

Wellness Center helps docs give patients a heartfelt jolt

■ Teaching medical professionals to use a difibrullator will help save lives and time during emergencies.

By Oscar Johnson

The Grand Ronde Health and Wellness Center is gearing up to offer the area's first continuing medical education course.

April 24 and 25 the Wellness Center will hold the first of what clinic physician and course instructor, Dr. Jim Molloy, hopes will be many Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) trainings.

The course is co-sponsored by the Grand Ronde Tribe and Willamette Valley Medical Center, which also serves as a regional ACLS training center.

About 40 doctors, nurses, paramedics, physical therapists and other healthcare professionals from the clinic, other Grand Ronde facilities and nearby institutions are expected to participate.

The advanced training is part of the American Heart Association's efforts to beef up medical defenses against cardiac emergencies by training healthcare professionals whose practice might not require ACLS certification but who could save lives with it nonetheless.

"We're going up 1,000 notches," says Molloy who has been working on getting courses started for several months. "This requires skills that many people don't have."

Participants will learn to use an Automatic External Difibrullator — the machine used in hospital emergency rooms to revive a stopped heart by applying an electrical shock

to the victim's chest with two hand-held paddles.

The difibrullator also helps analyze heart conditions by measuring vital signs such as the pulse and blood oxygen content.

The training will teach nearly a dozen algorithms, or procedures for diagnosing and treating different emergency cardiac situations.

Molloy points out that even if Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is administered on a heart attack victim, "recognizing basic heart problems can make a huge difference in saving someone's life."

"If I were to collapse (of a heart attack) right now and people around only knew CPR, for every minute that goes by a 10 percent chance of survival is lost," he explains. "After 10 minutes you become an organ donor."

Currently most clinics or doctors' offices call an ambulance if a heart attack occurs, expecting emergency medical personnel to handle the situation, says Molloy.

"If you talk to people in most physicians' offices they don't even have the equipment," says Molloy who brought his own difibrullator to work until the clinic purchased one last year.

He recalls attending a conference last year which brought together physicians from around the United States, Canada and Europe.

At the conference a show of hands was asked for those trained in using a difibrullator to treat cardiac emer-

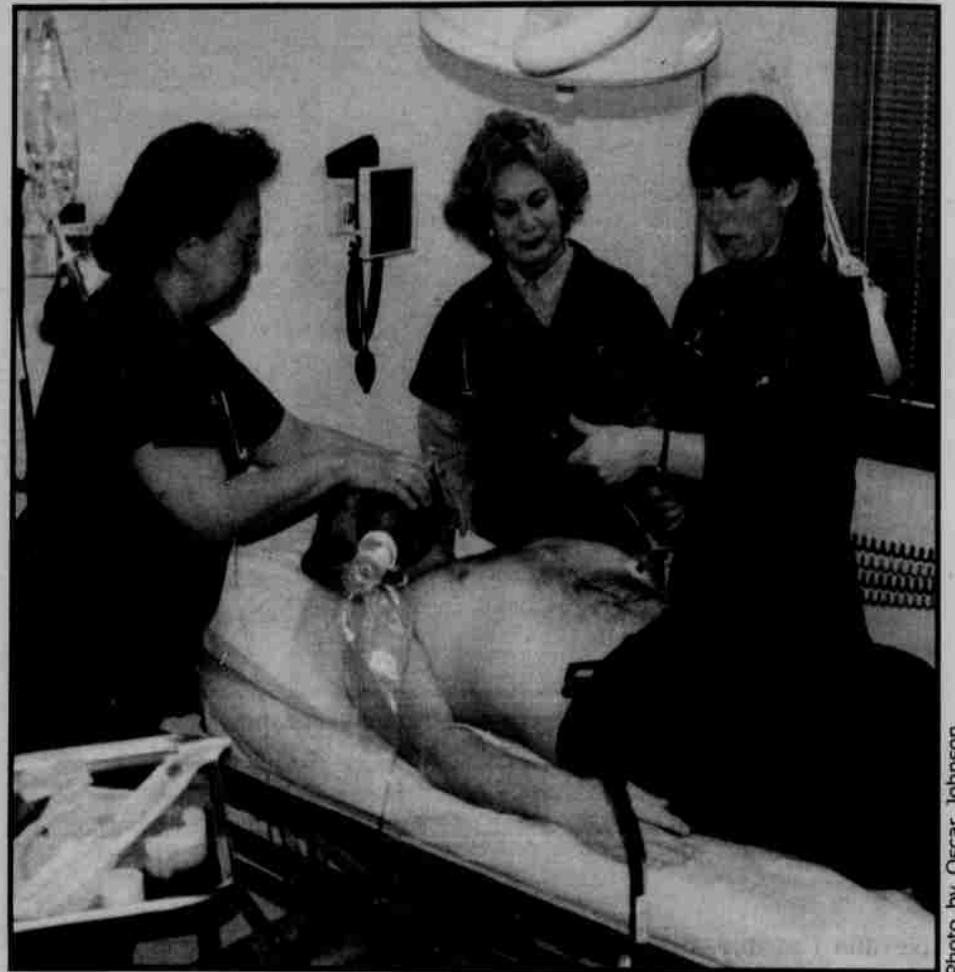


Photo by Oscar Johnson

Clinic healthcare workers practice using the difibrullator on Dr. Molloy.

gencies.

"I was amazed," he says. "Two out of about 80 people didn't have ACLS certification."

So, is the clinic turning into an Emergency Room?

"No," says Molloy. But he adds that since the clinic is in a remote area and close to heavily traveled Hwy 18, "we become one by default."

"We can't just hold back until an ambulance comes, or someone dies," he insists.

Currently, Wellness Center's four healthcare providers are ACLS certified. This is a pretty good average since Molloy says ACLS is not required medical training for most healthcare professionals.

"What we're trying to do is take the latest in training and technology and bring it to places where it hasn't been before," Molloy says. "There is no reason why people here shouldn't get the same care they can get elsewhere."



Grand Auto Supply leases part of the tribally-owned Fairview retail center in Salem.

Grand Ronde success

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overview of the Tribe's economic development efforts.

He cited SMDC projects such as two retail development centers in Salem and the Russellville housing project in Portland as examples of efforts to meet long-term tribal needs.

BIA officials were visibly impressed.

They were also eager to discover the key to Grand Ronde's success and pass it on to other tribes.

"You will note a very short time from the success of the Tribe," Speaks told the BIA managers. "That is because they've picked out experts and invited them in to help. I think that's been one of

the successful aspects of this tribe."

"I think one of the reasons the Tribe has been successful is that they've always been willing to work with their local communities," noted BIA Superintendent for Siletz, Ron Kortlever.

Other officials queried Mercier and Thomas on topics ranging from Council elections and the Tribe's relations with local counties, to its successful development plans and ability to separate tribal government from the Tribe's corporate arm.

"It's amazing the short time the Tribe has had to make itself successful in the business world," Speaks said. "They are really well known in Oregon."