

Healthcare...
Above and Beyond

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April 9, 2001

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the report on **Cesarean Section Deliveries in Pennsylvania, 1999**.

Our review of the data prompts the following comments:

- Our obstetrical population includes a significant number of high risk pregnancies.
- We are the referral center of choice for the lay midwives in our region, in part because we are a very low cost hospital. Vaginal deliveries performed by midwives occur at home and, therefore, are not counted in our hospital's statistics. High risk patients of midwives or patients from their practices with complications are referred to our obstetricians and have a disproportionately high rate of Cesarean section.
- Our mean Cesarean section rate, although higher than the statewide mean, is within the acceptable range according to standards promulgated by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.
- Our physicians will opt to recommend a Cesarean section in any situation where the outcome for the mother or baby could be in jeopardy.
- Recognizing that pelvic relaxation, stress incontinence and other related syndromes are increasingly viewed as consequences of vaginal birth, some of our patients may elect to undergo a Cesarean section rather than vaginal birth.
- Vaginal birth after Cesarean section is a potentially risky procedure which may be complicated by uterine rupture with serious consequences to the mother and baby. In order to prevent these complications our patients may elect to have a repeat Cesarean section

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to comment on the information included in your latest report.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arthur H. McTighe".

Arthur H. McTighe, M.D.
Vice President of Medical Affairs