



**ALLE-KISKI
MEDICAL CENTER**

WEST PENN ALLEGHENY HEALTH SYSTEM

1301 CARLISLE STREET, NATRONA HEIGHTS, PA 15065

724-224-5100

ALLEGHENY VALLEY HOSPITAL

December 10, 2002

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

Dear Mr. Volavka,

The following are the comments submitted on behalf of Alle-Kiski Medical Center in response to the release of Hospital Performance Report 2001:

The Hospital was identified as having a significant Short LOS Outlier Rating for Pneumonia and DRG 138 Abnormal Heartbeat, Complicated. There were 460 patients discharged with the diagnosis of Pneumonia. Thirty-three of the patients were identified as short LOS outliers. Of the 33 patients in this group, 11 (33%) were admitted to observation beds for 24 hours prior to admission. Therefore their stay in the hospital was actually one day longer than their inpatient length of stay. If the observation day would be included in the inpatient length of stay, our short stay outlier rating could possibly be reduced to 4.7%, which is below the 5% range for the State. The same situation occurs with DRG 138 Abnormal Heartbeat, complicated. There are 167 patients in this DRG. Seventeen patients were identified as short stay outliers. Six (3.5%) of these patients were also in observation beds prior to inpatient admission. This would also reduce our range.

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,


Joseph Calig
President and Chief Officer