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Dan's Corner

Recently, I flew to D.C. for a conference. The flight attendants pantomimed the safety instructions in case the flight became a cruise, and I knew the flight crew was methodically checking a series of steps to prevent that scenario. It is possible that the pilot and co-pilot never flew together before nor met the people in the flight tower. Neither variable mattered, because everyone knew their roles and responsibilities to prevent harm.



March 4-8 marked National Patient Safety Week. At Children's, we participated in a citywide Code Green, or mass casualty, drill.

Daniel Salinas, M.D.

Chief Medical Officer

These drills identify gaps in our processes, operations and communications. Often, the biggest breakdowns occur in how we organize ourselves, delegate tasks and keep teams updated to prevent errors. Learning from near misses and emergent situations makes patient care safer and maintains the critical skills clinicians and physicians need to be as ready as when Captain Sullenberger landed on the Hudson River.

We've made great strides in patient safety at Children's, but even one child harmed is too many. Rather than setting goals to reduce bloodstream infections by 30 percent, we need to reframe our thinking to focus on the number of kids harmed.

This year, Children's takes the next step in its One is Not Zero journey by educating physicians, staff and leaders on the principles other industries use to prevent errors, known as "high reliability." These principles have already driven incredible accomplishments in our system, such as those outlined on [page 3 of the latest edition of MedClips by Mark Wulkan, M.D., Surgeon-in-Chief](#). But high reliability shouldn't be confined to just our hospitals—more healthcare systems are using simulation training and high-reliability principles in primary care. Those key principles lead to high-functioning teams that communicate effectively and work efficiently, whether conducting scoliosis surgery, or managing the care of a child in a pediatrician's office. Because behind every number is a child and the only number that counts is zero.

Ask Dan

If you have comments or questions for Dan, contact him at AskDan@choa.org.

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