



### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Navicent Health Physician Implements Research Study in Zambia** *Storytelling Approach Inspires Hope and Resilience in Children*

**MACON, GA (Tuesday, June 5, 2018)** – Paul Seale, M.D. with Family Health Center, Navicent Health recently traveled with a team to Zambia to implement a research project called “Global Resilience Oral Workshops (GROW) Zambia: A Storytelling approach to Hope and Resilience through Character Training and Spiritual Practices.”

GROW is a 24-week curriculum that uses storytelling to teach character virtues to children ages 10 to 12 years old. Led by 30 Zambia nationals trained as GROW leaders, the project seeks to determine if the teaching of character values and spiritual practices can enhance hope, a sense of meaning and resiliency, and reduce or delay the use of alcohol and other drugs among 600 youth.

“One of the big focus areas is to encourage the kids to dream of a better future for themselves. What would they like to do and what would they like to be? We then develop the character strengths of perseverance, problem-solving and hope and the inner strength that it takes to stay in school even though it is difficult,” said Dr. Seale.

With a two-part education system and a cycle of poverty, Dr. Seale said it is challenging at times for Zambian children to gain access to education. Some children only complete the first part of their education, which ends at the sixth grade level. If they are able, they may proceed to higher education, but many do not.

Though the project is being implemented on the other side of the world, Dr. Seale believes the results of the project could impact the local community.

“This project demonstrates Navicent Health’s concern for underserved populations. I hope we are learning lessons that will be applicable to our vulnerable populations in Macon and central Georgia. It is broadening our research agenda, it’s allowing us to focus on an important disparity and on underserved populations. Hopefully, the project is helping us to learn lessons about increasing resilience in vulnerable kids that we are then able to use with our population here,” said Dr. Seale.

Dr. Seale said if the project is successful, GROW Zambia will provide a culturally adaptable training model for character and resilience training as well as alcohol and drug prevention usable in other oral-learning cultures worldwide.

“Navicent Health is firmly committed to eliminating healthcare disparities and improving health and wellbeing. We are so pleased that physicians like Dr. Seale are leading research projects that directly benefit students across the world, and also have implications for those we serve here at home,” said Dr. Ninfa M. Saunders, FACHE, President and CEO of Navicent Health.

The project received a \$217,000 grant from the John Templeton Foundation in addition to other funding from non-governmental organizations, and the research team has partnered with a network of Zambian churches.

*In the attached photo: Dr. Paul Seale and his wife Dana created GROW to transform the lives of children by teaching character virtues, with a goal of breaking the cycle of poverty.*

**About Navicent Health**

Navicent Health was incorporated on November 17, 1994, as a nonprofit corporation whose primary purpose is to coordinate The Medical Center, Navicent Health and other affiliated entities in their mission of providing a comprehensive continuum of high quality, reasonably priced healthcare services to the region. Navicent Health has 970 beds for medical, surgical, rehabilitation and hospice purposes. The health system includes The Medical Center, Navicent Health, a nationally recognized tertiary teaching hospital; Beverly Knight Olson Children’s Hospital, Navicent Health, the region’s only dedicated pediatric hospital; Navicent Health Baldwin and Medical Center of Peach County, Navicent Health, both rural hospitals; Rehabilitation Hospital, Navicent Health, the region’s oldest and most experienced rehabilitation provider; Pine Pointe, Navicent Health, which provides palliative and hospice care in homes and in its facility; Carlyle Place, Navicent Health, the area’s first continuing care retirement community; Navicent Health Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Navicent Health; as well as diagnostic and home care services. For more information, please visit [www.navicenthealth.org](http://www.navicenthealth.org).

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