



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

Feb. 18, 2008

RE: Comments for Westmoreland, Frick and Latrobe Hospitals Regarding PHC4  
Hospital Acquired Infection Report

Dear Mr. Volavka,

In July 2006, Excela Health (which includes Westmoreland, Frick and Latrobe Hospitals) adopted an electronic surveillance tool (MedMined). As a test of best practice, all nosocomial infection markers (NIMS) for both urinary tract infections (UTI) and multiple infections were accepted at face value and reported to PHC4 as hospital acquired infections (HAIs). Potential surgical infections, respiratory infections (pneumonia), GI infections and blood stream infections were identified by a nosocomial infection marker and prior to submission applicable CDC definitions were applied.

Using this process, the data reported reveals surgical infections, respiratory infections, GI infections and blood stream infections to be within expected norms. Unfortunately, using this recommended best practice, UTI and multiple site infection cases increased disproportionately. The numbers reported in this report reflect potential cases as identified by the electronic surveillance tool and not actual infections.

As a result, for all reported infections, electronic markers will be used to flag potential cases and CDC definitions will be applied prior to reporting HAIs to PHC4.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeffrey T. Curry".

Jeffrey T. Curry  
Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer  
Excela Health