

CENTER FOR
HEALTH

November 23, 1999

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

***Re: 1998 Hospital Performance Report
15 Common Medical Procedures and Treatments***

Dear Mr. Volavka:

We have received the DATA FOR COMMENT related to the Hospital Performance Report and will take this opportunity to make formal comments to be included in the *Hospital Comments Booklet*.

Of the 15 DRG's chosen to be included in this report, Somerset Hospital shows one outlier when looking at the Risk-Adjusted Mortality Rating. DRG #316 (Kidney Failure) is shown to have a "Mortality Rate significantly greater than Expected". That rating is based on 25 discharges for that DRG and 6 of those being mortalities.

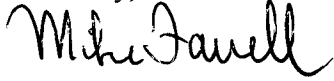
The six patients who were mortalities had an average age of 80 years. 4 of the 6 had the diagnosis of Chronic Renal Failure, while 2 were Acute Renal Failure. The average severity of these patients was 2.5. All of these 6 patients had many complicating factors in their history and at the time of their demise. Some of those diagnoses were CHF, AMI, COPD, AAA, and Organic Brain Syndrome.

Upon review of these patients these were not totally unexpected mortalities considering the complexity of their disease.

When reviewing the cost information included in this report, Somerset Hospital is consistently a lower cost facility when compared to others in Western Pennsylvania and those Statewide.

In conclusion, while every patient and the outcome of their care is of great concern to our staff, a review of the mortalities identified for DRG #316 reveal no concern of issues for our hospitals performance. Again, our costs and lengths of stay compare very well to the rest of the Pennsylvania facilities included in this report, so we will look upon this report in a favorable way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Farrell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "M" and "F".

Michael J. Farrell, CEO
Somerset Hospital, Center For Health
Somerset, PA