

Tamworth father Mark Hooper was brought back from the brink thanks to a public access defibrillator

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KINGSWOOD father Mark Hooper was taking a well-earned spell during his regular Saturday hockey game late last month.

He got to the bench, took out his mouthguard and turned to pick up a drink bottle.

The next thing he remembers is waking up in hospital.

It was a public access defibrillator at his hockey field that saved his life on July 30.

"Life started out pretty normal, I felt like I did every other day," Mr Hooper said.

"I was a little bit sore in the shoulders, but I thought it might have been from a big week at work.

"Unfortunately, that was not the case."

Mr Hooper, 39, counts himself as a "fit bloke", having played hockey for Tudor Wests for the last three-and-a-half years and "quite a bit of rugby league" in his life.

"I came off the field after running around and felt a little exhausted," he said.

"I thought I would have a drink before I went back on. I took my mouthguard out and turned around to pick a drink bottle. The next thing I remember was waking up in hospital."

Mr Hooper had a heart attack and his teammates rushed to his aid, performing CPR and using the club's public access defibrillator in the first



Mary O'Connor illustrates how to perform CPS on Colleague Damian Baker as Dr John Geaney and D FATEFUL DAY: Mark Hooper was brought back from the brink at the hockey fields last month. Pictured with sons Liam, 7, and Ethan, 5. Photo: Gareth Gardner 290816GGD04 r Fiona Gallagher offer advice. Picture: Don McMonagle

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crucial minutes after his incident.

"These need to be in as many places as possible, but they've got to be visual," he said of the defibrillators.

"They need to be where everyone can see it so there's no minutes lost. Seconds count with these things."

Mr Hooper told The Leader he thought nothing like this could happen to him and wanted his story to serve as a lesson in vigilance for others.

"People need to check their cholesterol and blood pressure," he said.

"And knowing your DNA, genetics and background can make a difference.

"I didn't know until after the fact, but my grandfather died at (the age of) 37 from an enlarged heart."

Mr Hooper said the incident has "put him back a fair bit" in terms of his health, but the Tamworth dad has made an astounding recovery in the last four weeks.

He was able to receive treatment at Tamworth hospital, missed just over two weeks of work and is already back on light duties at Trend Windows and Frames.

Mr Hooper is already back scoring goals on the hockey field, returning for Tudor Wests on Saturday, just four weeks after his heart attack.

"It was quite tough in the hours beforehand going over everything," he said.

"The anxiety was heart-wrenching.

"I thought it was important for the other guys in my team to see me back, there's a few young kids in the team who seen it all. I can't believe it sometimes and I'm quite taken back by it."



Public Access Defibrillator

