



# UPMC HEALTH SYSTEM

*UPMC Lee Regional*  
April 24, 2002

320 Main Street  
Johnstown, PA 15901  
814-533-0123

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

UPMC Lee Regional Hospital is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council's Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Surgery Report, 2000.

We constantly strive for lower mortality rates. The numbers in this report reflect the smaller patient population at the inception of our cardio-thoracic program in calendar year 2000. One less mortality would have resulted in our being ranked well within the expected range for 30-day mortality. However, UPMC Lee Regional has carefully calibrated the size of its cardiac program to assure that we can offer high quality, personalized, patient-based care and will not be detoured from the path we have chosen.

Although performing additional procedures (and therefore increasing volume) or refraining from undertaking procedures on higher risk patients would improve our numbers, UPMC Lee Regional does not allow decisions regarding delivery of health care to be driven by numbers. Our focus is clearly on what's best for each individual patient.

Our medical staff carefully reviews procedures with patients so they and their families can understand the available options, risks, and resulting quality of life. We work closely with our patients and their families to provide individualized medical care that meets their needs.

It is well known that patients can more quickly, and more comfortably, regain health in their own home compared to a hospital, any hospital. Thus, it has been, and will continue to be, the policy of UPMC Lee Regional and our medical staff to discharge patients as soon as they are ready to leave the hospital so they can continue recovery at home. With a proactive program of monitoring patients to include community nurse visits to their homes, a patient can be readmitted to the hospital if necessary.

We commend the efforts of our Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council for its commitment, along with UPMC Lee Regional Hospital's commitment, to provide quality and cost efficient care to the members of our community.

Sincerely

David R. Davis, President & CEO