

ATTACHMENT C

CSAC Entry Summary 2017
Santa Barbara County EMS Agency

Public Health's Emergency Medical Services created a system for making an instant team of perfect strangers, radically reducing cardiac arrest deaths. Two factors contributed to the success of this program: attention to best practices as described in the medical literature and the perseverance necessary to get participation from everyone, countywide, who practices in the emergency medical system.

Survival rates from cardiac arrests have been abysmally low. Current studies show that greater success can be achieved by immediate and sustained chest compressions, so that action formed the core of the model. The next step was to convince the 1,000 emergency response participants from five separate 911 dispatch centers, seven emergency medical response agencies (including fire and ambulance), and two local hospitals that everyone needed to follow the same model. This was especially important because responding to a cardiac event is invariably involves multiple agencies, and every second counts. There is absolutely no time to argue about strategies or techniques.

With scientific evidence in hand and a plan to train participants from multiple agencies during their regular work shifts, EMS was able to achieve participation from every emergency responder countywide. From the 911 dispatcher who pressed a bystander into early intervention, coaching them through the first compressions, to the team that arrived to take on pre-defined roles and stations around the victim, the instant teams were able to double survival rates, giving Santa Barbara County the highest survival rate in the nation. Along the way, EMS redefined success from getting the victim to display a pulse, to seeing the victim return to their life and their loved ones intact. This was commemorated in a very emotional way in February, 2017 when the victims and their rescuers came together in a celebration of life.

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