

September 9, 2005

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

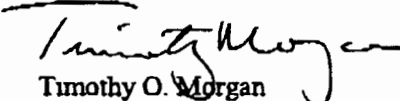
Dear Mr. Volavka:

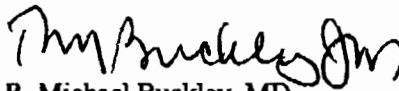
On behalf of Pennsylvania Hospital, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2004 Hospital Performance Report. We appreciate the time and effort involved in reporting information related to cost and outcomes of healthcare in Pennsylvania. After careful review of the report, we would like to provide these additional observations

Only one condition with greater than expected mortality rate was reported for Pennsylvania Hospital. The condition category listed as "Hysterectomy - Abdominal" included 290 patients who were admitted for surgical hysterectomy procedures. There were two patients who expired during their admission. One patient was admitted with very high admission severity score and high risk of mortality due to her malignancy. This tells us that the patient was very ill at the time of admission. This patient had metastatic cancer that had spread to other major organs such as the liver, lungs, and small bowels. The patient did not survive despite surgical and medical treatments and was provided comfort care. The second patient had an underlying congenital disorder characterized by multi-organ anomalies. A detailed systems review of the case, including the autopsy report showed there were no surgical related complications.

We continuously review the quality of patient care at Pennsylvania Hospital for improvement opportunities. Thank you for the inclusion of this information with the published report.

Sincerely,


Timothy O. Morgan
Executive Director


R. Michael Buckley, MD
Chief Medical Officer