RESPIRATORY THERAPY: DO WE MEASURE UP? EVALUATING OUR PRACTICE.
Raso, Tony¹; Klages, Robyn¹
¹William Osler Health System - Brampton Civic Hospital, Respiratory Therapy, Brampton, Canada

Introduction: The importance of utilizing a low tidal volume strategy in critically ill mechanically ventilated patients has been known since the ARDS Network published their landmark data over 10 years ago. Since that time numerous articles have identified various barriers to the sustainability of implementing this lung protective strategy.

Objectives: In our critical care units all mechanically ventilated patients are measured, irrespective of admitting diagnosis and ventilated to a target tidal volume of 6-8 mls/kg of predicted body weight. We wanted to quantify our compliance to this practice in real time and if this was not happening, identify our own unit specific barriers.

Methods: We measured our compliance daily, reviewed and tracked the data on a monthly basis. All ventilator flow sheets per patient for the duration of their critical care admission were reviewed. Data was collected for the past 3 years, from Jan 2010 to Jan 2013 and from both hospital sites within our organization, comprising 38 critical care beds.

Results: The initial data revealed a lower than expected compliance to measuring patients and ventilating to 6-8 mls/kg predicted body weight. Site to site fluctuation in compliance rates were also noted, which seemed to be linked to respiratory therapy staff experience in years. The site where the staff had an average of greater than 10 years experience had higher compliance rates and less month to month variability compared to the site where the average respiratory therapy staff experience was less than 5 years. With monthly tracking and reporting of compliance numbers at department huddles, staff meetings and corporate critical care quality meetings we were able to emphasize best practice and adherence to clinical standards. Since giving timely updates on our performance and being receptive to staff input as well as providing clarification to process, our compliance rates have shown significant improvement with numbers consistently over 80% within the last year.