



February 25, 2003

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to comment on the findings published in PHC4's report, "*Measuring the Quality of Pennsylvania's Commercial HMOs.*" As always, I commend the Council for its continued efforts to report on key areas of care and service within the managed-care industry. As our nation's health-care system continues to face challenges, the public release of this information reinforces the leadership role our industry has played in improving the state of health care in this country. In addition, I feel that it is beneficial for Pennsylvanians to see a comparison of managed care performance to fee-for-service, helping to convey the message of the positive improvements managed care has realized. With that said, we are pleased, once again, to see that the Council's findings reflect Geisinger Health Plan's commitment to member satisfaction, clinical outcomes and preventive measures.

Our ongoing efforts to deliver services aimed at controlling or preventing disease continue to demonstrate increased success. Investing internal resources into the implementation of seven specialized disease-management programs has resulted in documented improvements in quality of care. Hospitalization rates of members with chronic illnesses, including diabetes, asthma and hypertension, are significantly lower than the state averages, as measured by your report. We are committed to strengthening these programs that have already been so successful in championing clinical guidelines and empowering members to take an active role in the management of their condition.

As one of the nation's largest rural HMOs, our top priority is to provide the highest level of service and care to all of our members. We are pleased with the results of your report and will continue to use them as a benchmark for evaluating and developing new initiatives to meet current challenges.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Duane E. Davis M.D." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Duane E. Davis, M.D., F.A.C.P., F.A.C.R.  
Vice President, Chief Medical Officer  
Geisinger Health Plan

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ADMINISTRATION  
100 NORTH ACADEMY AVENUE • DANVILLE, PA 17822-3020  
TEL. 570.271.6487 • FAX 570.271.5268