



Abington Memorial Hospital

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

Subject: Comments to PHC4 re: Abington Memorial Hospital Cardiovascular surgery report

Dear Mr. Wilderman:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you last week regarding the 2006/2007 PHC4 Report on Cardiac Surgery. Following are the comments which we would like to include in your final report:

"Abington Memorial Hospital takes strong exception to this 2006/2007 report from the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council on cardiac surgery. Of the total number of cases submitted by Abington during the reporting period, 48 were excluded either because the patients resided in another state, and therefore are not tracked or counted by Pennsylvania, or social security numbers were missing. In that instance, despite the fact that many patients refuse to provide social security numbers, PHC4 does not allow the case to be counted.

Abington has followed up on each of the 48 cases and can verify that every patient was alive within the defined period. Had those 48 cases been included in the count, and the PHC4 database, all of Abington's outcome measures would have fallen well within the acceptable ranges.

Abington has questioned the necessity and wisdom of using social security numbers as a qualifier for inclusion in the PHC4 studies. We are pleased that the staff at PHC4 has agreed to review this issue as it may not be a valid qualifier given consumer reluctance to provide that information. We thank PHC4 for allowing us to add these comments regarding the incomplete data. We believe that without these comments the report would be misleading."

Sincerely,

John J. Kelly, M.D., FACP