

## National Training Memo

March 1, 2004

**Subject:** Skills Testing for *HeartCode ACLS Anywhere*

**Purpose:** To provide information and training guidance on conducting skills testing for providers completing *HeartCode ACLS Anywhere*

**Background:** *HeartCode ACLS Anywhere* is a self-directed program that allows learners to practice techniques at their own pace while receiving feedback and evaluation of their cognitive skills. To receive an ACLS Provider card, students must successfully complete the required psychomotor skills, which are evaluated by an AHA ACLS Instructor.

### General Information

HeartCode ACLS Anywhere is a CD-based program that includes microsimulation technology. Students complete the didactic components of ACLS independently, followed by completion of a brief skills session with a current AHA ACLS Instructor. Instructors need to communicate their intention to conduct HeartCode ACLS skills checks with their training center to ensure that cards will be issued for successful completion.

To complete the HeartCode ACLS Anywhere program, skills checks must be performed within 120 days after printing the ACLS certificate.

The skills check for an individual student who needs no remediation should take no more than 20 to 25 minutes.

### Required Skills

The required skills check includes:

- One-rescuer adult CPR with AED (Requirement can be waived with proof of a current AHA Healthcare Provider CPR card)
- Successful management of one arrest scenario, which includes v-fib/pulseless v-tach and two other rhythms
- During the patient scenario, provide appropriate airway management, which includes
  - Safe and adequate patient ventilation with a BVM
  - Recognition of need for advanced airway management
  - Primary and secondary confirmation of tube placement
- If within the scope of practice or job requirement of the student, demonstration of endotracheal intubation

### CPR/AED Requirements

Students are required to demonstrate one-rescuer adult CPR and AED skills. This requirement can be waived with proof of a current AHA Healthcare Provider CPR card. This differs from the

course completion requirements of a traditional ACLS course, in that CPR decision-making and skills knowledge are repeatedly reinforced during the patient simulations.

The CPR/AED check sheet is available on page 7 of the current ACLS Instructor Manual, or page 3-34 of the BLS Instructor Manual.

### **Patient Scenario**

Instructors are encouraged to tailor the scenario to each student, with the patient in a situation that the student might encounter in his or her practice. The scenario can begin with any rhythm and proceed through at least two additional rhythms. One of the rhythms must be v-fib/pulseless v-tach. Several examples of possible rhythm sequences are:

- V-fib to PEA to perfusing rhythm with appropriate post resuscitation care
- Chest pain in sinus rhythm with ectopics to v-fib to a perfusing rhythm with appropriate post-resuscitation care
- V-tach with a pulse to v-tach without pulse to perfusing rhythm with appropriate post-resuscitation care

Other rhythm combinations can be used. Appropriate airway management is to be incorporated through the scenario. Skills appropriate for the level of the provider must be demonstrated. All providers must demonstrate basic airway management with bag-mask ventilation. If the provider does not intubate as part of his/her scope of practice, he/she is to describe assisting with intubation and appropriate tube confirmation.

In all cases the appropriate algorithms must be followed. Skills check sheets for key algorithms and airway management are available at [www.americanheart.org/cpr](http://www.americanheart.org/cpr). If other algorithms are used during the testing, check sheets from the ACLS Instructor Manual or the ACLS-EP Instructor Manual can be used. Multiple sheets can be used, or an instructor can use his own multiple-rhythm check sheet.

### **Remediation**

Remediation during the skills verification is provided by the instructor according to current guidelines outlined in the *Program Administration Manual*.

### **Course Documentation and Course Completion Cards**

The training center providing the skills check will issue the provider card and document the session, the same as for an ACLS Provider Course. The skills check sheets, documentation of CPR/AED skills, and the ACLS certificate confirming completion of the computer-based portion should be kept on file with the course roster. The student retains the certificate documenting CE credit.

The course completion card is completed according to policy, with the issue date being the date the skills check is completed.

Providing a skills check session equates to a course taught toward requirements for maintaining ACLS Instructor status.