

LVH CASE MANAGEMENT Fax: 610-402-8613

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September 12, 2008

David H. Wildermam  
Acting Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council  
225 Market Street  
Suite 400  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. Wildeman:

We appreciate the opportunity to be able to submit comments regarding the soon-to-be released 2007 Hospital Performance Report and applaud the Council for its ongoing efforts to inform the public of performance outcomes on these common medical procedures.

The performance report indicated that Lehigh Valley Hospital - Muhlenberg's mortality rate for Removal of Blockage of Neck Vessels was greater than expected. Upon review of the one mortality, this patient had an extremely extensive medical history including diabetes, hypertension, hypothyroidism and dyslipidemia. Further appropriate care was rendered and the patient and family requested comfort measures only.

The performance report also indicated a higher than expected mortality rate for DRG 418 - Infection after Surgery or Trauma. Upon review of the two cases, one patient was placed on comfort measures only by the family upon arrival at the hospital. The other patient presented to our hospital in overwhelming sepsis after ignoring symptoms for two weeks. An Acute MI was also diagnosed on admission. Appropriate care was rendered and the patient's family requested no aggressive measures to sustain life.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to comment on this report. Any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at 610-402-1770.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ardire MD'.

Anthony Ardire MD, MPH, CPE  
Senior Vice President  
Quality and Patient Safety