



October 10, 2003

815 Freeport Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15215

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

UPMC St. Margaret would like to thank the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council for providing the opportunity to comment on the outcome data for the PHC4's Hospital Performance Report for Federal Fiscal Year 2002.

In the current report, UPMC St. Margaret was within the expected mortality rate for all but one condition. While the Hospital Performance Report produced by PHC4 analyzes specific data elements, we recognize the importance of reviewing the entire patient's hospitalization. At UPMC St. Margaret 100 % mortality review is performed by the Care/ Quality Management Department as part of our continuous monitoring of the quality of care.

The condition identified that had a *higher than expected mortality rating* is Abnormal Heartbeat. Of the eight mortalities that occurred within this condition, seven patients or 87.5 % were a *Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)* or family wished to withdraw support due to the patient's co-morbid conditions and poor prognosis.

Another condition with a *higher than expected rating* is Short LOS Outlier for Kidney and Urinary Tract Infections. Fourteen or 9.3% of those patients had a shorter than expected LOS. The expected range of short LOS outliers is 3-13. Two factors were responsible for this shorter than expected LOS. The rapid administration of antibiotics in our Emergency Department is a major factor and produces high quality and efficiency of care. A review of these fourteen (14) cases indicate that five patients (37 %) were residents of skilled nursing facilities and after clinical response to treatment were discharged back under medical supervision to the skilled nursing facility to complete their course of antibiotics.

UPMC St. Margaret supports the efforts of the PHC4 to enhance the quality of patient care delivered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Jacobs, RN
Director Care/Quality Management