

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****April 7, 2026**

Page 1 of 4

**SUBJECT: CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVAL REPORTING AND IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES****Purpose**

This Informal Report provides an overview of how the Fort Worth Office of the Medical Director (OMD), and the Fire Worth Fire Department (FWFD), assess and report on the EMS system performance related to cardiac arrest resuscitation. It highlights key components of the ‘chain of survival, reviews system performance over the past several years in comparison to national survival rates and identifies opportunities to further enhance survival outcomes in Fort Worth.

**Background**

In the Fort Worth EMS system alone, we responded to and attempted resuscitation for more than 1,100 residents experiencing cardiac arrest last year. Nationwide, sudden cardiac arrest claims approximately 250,000 lives each year, underscoring the scale and urgency of this public health issue. Cardiac arrest can occur for many reasons, but those with the highest chance of survival typically experience an acute cardiac event, such as a heart attack, resulting in a dangerous and irregular heart rhythm.

The American Heart Association outlines a “chain of survival,” a series of critical actions that significantly improve survival: early recognition and activation of 911, high-quality CPR, rapid defibrillation, advanced resuscitation, post-arrest care, and recovery. This chain of survival begins with the public and is strengthened through comprehensive education and community awareness efforts.

**Cardiac Arrest Performance Measure Reporting**

OMD reviews every out-of-hospital cardiac arrest comprehensively using multiple data sources, including dispatch audio, patient care reports, cardiac monitor data, and hospital outcomes. FWFD participates in the CARES registry, a national database that enables standardized reporting and benchmarking of survival outcomes. While all cases are tracked, EMS system performance is best reflected in Utstein cases, those cardiac arrests that are witnessed by a bystander and have a shockable rhythm on EMS arrival. Bystander CPR and AED use are also monitored, as both significantly improve survival.

CARES provides annual validated reports, and OMD supplements this with monthly performance reporting.

**Performance Trends**

An overview of Fort Worth Cardiac Arrest Performance (2023-2025) shows that our system has been steadily improving survival over the past 5 years, surpassing national survival in 2025. Our Bystander CPR and Public AED use has been stable for the past 5 years and presents an opportunity to improve.



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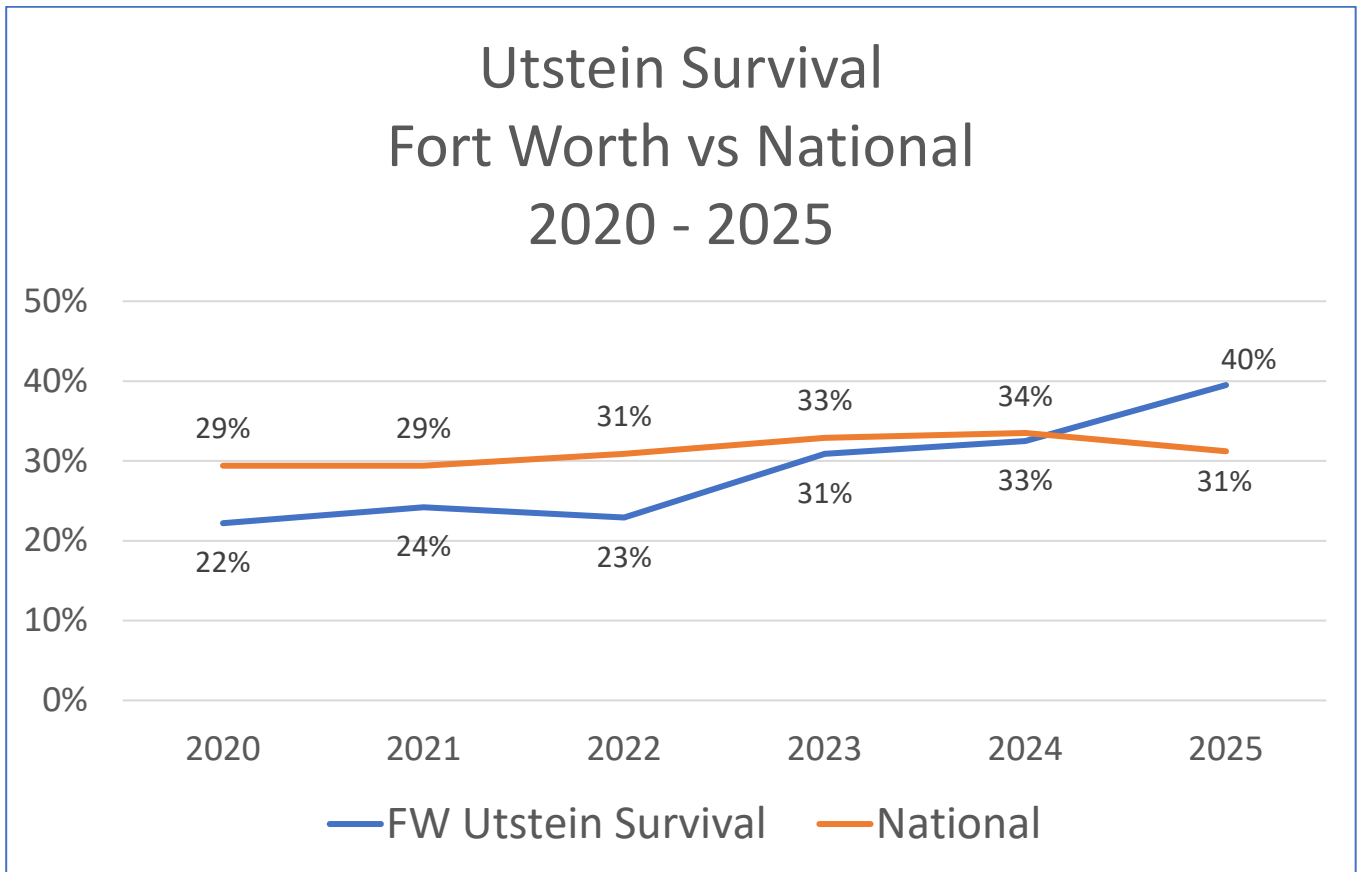
**April 7, 2026**

