

CASE STUDY

Using Fire First Responders to Impact Resuscitation in Rural Communities

North Carolina HeartRescue engages local fire departments to improve response

THE CHALLENGE:

In North Carolina, only a fraction of Fire Departments were trained and equipped to respond effectively to out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

THE RESPONSE:

As part of the HeartRescue project, the North Carolina Regional Approach to Cardiovascular Emergencies Cardiac Arrest Resuscitation System (RACE-CARS) program leads multifaceted interventions for improving care for cardiac arrest in North Carolina.

In coordination with statewide initiatives to improve bystander and first-responder response to out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, North Carolina HeartRescue convened resuscitation workshops for Fire Departments across the state. At the workshops, first responders from fire and rescue teams participated in comprehensive trainings to deliver essential basic life support until the arrival of the EMS (Emergency Medical Services) team. Participants were trained to perform timely high-performance CPR and AED (Automatic External Defib) defibrillation techniques.

This initiative had important impacts in rural, less-resourced communities where conventional EMS response is not as timely. The initiative highlighted the importance of time, and that earlier intervention of CPR and defibrillation can translate to lives saved. The initiative provides an instructive example for rural or less-resourced systems on how to involve public safety to achieve a “resuscitation bridge” with early CPR and defibrillation



30%
improvement
in survival

The resuscitation workshops for North Carolina Fire Departments led to a **30% improvement in survival** following SCA.

Learn more about the [North Carolina Regional Approach to Cardiovascular Emergencies Cardiac Arrest Resuscitation System](#) (RACE-CARS).