

September 17, 2008

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

Mr. Wilderman,

The FFY 2007 Hospital Performance Report for St. Luke's Quakertown Hospital contains a number of areas I will comment on briefly and one area I will address in greater depth. First, there were fewer than expected long LOS outliers in Abnormal Heartbeat, Congestive Heart Failure and Infectious Pneumonia. There were also a greater than expected number of short LOS outliers for Abnormal Heartbeat. There were also fewer than expected readmissions for Infectious Pneumonia. I feel that all of the above data reflect a hospital that strives for maximum efficiency at all times, with an excellent Care Management Team, working in concert with our Medical and Nursing Staffs.

The area that requires a greater depth of analysis is Readmissions of patients with Surgery for Infectious or Parasitic Disease (DRGs 578 & 579). There were 9 eligible cases and 5 readmissions, when the expected number of readmissions was 2.2. I have reviewed the files of the five patients who were readmitted and my findings are as follows.

Two of these cases were dealing with surgical infections acquired elsewhere. One of these patients and one other were readmitted to the hospital for treatment of illnesses completely unrelated to their prior surgery. There were two patients who were readmitted because of failures of aftercare. One patient was readmitted with a multitude of medical problems, including myelodysplasia, insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, end-stage renal disease, gastrointestinal bleeding and severe anemia. He was subsequently transferred to Hospice services. None of the readmitted patients required readmission because of inadequate, incorrect or inappropriate surgery, as such a statistic might imply. I do not feel that there are any quality issues at St. Luke's Quakertown Hospital concerning the care of patients readmitted after Surgery for Infectious or Parasitic Disease (DRGs 578 & 579).

Respectfully,



Thomas Filipowicz, MD, FACEP  
Director, Emergency Department  
VPMA, St. Luke's Quakertown Hospital