



The Spirit of Caring

July 22, 2009

Ms. Flossie Wolf
Acting Deputy Executive Director
Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council
225 Market Street, Suite 400
Harrisburg, Pa. 17101

Dear Ms. Wolf,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the upcoming *Cardiac Surgery in Pennsylvania* report. We support the transparency of clinical data in healthcare and appreciate the work done by the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4).

This report includes data on cardiac and valve surgeries performed in 2006 and 2007. In 2006, we received as expected ratings for all cardiac and valve surgeries. In 2007, Holy Spirit received two higher than expected ratings for CABG without valve surgeries for in-hospital and operative mortality (includes in-hospital and 30-day). All of our other ratings were deemed as expected in 2007. Our most recent data (April 2008 through March 2009) submitted to the Society for Thoracic Surgery National Database shows that we performed 182 CABG without valve surgeries and had no deaths. The higher than expected ratings for CABG without valve procedures in 2007 is an isolated occurrence.

The Ortenzio Heart Center at Holy Spirit is well-utilized by the area's cardiac physicians and thousands of patients every year. We work collaboratively with our surgeons to ensure we provide high quality care. By partnering with these physicians, we created a more timely and effective performance improvement process. This is evident in multiple venues.

In May 2009, Highmark - Blue Shield designated Holy Spirit Hospital as a Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care. Blue Distinction Centers for Cardiac Care demonstrate their commitment to quality care, resulting in better overall outcomes for cardiac patients. Holy Spirit Hospital meets evidence-based clinical criteria developed in collaboration with expert physicians' and medical organizations, including the American College of Cardiology and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons. These criteria include:

- an established cardiac care program, performing required annual volumes for certain procedures

A Service of Holy Spirit Health System

503 North 21st Street • Camp Hill, PA 17011-2288

(717) 763-2100

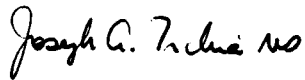
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- appropriate experience of its cardiac team, including sub-specialty board certification for interventional cardiologists and cardiac surgeons
- an established acute care inpatient facility, including intensive care, emergency and a full range of cardiac services
- low overall complication and mortality rates
- a comprehensive quality management program

We are pleased with the success of our cardiac program. Our patients also have a high opinion of our services. Independent survey results consistently reveal outstanding patient satisfaction scores for our Heart Center.

We appreciate the Council's ongoing efforts to share quality data with the citizens of Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph A. Torchia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joseph A. Torchia, MD
Chief Medical Officer