

CARDIAC ARREST STRIKES FAMILY TWICE IN THREE YEARS

In just three years, both Kelly Drover's husband and father suffered cardiac arrests. Her father survived the attack, but sadly her husband Mathew died on 28 February 2013 after suffering an arrest in the middle of the night.

"People need to be made more aware that cardiac arrest doesn't discriminate. So many people think it won't happen to them, let alone two people in their family," Kelly said.

Mathew was just 33 when he suffered a cardiac arrest. He had gone to bed feeling "perfectly fine" that night.

"At around 1.30am I woke to see what I thought was him having a fit with his limbs jerking about and making a gasping sound," Kelly said.

"I was later informed that the 'Agonal' breath accompanied by muscle jerks is a literal last gasp reflex to stay alive. He was pretty much gone when I discovered him.

"By the time I called 000 and waited for the ambulance I'm positive it was well over 10 minutes. So once they arrived and took over and used the defibrillator I believe it was way too late.

"I recall the 000 operator asking me if we had a defibrillator and thinking to myself, why would I have one at home? But now I think, maybe if I lived close to a shopping centre or service station that I knew had one, I could have sent a neighbour down the road."

Following his death, Kelly had Mathew's bloods tested for genetic mutations, with five variables of unknown significance being found.

"Based on these results, my son needs to have ECG's every two years and see the cardiologist every five years," she said.

"However now that my dad has had a cardiac arrest – and the fact that a lot of his uncles and his dad died young of heart attacks – I will be following up whether more testing is required for my son to see if there could be genetic issues on the paternal side of the family."

Kelly now hopes to help in creating awareness that cardiac arrest can strike anywhere, anytime to anyone.

"Cardiac arrest is one of the biggest killers in Australia with just a 9% survival rate," she said.

"The parts of the USA they have a 56% survival rate and that's because 75% of the community is trained in CPR. I wish more people here would take up CPR training and that more businesses would provide it to their staff

"Installing defibrillators for a small cost can also potentially save lives in the event of a cardiac arrest.

“These machines are so hi-tech now that you can’t actually hurt someone from doing ‘the wrong thing’ as the machines talk you through everything and won’t shock a heart that isn’t in a shockable rhythm.

“People should also be aware that, if the person having the cardiac arrest doesn’t survive, there are no legal consequences to them.”

That night in February 2013 changed Kelly’s life forever.

“My son and I have lost our husband and father, lost financial security, our future together. All special events like my son starting school are tinged with sadness,” she said.

“But it has also taught me to appreciate life and not take things for granted. My son is only five yet understands he needs to exercise and eat healthily to keep his heart healthy, and to call 000 in an emergency.”

ENDS

The Collins & Drover family story was shared by Central Coast Gosford Express Advocate on 5th May 2016 – [Click Here](#) to view full article.

The Michael Hughes Foundation was established in honour of Michael Hughes who passed away in 2013 from sudden cardiac arrest at 38 years of age. The aims of the Foundation are to raise awareness of sudden cardiac arrest, the placement of defibrillators in the community and turning bystanders into first responders.

For more information, visit www.mhf.life