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LIFESAVERS:
Mr Khoo Teng Guang (middle), holding an AED and thanking senior security officers Mr Hasan Ahmad (far left) and Mr Javerson Chok for saving his life.

TNP PHOTO: JONATHAN CHOO

Security officers help save man's life after he suffers cardiac arrest at S'pore Turf Club

Reports by NABILAH AWANG
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Doctor thought he might not make it

The last thing Mr Khoo Teng Guang remembered was looking out at the tracks of the Singapore Turf Club (STC), waiting for a race to start.

Then, darkness.

He woke up days later in hospital, where he found out that his heart had stopped at the STC.

He had survived thanks to members of the STC staff, who used a mobile automated external defibrillator (AED) and performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to save him.

"The doctor told my wife to be prepared because I might not make it through the night.

"Thankfully, I woke up on the fourth day of my admission, but without any memory of the incident," said Mr Khoo, 49, who is self-employed.

"I was very lucky that the officers were there to help me."

On Thursday, he got to meet the men who saved his life at a press conference, where he also presented an AED to the Riding for the Disabled Association of Singapore as part of an initiative by AED-maker HeartSine. (See report, right.)

HEART STOPPED

Mr Khoo said he was at the North Grandstand of Singapore Turf Club on Dec 13 when he suffered a sudden cardiac arrest — a life-threatening condition in which the heart abruptly stops beating — at about 5.10pm.

"Before I collapsed, I didn't feel any pain at all," said the father of one.

A passer-by who saw the incident quickly alerted STC's security command centre and senior security officers Hasan Ahmad, 45, and Javerson Chok, 30, were deployed to the scene.

Mr Hasan, who has been working at STC for the past eight years, retrieved the nearest mobile AED, which about 1m away from where he was.

"It was the first time someone had a sudden cardiac arrest in the Turf Club. I had to calm myself down and move as quickly as I could," he said.

Meanwhile, Mr Chok, who was already at the North Grandstand, ran to where Mr Khoo was lying down and started performing CPR.

"There wasn't any heartbeat or pulse on him.

"So I immediately started doing chest compressions while Hasan hooked him up to the AED," added Mr Chok.

The AED detected no pulse from Mr Khoo.

The machine then instructed the pair to keep their distance from the man's body and gave Mr Khoo an electric shock to restart his heart.

Mr Chok said: "Even after the shock, he had no pulse. So I had to carry on with the CPR.

"By then, the on-site doctor had arrived and took over. After a few seconds, he told us that Mr Khoo's heart started beating."

Mr Khoo was taken by the Singapore Civil Defence Force to Khoo Teck Puat hospital, where he was admitted for five days.

Mr Simon Leong, vice-president of corporate services at the STC, told The New Paper: "On live race days, we always have an on-site doctor at our race course to attend to any emergencies.

"On top of that, and having our security officers trained in CPR and first aid, we also make sure the AEDs are readily accessible in public spaces."

Mr Hasan said having AEDs readily accessible matters in life-or-death situations.

"It was just my luck that the AED was right beside me so I just took it and ran as fast as I could," he said.

"I am very proud that we both managed to save someone's life."

A GIFT FROM THE HEART

He survived a sudden cardiac arrest, thanks to an automated external defibrillator (AED).

And Mr Khoo is hoping that a gift of a HeartSine AED to the Riding for the Disabled Association of Singapore (RDA) may help save someone's life in the future.

The gift is part of an initiative by manufacturer HeartSine called "Forward Hearts", which allows survivors of sudden cardiac arrest who were saved using HeartSine devices, to donate an AED to an organisation of their choice.

"I am fortunate to have the opportunity to donate an AED to RDA Singapore, where it could potentially save the lives of its riders, both young and old," said Mr Khoo.

According to HeartSine, studies have shown that when cardiopulmonary resuscitation and defibrillators are both correctly used during a sudden cardiac arrest event, survival rates could potentially increase to over 75 per cent — compared to 5 per cent without intervention.

For more information about HeartSine AED, please contact:

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