



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

December 9, 2002

Re: PHC4 2001 Hospital Performance Report
DRG 316 – Kidney Failure

Dear Mr. Volavka,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to and comment on the data for Palmerston Hospital contained in the 2001 Hospital Performance Report. Our personnel have carefully reviewed the charts of patients listed under DRG 316. The mortality Analysis for this DRG noted that our actual mortality rate for this condition was 30.8 against an expected value of 9.6.

Charts of all of the patients who expired under this code in 2001 at Palmerston Hospital were reviewed. The average age for the group was 80.2 years. Two of the 12 refused dialysis (ages 87 and 85), 5 patients or their families had requested that no aggressive intervention be carried out (DNR status), 3 patients had their renal failure on the basis of obstructive nephropathy from advanced, unresectable malignancies and one patient had renal failure as a part of multi-system organ failure due to end stage coronary vascular disease with congestive heart failure and diabetic nephropathy. Eleven of the 12 had an ASG of 3.

We continue to review all of our hospital mortalities looking especially at issues of appropriateness and quality of care. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the report. If we may be of any further assistance on this matter please feel free to contact us at (610) 826-1342.

Sincerely,


Richard Hager
Chief Executive Officer


Thomas J. Tachovsky, MD
Medical Director