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February 23, 2007

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

Dear Mr. Volavka,

Aetna commends PHC4 for its continuing commitment to leverage information to improve the quality and affordability of health care in Pennsylvania. As an organization similarly committed to improving care and empowering consumers through information, we are pleased to see PHC4 publish *Measuring the Quality of Pennsylvania's HMOs*, reflecting performance for CY 2005. We particularly commend the care PHC4 staff have taken to promote accuracy in the data collection process and the responsible way PHC4 applies state-of-the-art severity adjustment methodology.

One potentially important factor which no adjustment methodology can adequately address is the geographic variation in the way health care is delivered in different parts of this diverse Commonwealth. Comparisons between HMOs which predominantly operate in one part of the state to those operating in other parts of the state are likely more a reflection of secular trends in health care than of HMOs' activities or programs. We would encourage those making use of *Measuring the Quality of Pennsylvania's HMOs* to keep this in mind as they analyze the results.

As Aetna continues its industry leading efforts to promote transparency and to use information to improve the care delivered to our members, we are pleased to see PHC4 drive all of the constituencies in health care in Pennsylvania to do better. We were pleased to support the publication of academic work making use of PHC4's landmark reporting on hospital acquired infections and are anxious to see PHC4 continue its leadership efforts to eliminate hospital acquired infections in the Commonwealth, an outcome can all agree will improve care and reduce cost.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Liss".

Don Liss, MD
Regional Medical Director