



Memorial
Medical Center
Member Conemaugh Health System

December 5, 2002

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

These comments are being sent in response to the data received which is intended for publication in the Hospital Performance Report for 2001.

Of the mortalities occurring in those patients treated for Non-Hemorrhagic Stroke, 75% had a co-existing cardiac condition; 40% experienced at least one prior stroke; 20% had a history of cancer; other co-morbid conditions included advanced renal and lung disease, diabetes and seizure disorder. In addition, 75% had "Do Not Resuscitate", DNR, orders. Of those patients who did not have a DNR order, all but one were either comatose or experiencing acute myocardial infarction on admission to Memorial.

In DRG 79, Lung Infection with Complication, 90% had DNR orders. Those who did not have a DNR order had a history of both advanced cardiac disease and cancer. Other co-morbid conditions throughout this group of patients included diabetes and chronic lung or renal disease.

Mortality in DRG 180, Complicated Stomach and Intestinal Obstruction were related to multiple co-morbid conditions in each of these patients. Two-thirds of this group were also over age 85. Only 3 patients in this group did not have a DNR order; treatment in all 3 cases included ICU management with ventilator support, TPN and resuscitation efforts.

Of the deaths occurring in DRG 243, Medical Back Problems, all were over 79 years old with multiple co-existing conditions. Co-existing conditions included diabetes, chronic lung and cardiac disease and perhaps most significantly, advanced metastatic cancer.

One mortality occurred in DRG 297, Nutritional and Metabolic Deficiencies, uncomplicated. This patient was transferred in from another facility and was over 100 years old with multiple co-morbid conditions.

Thank you for allowing us to comment on these findings.

Sincerely,

Paul Weygandt, MD, JD
VP, Medical Affairs

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