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October 27, 2006

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

St. Mary Medical Center supports the efforts of the PHC4 to provide meaningful benchmarking data that will help hospitals and physicians improve the quality of care provided to their patients. We thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Hospital Acquired Infection Report to be released on November 14<sup>th</sup>.

We recently completed a comprehensive review of all the hospital acquired infections reported by St. Mary to the PHC4 for calendar year 2005. This review revealed that according to the PHC4 reporting requirements in 2005, St. Mary over-reported the number of hospital acquired infections in several categories during this time period. The below table compares the number reported to the PHC4 v. the number of cases required to be reported by PHC4 definitions.

	St. Mary Reported Cases	St. Mary Reported Rate	Correct # of Reportable Cases	Correct Rate
Urinary Tract	171	8.4%	171	8.4%
Surgical Site	24	6.9%	6	3.6%
Pneumonia	37	1.8%	26	1.3%
Bloodstream	44	2.1%	29	1.4%

We have incorporated the PHC4 methodology into our reporting processes for 2006 and believe that this data will more accurately reflect those infections currently being benchmarked at the Peer Group and State levels. St. Mary is very proud of its ongoing efforts to reduce the incidence of hospital acquired infections as evidenced by a 76% reduction in Ventilator Acquired Pneumonia and a 60% reduction in bloodstream infections between 2005 and 2006.

Sincerely,

  
Dr. Joseph Conroy  
Chief Medical Officer