The Center for Patient Safety is issuing this notification regarding:

**SAFETY WATCH: Respiratory Compromise**

**BACKGROUND**

- Respiratory Compromise is a state in which there is a high likelihood of decompensation into respiratory insufficiency, respiratory failure or death, but in which specific interventions (enhanced monitoring and/or therapies) might prevent or mitigate decompensation.*
- Respiratory Compromise creates problems that are often serious and potentially life-threatening, but they are almost always preventable with the proper tools and approach. Appropriate patient monitoring and therapeutic strategies are necessary for early recognition, intervention and treatment.
- Common themes include:
  - Lack of appropriate monitoring and early identification of respiratory compromise
  - Distractions, complacency or failure to identify high risk patients at transitions of care
  - Not anticipating respiratory complications or lack of situation awareness
  - Complications and risks from procedural sedation

**ACTIONS TO TAKE:**

- Understand the pathophysiology and clinical factors of respiratory compromise
- Early identification of patients at risk
- Appropriate and timely patient monitoring
- Appropriate and prompt interventions and treatment

**RESOURCES**

*Respiratory Compromise Institute*

*Thanks to Dr. Brian Froelke, CPS EMS Medical Advisor, for contributing to this Patient Safety Watch.*