

September 12, 2009

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

Dear Mr. Wilderman:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this year's report.

We are very pleased with the results of the data presented to us by the Health Care Cost Containment Council. We have seen a great deal of improvement in our data over the last few years. This is due, in a large part, to an aggressive team approach to quality improvement throughout the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance.

Our report shows a number of areas in which we perform better than expected. These include short length of stay for COPD and infectious pneumonia, and readmissions for congestive heart failure. Our multi-disciplinary respiratory team has worked very hard on new clinical pathways for respiratory care within the hospital. We are also happy that the PHC4 data has finally caught up with our internal congestive heart failure data, showing that our CHF readmission rate is much lower than the statewide and national averages.

This year's data contains two areas of focus: Kidney and urinary tract infection mortality rates and long length of stay for infectious pneumonia. Neither of these areas has been problematic in the past. Both of these areas will be incorporated into our improvement teams.

We at Hazleton General Hospital are committed to providing quality, cost effective health care to our customers. We look forward to working with you in the future to achieve this goal.

Yours truly,



Barbara A. Vilushis, DO
Associate Medical Director, GHHA