

JAMES M. COLLINS
President and Chief Executive Officer

4800 FRIENDSHIP AVENUE
PITTSBURGH, PA 15224
412-578-7137
FAX: 412-578-1296
E-MAIL: jcollinswph@msn.com

December 1, 1999

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

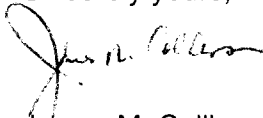
Dear Mr. Volavka:

The Western Pennsylvania Hospital is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council's 1998 Hospital Performance Report of fifteen common medical procedures and treatments

At The Western Pennsylvania Hospital all deaths are reviewed as part of our continuous monitoring of the quality of care. We are pleased with the outcome of your analysis demonstrating that the mortality rate for all 15 of these DRGs was within expected for our institution.

Through an active Performance Improvement Program, the Hospital and Medical Staff work together continuously to evaluate and improve the care provided to our patients. We support the work of the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council in its efforts to enhance service effectiveness.

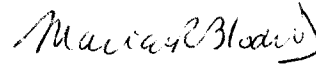
Sincerely yours,


James M. Collins

President and
Chief Executive Officer



Elliot B. Goldberg, MD
Physician Director of
Utilization Management



Marian R. Block, MD
Medical Director for Quality

JMC/EBG/MRB/gal

File: g:\jr\letters\PHC4