



ALLEGHENY GENERAL HOSPITAL

WEST PENN ALLEGHENY HEALTH SYSTEM

320 EAST NORTH AVENUE, PITTSBURGH, PA 15212-4772
412-359-3131

September 13, 2005

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

Allegheny General Hospital would like to thank the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council for the invitation to review and comment on outcomes relating to the FFY 2004 Hospital Performance Report. We appreciate the opportunity to access hospital effectiveness benchmarks, which address the care delivery systems within our institution.

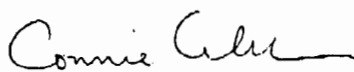
Through our continuous efforts to enhance performance improvement initiatives, we utilize this information in conjunction with additional data to monitor the quality of our patient care. The current report indicates that AGH had a higher than expected mortality rate in the Non-hemorrhagic Stroke category. Upon analysis of these cases, we found that 20% were patients with basilar artery occlusions and 40% were patients with large middle cerebral artery infarctions. Both of these stroke types carry a dismal prognosis. Appropriately, most of these patients received palliative care in accordance with the wishes of the patients' family.

Our hospital Emergency Department receives a disproportionate number of similar cases in transfer from other hospitals, because we have a stroke center. Of these mortalities, 57% were deemed too ill to remain at the referring hospital.

We will continue to monitor the severity of strokes at our institution and the percentage of stroke patients received from other hospitals. We expect to learn useful information about outcomes using both the Atlas data and our stroke registry.

In summary, we appreciate the efforts of the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council in taking a lead role in comparing hospital performance, and we will continue to strive toward improving the quality of patient care at Allegheny General Hospital.

Sincerely,



Connie M. Cibrone
President & CEO



David G. Wright, M.D.
Medical Director, Stroke Program

cc: Duke Rupert
Kim Sperring
Sharon Kiely, M.D.
Jon Brillman, M.D.
Pamela Zajdel