

May 3, 2005

Marc P. Volavka
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council
225 Market Street
Suite 400
Harrisburg, Pa. 17101

Re: Hip and Knee Replacement Report, FY2002,
Hazleton St. Joseph Medical Center

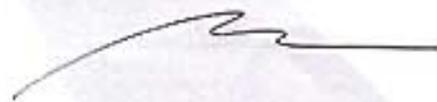
Dear Mr. Volavka:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to our Hip and Knee Replacement data.

According to the report, only eleven total hip or knee replacements were performed at our hospital during the fiscal year 2002. This number is below the threshold of thirty cases set by the Health Care Cost Containment Council for a valid statistical analysis. However, these eleven cases were reviewed internally to determine if any problems existed. I am pleased to say that our length of stay was comparable to the statewide benchmarks from previous PHC4 reports, and we had no significant complications or readmissions.

Hazleton St. Joseph Medical Center is committed to providing quality health care services to our community. The information that we receive in these reports helps us to evaluate our progress toward our goal. In addition, it serves to highlight the excellent care that we currently provide to our patients. Therefore, we look forward to working with you on future projects.

Yours truly,



Barbara A. Vilushis, DO
Associate Medical Director,
Greater Hazleton Health Alliance