

July 23, 2009

David H. Wilderman, Acting Executive Director
Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council
225 Market St., Suite 400
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. Wilderman,

Allegheny General Hospital would like to thank the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council for the invitation to review and comment on the results of the calendar year 2006 / 2007 report on coronary artery bypass and cardiac valve surgery. The Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery has a long-standing and close working relationship with the Allegheny Clinical Effectiveness group in the preparation and analysis of outcomes data for support of all process improvement initiatives, including the PHC4 Open Heart Project.

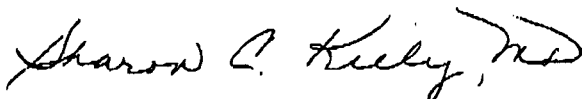
As active participants in regional and national outcomes projects, including the STS National Database and The Leapfrog Group, we not only support transparency, but also the efforts of the PHC4 to inform and educate the public on issues affecting healthcare delivery.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this important, ongoing process and remain committed to working closely with the Council on this and future projects.

Sincerely,



George J. Magovern, Jr. M.D.
Chair, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery



Sharon Kiely, M.D.
Medical Director of Quality and Patient Safety



Duke Rupert,
Sr. Vice President and Interim Chief Operating Officer

cc: Dan Laurent, Director of Media Relations
Kathleen Simpson, Academic Specialist, Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery
Kim Sperring, Vice President, Operations
Pamela Zajdel, CPHQ; PHC4 Contact