

ABINGTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

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ABINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA 19001



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April 5, 2001

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

I have reviewed the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council 1999 C-section Deliveries in Pennsylvania Report. Abington Memorial Hospital is the hospital with the highest number of births in Eastern Pennsylvania. In 1999, 4564 babies were born in our institution. In addition, we are also a major obstetrical tertiary referral hospital for other hospitals in the Philadelphia, Montgomery and Bucks County region. Our perinatology group of high-risk obstetricians delivered 359 newborns in 1999. Of those deliveries 44.3 % required delivery by cesarean section because of maternal and/or fetal indications, indicating the extremely high-risk population served by that group.

It is important that consumers understand that the definition of the High-Risk C-Section developed by the Pennsylvania Cost Containment Council includes only a very limited number of medical conditions, those that could be well taken care of in most community hospitals. At Abington Memorial Hospital, patients with a wide variety of both common and exotic high-risk conditions are taken care of, a list of conditions much more extensive than the list of high-risk conditions on the Pa. C.C.C. list. Many of these conditions not only exist by themselves, but also as co-morbidities with conditions listed in the Pa. C.C.C. limited list. Because many of these conditions require delivery by cesarean section, the cesarean section rate at Abington Memorial Hospital is perforce higher than it would be at a typical community hospital.

Mr. Marc P. Volavka

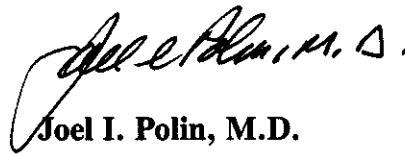
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When a consumer compares high-risk C-section rates as published by the Pa. C.C.C., they are led to believe that they can compare cesarean section rates for high-risk patients from hospital to hospital. As explained in detail above, such a comparison would not be possible based on the nature of the data, and any conclusion based on those data would be invalid or unwarranted or both.

In addition, many patients of very high-risk status are referred to the generalist OB/GYN groups at AMH because of the experience of these groups and the maternal and newborn facilities available at the hospital to care for the highest risk of pregnancies.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel I. Polin, M.D.", with a large, stylized flourish at the beginning.

Joel I. Polin, M.D.
Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology
Temple University School of Medicine

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