



Conemaugh Memorial Response to *Pennsylvania Hospital Performance Report - November 2018*

Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center is proud to routinely and voluntarily share our data with third parties such as PHC4 to measure our quality outcomes. As the only hospital between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh with a Level 1 Trauma Center and a Regional Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Conemaugh Memorial plays an important role in serving the needs of Southwestern Pennsylvania's rural communities. Our team is outstanding, and we take great pride in our record on patient safety and quality.

We take the results of the *Pennsylvania Hospital Performance Report* very seriously and were disappointed with our performance, but the results don't reflect the total quality of care offered at Conemaugh Memorial. We view this report as resource for ongoing conversations about continuous improvement.

An area we'd like to improve upon based on the report is our process for documenting existing chronic conditions for patients in our care. This data was collected from October 2016 – September 2017, during our adoption of our new electronic medical record (EMR) system. Analyzing the outcomes in the report against our own medical records, we believe that we haven't adequately documented data that are being used in the algorithm to characterize patient risk. A patient may have been admitted for a condition that, on its own, should not be fatal, but a more thorough review of the chart would show they were gravely ill. We'll be working to improve our documentation protocols so the data we provide to third parties like PHC4 more accurately reflect the severity of the patient's condition.

This year's report also highlights a significant opportunity for Conemaugh Memorial with regard to managing end-of-life care. Our hospital cares for the sickest of the sick, and the mortality data in the *Pennsylvania Hospital Performance Report* shows that many patients and their families are trusting Conemaugh Memorial to compassionately care for them in their final hours.

As a hospital and as a community, we need to do a better job of navigating health care during those final stages. We need to have the heart-to-heart conversations with families about patients' wishes much earlier in the progression of their disease. Many of the deaths noted in this report were patients who would have benefitted from hospice for their palliative care. No one should have to die in a hospital, and we need more and better options for supporting our community members when life's journey is nearing the end. We can assure you that Conemaugh Health System will be tackling this difficult topic with our community and health care partners.

For patients and community members who may be concerned about the mortality data presented in the report, please keep in mind that Conemaugh Memorial has a very good track record on patient care. We've just earned the LeapFrog Grade 'A' rating for patient safety for the third time in a row. On Hospital Compare (Medicare.gov), Conemaugh Memorial is the same as the national average for mortality, and we score comparably with other Level 1 Trauma Centers in Pennsylvania for overall quality.

Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center is absolutely committed to patient safety, outcomes and making communities healthier. We'd like to thank PHC4 for highlighting these opportunities to serve our patients and our community better.

Bill Caldwell, CEO Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center

Susan Williams, MD, Chief Medical Officer