Asthma: Heavily Sedated Patient Dies, Family Obtains Settlement.

he twenty-seven year-old asthmatic patient came to the E.R. for an upper respiratory infection, was sent home and was sent back to the same E.R. several days later by her doctor with shortness of breath, wheezing, non-stop cough, chest pain and tachycardia.

The patient was admitted to the hospital and was started on several IV medications which can produce CNS and respirator depression, including Dilaudid, Ativan and Benadryl.

The nurses charted she was getting adequate pain relief and relief from an xiety with her medications. The physician added po anti-depressant trazodone and po anticonvulsant Neurotonin to the list of medications she was getting.

ished breath sounds, expiratory wheezing, ily's private pathologist's toxicology findlabored breathing and oxygen saturation of ings as to the cause of death, the family got only 92% after giving the patient a breath- a settlement of \$1,175,000 for their lawsuit ing treatment.

by her nurse eighty minutes after IV push doses of Dilaudid and Ativan.

The patient received an additional 4 mg of Dilaudid IV and 4 mg of Ativan IV.

The patient was not checked for eighty minutes. A nurse found the patient seated in her bed unresponsive. A code was called but the patient was pronounced dead.

SUPERIOR COURT SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA October 14, 2009

Even though there were discrepancies A respiratory therapist noted dimin- between the coroner's report and the famfiled in the Superior Court, San Diego The patient was found unresponsive County, California. Confidential v. Confidential, 2009 WL 4916568 (Sup. Ct. San Diego Co., California, October 14, 2009).

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