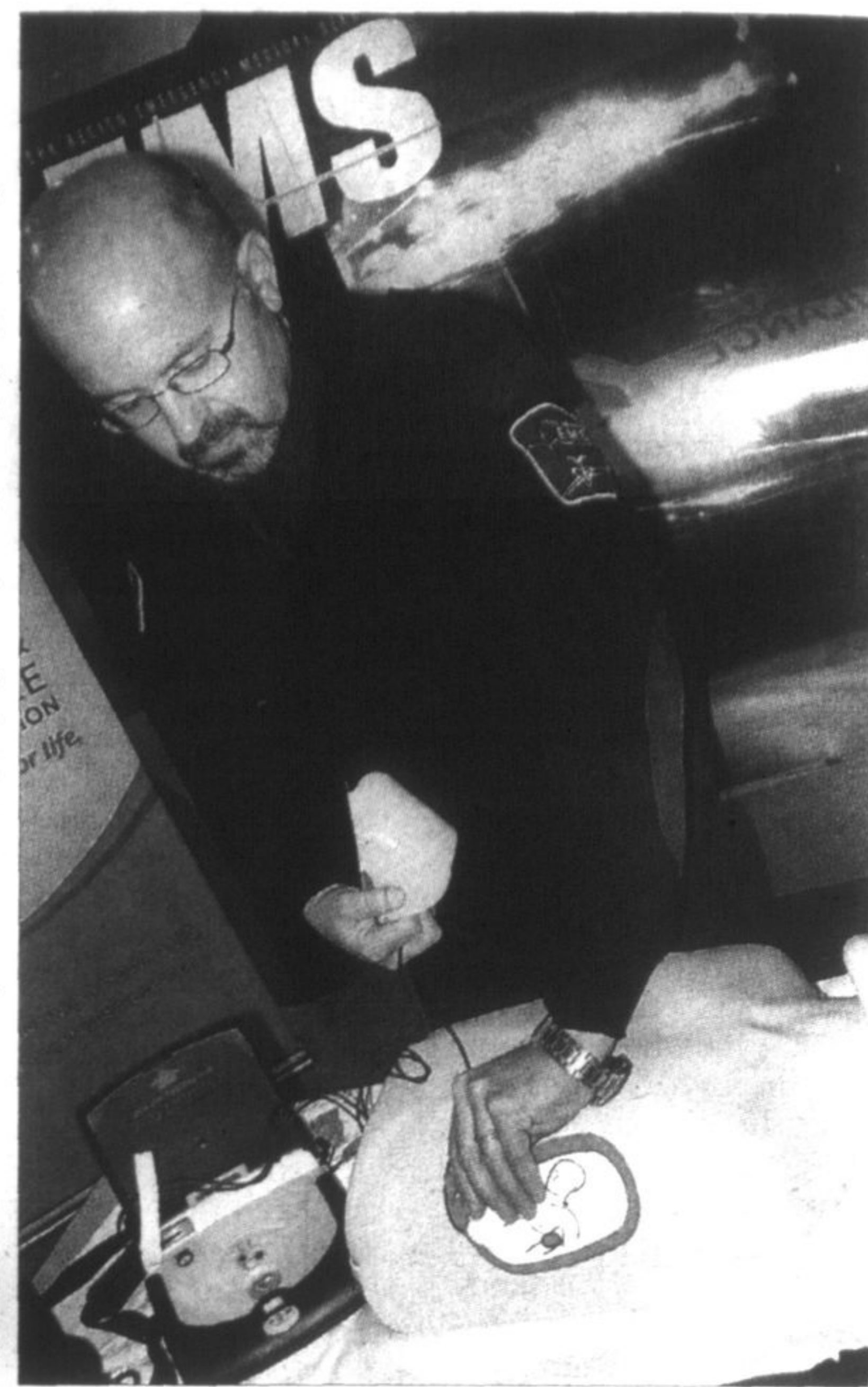
resuscitate someone before serious brain damage occurs."

Using an automated external defibrillator in combination with CPR within the first few minutes of a heart attack can improve the chance of survival up to 50 per cent.

"The health and safety of our residents and visitors have always been a top priority," York Regional chairperson and CEO Bill Fisch said.

"This historic investment through the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario complements York Region's commitment to our public access AED program and to increasing the potential to save lives from cardiac arrest."

For more information about AED devices, visit [heartandstroke.ca](http://heartandstroke.ca)



STAFF PHOTO/TERESA LATCHFORD

York Region EMS community programs development co-ordinator Michael Jessop demonstrates how to use an automated external defibrillator as the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario donated 100 devices with related training to York Region.

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