



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fire Department Now Carrying Whole Blood

New Braunfels, TX – On August 1, 2019 the New Braunfels Fire Department (NBFD) began carrying low titer O positive whole blood as part of a regional initiative to allow for the early infusion of whole blood to patients suffering from significant blood loss. This, as with many recent advancements in trauma care, is the result of knowledge gained from battlefield medicine in Iraq and Afghanistan. Those experiences demonstrated the life-saving efficacy of whole blood verses standard IV fluids or blood components. As a result, the opportunity to preserve life following significant blood loss has never been higher than it is with this new capability.

NBFD will carry one unit of whole blood on the Battalion Chief’s vehicle. When an EMS crew is dispatched to an incident that involves significant blood loss, the Battalion Chief will respond with the blood. When blood is used, a replacement unit will be obtained from the South Texas Blood and Tissue Center on a 24-hour basis. If the blood is not used within 14 days of receipt, it will be returned to the center as part of an exchange program to ensure the blood is not wasted.

“The addition of this life-saving capability is the result of an incredible amount of work by Captain Mark Eliot, Lieutenant Michael Hayes, and Engineer Jordan Johnson,” said Interim Fire Chief Patrick O’Connell. “It also would not have been possible without the support and guidance of our medical director, Dr. Heidi Abraham, and the South Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC). We are proud to participate in this regional program and excited to have this amazing tool for our citizens and visitors.”

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