

(UNCLASSIFIED)

INFORMATION PAPER

02 July 2014

SUBJECT: Chasing Zero Summary

1. **Purpose.** Provide the OneStaff a summary of the concept of Chasing Zero Harm and provide recommendations for furthering OneStaff understanding of the topic.

2. **Overview.**

a. Chasing Zero is a program established to reduce medical errors within the delivery of healthcare. A near fatal medical error almost cost the lives of twins, born to actor Dennis Quaid and his wife in 2007. Their 12 day old twins received an accidental overdose of Heparin. Instead of 10 units per millimeter, the patients received 10,000 units. During the investigation it was determined that a pharmacy technician mistakenly stocked the 10 unit vials and 10,000 unit vials in the same drawer. Protocol at the hospital was to keep the different units separated.

b. This event inspired a patient education documentary featuring the Quaid family's personal ordeal, along with stories of other families who faced medical errors. *Chasing Zero: Winning the War on Healthcare Harm* is hosted and narrated by Dennis Quaid and is intended as a call to action for healthcare leaders to invest in patient safety. The documentary reveals a series of short "arc to action" stories. Each story opens with a challenge and then tells how caregivers overcome such challenges with practices that everyone can adopt. The objective is to inspire the audience to act in their own communities or at their own hospitals.

c. The Quaid Foundation joined forces with TMIT (the Texas Medical Institute of Technology) and has a new web site address: <http://www.safetyleaders.org/quaid/> to provide patient safety reference and educational materials.

3. **Overview of the Documentary: *Chasing Zero: Winning the War on Healthcare Harm***

a. Each year, medical mistakes kill nearly 100,000 people. These mistakes, made by doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and even medical students, make health care more deadly than breast, colon, prostate, and skin cancers - combined.

b. The harm due to health care changes lives, and not only patients suffer the consequences. For families of victims, medical errors can lead to years of suffering, unanswered questions, and struggling for closure. For providers who make the mistakes, the consequences are also grave. A split-second error may mark the end of a career and the start of a crippling depression.

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c. Among those harmed by medical errors are the Quaid twins, who nearly died as the result of a 1,000 times overdose of the blood thinner heparin. They survived, unlike a dozen other newborns who bled to death.

d. Tragically, most errors are caused by bad systems, not bad people. Why did families and providers suffer the heparin tragedy? Because health care continues to tolerate unsafe conditions that would be unacceptable in any other high-risk field. Against all odds, the Quaid twins pulled through, and their father, actor Dennis Quaid, began a mission to tell the world their story, in the hope that it would never be repeated.

e. Produced by the Discovery Channel in partnership with the Texas Medical Institute of Technology (TMIT) and the Quaid Foundation, *Chasing Zero* shows vividly the harm done by medical mistakes, as well as the solutions out there for better, safer medicine.

4. **Links.**

a. Documentary link:

<http://www.safetyleaders.org/pages/chasingZeroDocumentary.jsp>

b. TMIT website: <http://safetyleaders.org/discovery/>

5. **Recommendation.**

a. Encourage OneStaff personnel to view the 53 min documentary as part of individual or organizational development .

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