

**ALLEGHENY  
GENERAL HOSPITAL**

WEST PENN ALLEGHENY HEALTH SYSTEM

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July 8, 2010

Joseph Martin, Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council  
225 Market St., Suite 400  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. Martin,

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 2007 /2008 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 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,

Thomas D. Maher, M.D.  
Director, Surgical Outcomes  
Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery

Sharon C. Kieley, MD, MPM, FACP  
Vice President and Chief Quality Officer

Duke Rupert  
Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

cc: Gregory Burfitt, President & CEO, AGH & WPH  
George Magovern, MD, System Chairman, Dept. of Thoracic & Cardiovascular Surgery