

Clearfield Hospital

September 12, 2005

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

Dear Mr. Volavka,

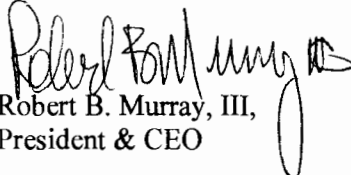
Clearfield Hospital welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Hospital Performance Report for discharges from October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2004. In analyzing the cases receiving higher than expected marks, it becomes evident that the codes may not adequately reflect the nature of the multiple chronic and end stage diseases of the patients involved.

Overall our facility compares favorable with other hospitals with the exception of our higher than expected rating for readmissions for complications and infections for Congestive Heart Failure. Thorough investigation of these readmission cases revealed that the complications were unrelated and the infections related to pneumonia. According to the literature the incidence for infectious problems is high in the Congestive Heart Failure patient population. We do not believe that these readmissions were totally unexpected given the severity of illnesses for these patients who had multiple medical co-morbidities.

However we continue to look for opportunities to improve care to our patients with these conditions and we are participating in the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) quality initiatives regarding pneumonia and heart failure.

Clearfield Hospital welcomes information that helps us improve our care to our patients and we thank the Council for providing regular comparative reports. We appreciate the opportunity to respond to the report and we will use this data as yet another opportunity for us to improve and strengthen our ability to provide high quality, cost-effective care.

Sincerely,


Robert B. Murray, III,
President & CEO