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Conference Paper · November 2015

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Creating a new Drowning Chain of Survival

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All nations would benefit from a simple, clear Drowning Chain of Survival. In high income nations this tool will refine prevention and the call for action. In low and middle income nations this tool is a guide for policy making, resource allocation and priority setting in drowning prevention.

A best evidence approach was utilised to create a universal Drowning Chain of Survival. Education on how to prevent drowning and how to react when a drowning incident occurs has not always been guided by good levels of evidence, or high levels of specialised training in the recognition and management of the drowning process.

The Drowning Chain of Survival refers to a series of steps that when enacted, attempts to reduce mortality associated with drowning and attempted aquatic rescue. The term “chain of survival” has provided a useful metaphor for the elements of the emergency cardiac care system for sudden cardiac arrest, however, interventions and patient management in drowning involves principles and actions that are specific to these situations.

The result is a unique and universal Drowning Chain of Survival comprised of five links guiding the important life-saving steps for lay and professional rescuers. This may significantly improve chances of prevention, survival and recovery from drowning.

The steps of the chain are: Prevent drowning, Recognise distress, Provide flotation, Remove from water, and Provide care as needed. This presentation describes the development of a new Drowning Chain of Survival from concept to publication.

References

1. Szpilman, D, et al. (2014). Creating a new drowning chain of survival. *Resuscitation*, 85(9), 1149-1152. doi: 10.1016/j.resuscitation.2014.05.034