Finding the budget for AEDs
Like any city contemplating an AED program, Inglewood had to determine the scope and budget for the program.

Together with Inglewood’s employee health manager and a Cardiac Science AED expert, Falkow determined AEDs were most needed in buildings where city employees work, the police department, the jail, public works, and city hall. He included areas where the public gathers including parks and recreation facilities, libraries, senior centers, and child activity programs. And, he added six mobile units for police cars, often the first vehicles at the scene of an emergency.

At the same time, Falkow began looking for places in the city budget that could fund the purchase of these life-saving devices.

“Purchasing AEDs using only the employee health budget would have been very difficult,” he said, “but the city’s IT budget is in the millions. In this light, the amount of money required to purchase AEDs is negligible. It’s less than the amount you spend on the contract to keep photocopy machines maintained.”
Falkow was able to find the necessary budget and won City Council approval for the expenditure shortly thereafter. (See sidebar on the right for other sources of municipal funding.)

**Managing the deployment; maintenance**

“Having never done an AED program before, we had a few concerns,” Falkow said. “Who would keep track of the devices? What were the legal requirements? (We were concerned about liability.)”

“Cardiac Science has an online tracking system and a dedicated team to make sure the program runs seamlessly. That’s two of the reasons we chose them.”

Using MasterTrak®, an easy-to-use online tracking system that documents AED training and equipment maintenance, Inglewood Acting Human Resources Director and Employee Health Manager Randy Abram keeps tabs on the 43 AEDs deployed throughout the city. MasterTrak sends automatic monthly “Eminders” to the employees responsible for checking the AEDs in their facilities.

Cardiac Science is also providing medical direction services for the Inglewood AED program. This simplifies the process of complying with state and local requirements for AED programs, including ongoing medical oversight by a California-licensed physician.

**Ready for anything**

As a community in an earthquake zone, Inglewood is keenly aware of the importance of emergency preparedness.

In the event of a region-wide disaster, city employees would be on the front lines. As a result, a goal of Inglewood’s emergency preparedness and disaster planning program is to get all of the city’s employees trained in First Aid, CPR, and AED use.

“We are ‘all in’ with this program,” Falkow said. “We’ll have 1,000 people prepared for emergencies, whether they’re earthquakes or sudden cardiac arrest.”

**Why Inglewood chose Cardiac Science**

“Cardiac Science was highly professional and knowledgeable throughout the evaluation stage and, I later learned, they have a dedicated team of AED specialists certified in all aspects of heart safety and current/pending legislation,” Falkow said. “They were also highly responsive to what turned out to be a fast-paced purchase at the close of a budget year.”

The device itself, the Powerheart G3 AED, also impressed Falkow.

“The Powerheart’s ease of use is very important to us,” he said. “We needed to be sure that the defibrillators we purchased would be ones that any of our employees would be able to use in a true emergency.”

Safety was an important consideration, as well.

“We felt completely confident with the Powerheart AEDs. The comprehensive daily self-tests assured us the AEDs would be ready in an emergency.”

**Finding the money**

Michael Falkow tapped into his IT budget to fund the city’s AED program. Here are some other sources you may consider when building a heart-safe community:

- Hospitals and corporations charitable foundations
- General funds including employee match programs
- Tax revenue from tobacco / liquor sales
- Public Safety asset forfeiture money
- Rural and Community Access to Emergency Devices Grant
- Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Grant
- Untapped funds from other internal sources (general funds, employee health budget; others)

And remember: Engage in these conversations early in the budget cycle for optimal results. It’s also best if you can engage someone high in administration to be a champion of the project.

Protect your community. Call Cardiac Science at 866.469.3800 or email care@cardiacscience.com.