Page 2 of 4

**SUBJECT: CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVAL REPORTING AND IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
FW Utstein Survival	22%	24%	23%	31%	33%	<b>40%</b>
National	<b>29%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>34%</b>	31%
FW Overall Survival	8%	7%	8%	9%	11%	<b>12%</b>
National	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>10%</b>	11%	10%
FW Bystander CPR	<b>45%</b>	38%	<b>43%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>45%</b>
National	40%	<b>40%</b>	40%	41%	41%	42%
FW Public AED	9%	10%	9%	12%	9%	10%
National	9%	10%	<b>11%</b>	12%	<b>13%</b>	<b>14%</b>
FW Total Resuscitations	1,142	1,058	1,199	1,013	1,039	1,168
National	129,607	150,016	150,813	145,642	146,047	150,066

*\*Bold indicates higher performance*



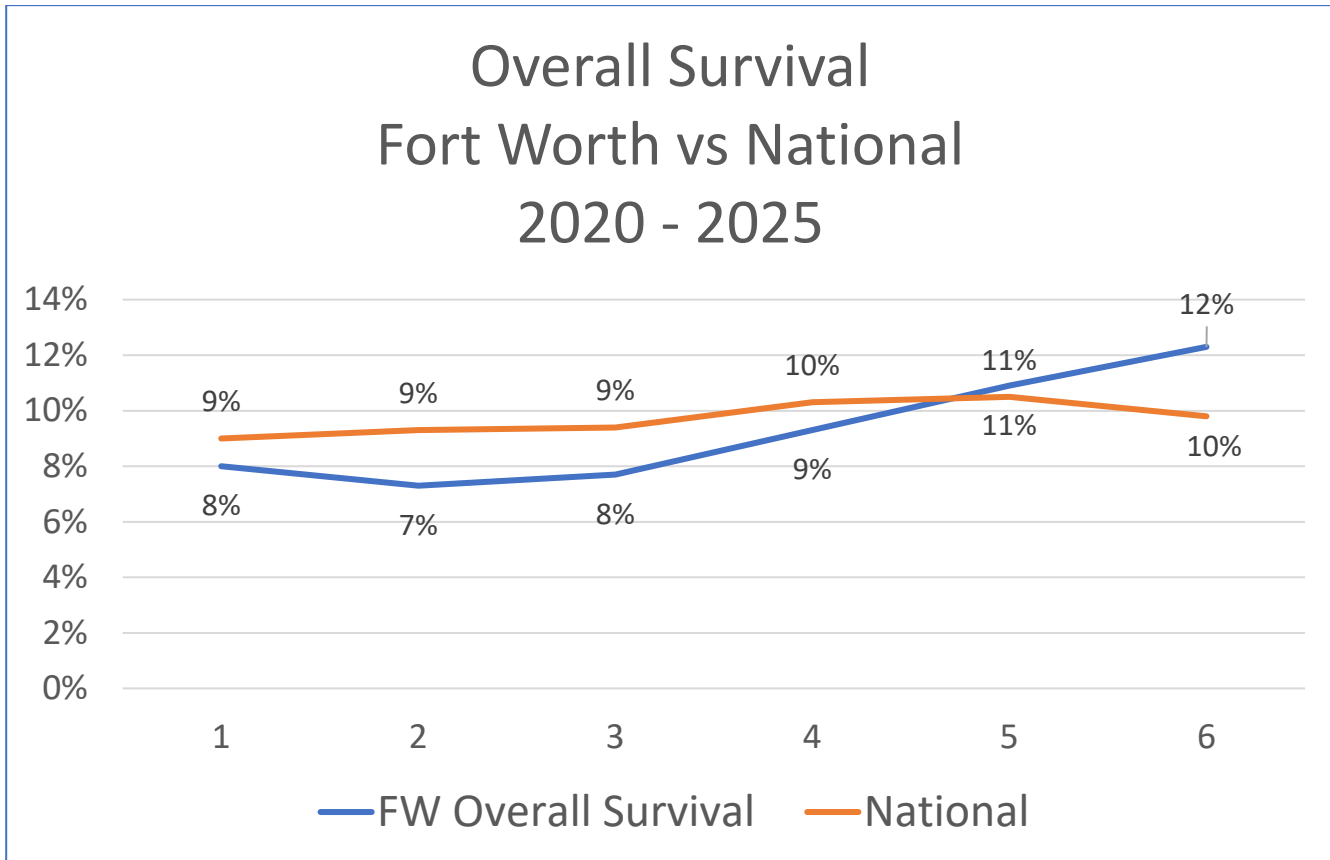


To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

April 7, 2026

Page 3 of 4

**SUBJECT: CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVAL REPORTING AND IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**



**Current Improvement Efforts**

OMD and FWFD, along with our suburban partner cities, are collaboratively planning annual, system-wide, in-person continuing education for both single- and dual-role responders, with a focus on improving the coordination of high-quality CPR and rapid defibrillation. An ongoing quality improvement initiative is focused on identifying and testing strategies to improve survival outcomes. In addition, a dedicated task force is evaluating approaches to better prioritize limited resources for cardiac arrest response and reduce dispatch and response times.

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****April 7, 2026**

Page 4 of 4

**SUBJECT: CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVAL REPORTING AND IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES****Improvement Opportunities**

Cities, like Seattle, have learned the key to consistently achieving high survival from cardiac arrest is to engage their community as first responders. They have widely available AEDs and extensively train citizens in hands-only CPR. To help bring these lessons to play in Fort Worth, we have several opportunities:

1. Enhance access to AEDs throughout the city
2. Enhance CPR training to both city employees and public
3. Finalize implementation of PulsePoint, a publicly available app to help notify willing citizens of cardiac arrest near their location in real time, as well as the location of the nearest AED.
4. Work with outside organizations on campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of citizen CPR and AED use.
5. Publicly recognize citizens and city employees whose efforts resulted in survival from sudden cardiac arrest.

**Summary**

Cardiac arrest is a critical public health issue, and a high-performing, community-supported EMS system can significantly improve survival outcomes. Fort Worth has made steady progress in improving survival over the past several years, while still recognizing opportunities to advance further. Key areas of focus include strengthening fire-based EMS response, expanding public access to AEDs and CPR training, enhancing rapid public notification of nearby cardiac arrests, and recognizing both first responders and community members who play a role in saving lives.

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