



## SAFETY ISSUE

Volume 4; Issue 2

MISSION: To provide creative culture solutions to improve patient safety



### PURPOSE OF THIS NOTIFICATION

- Increase awareness of topic
- Provide actionable items to review and mitigate potential harm.

### TARGET AUDIENCE

Nursing, Medical & other Clinical Leaders

Clinical Educators

Patient Safety/Quality Improvement Leaders

Legal/Risk Management

Organization Leaders in:

- Hospitals
- EMS
- LTC
- Home Care

### NEXT STEPS

- Share this watch with the target audience
- Promote daily safety briefings
- Continue to share incidents, near misses and unsafe conditions with the Center for Patient Safety

### CONTACT

#### MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Michael Handler, MD, MMM, FACP

#### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Tina Hilmas, RN, BSN, CPPS

thilmas@centerforpatientsafety.org

The Center for Patient Safety is issuing this notification regarding:

## SAFETY WATCH: Elopement

**Emergency Services are increasingly dealing with patients who elope prior to receiving care, many times due to lengthy wait times. Patient safety issues associated with these scenarios include increased risk of:**

- Adverse events
- Misdiagnosis
- Mental health exacerbation
- Diversion which can lead to dangerous delays of care



### ACTIONABLE ITEMS TO MITIGATE RISK

- Review/establish an elopement policy
- Review triage policy/process
- Identify those at risk for elopement (such as those suffering with psychosis, dementia, drug or alcohol-related conditions)
- Perform a gap analysis to address issues such as opportunities to reduce risk, assessing staffing, etc.



### THE CULTURE CONNECTION

- Open Communication: Interview staff to see if they have concerns regarding patient elopement
- Teamwork: Develop a communication tool that will inform all ED staff of a high risk elopement patient.
- Share: Openly share peer-reviewed best practices from the literature and processes that have been implemented at your facility or other facilities.



### RESOURCES

[AHRO PSNet Elopement](#)

[VA National Center for Patient Safety A Toolkit: Patients At Risk for Wandering](#)

[Improving Patient Flow and Reducing Emergency Department Crowding: A Guide for Hospitals](#)

[Patient Elopement: Widespread, but Rarely Discussed](#)

### MORE INFO

Contact us at 573.636.1014 or view this issue at [www.centerforpatientsafety.org](http://www.centerforpatientsafety.org)