



HERITAGE VALLEY

Health System

Sewickley Valley Hospital - The Medical Center

720 Blackburn Road
Sewickley, Pennsylvania
15143 - 1498

September 14, 2004

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

Sewickley Valley Hospital recognizes the commitment and effort of the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council in the publication of the 2003 Hospital Performance Report. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the performance report.

Within the published report, the mortality information indicates that Sewickley Valley Hospital performs within the expected mortality rates in 46 of the 47 clinical conditions and/or DRGs. As part of our ongoing performance improvement, Sewickley Valley Hospital reviews each mortality, and if indicated forwards the case to a physician for an independent objective review. This review is performed to assess whether or not care is consistent with current evidenced based medicine and to support the learning and ongoing performance improvement culture within our organization. Sewickley Valley Hospital actual mortality exceeded the expected mortality for abnormal heartbeat. This represents 6 cases. No areas of deficiency or untoward trends were identified within this clinical area.

Sewickley Valley Hospital within the past year has embraced Six Sigma methodology as a way of doing and improving business. Three clinical areas; heart failure, pneumonia and ventilator management in critical care have been selected as six sigma projects in order to better understand the processes that lead to untoward events and then implement strategies to reduce its occurrence.

Again, we appreciate and support the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council 2003 Performance Report and will continue to use this information in our ongoing efforts to improve the quality of care for the community we service.

Sincerely,

Daniel H. Brooks, M.D.
Vice President & Chief Medical Officer
Heritage Valley Health System