

December 3, 2002

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

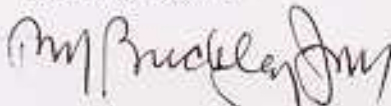
On behalf of Pennsylvania Hospital, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2001 Hospital Performance Report. We appreciate the time and effort involved in reporting information related to cost and outcomes of healthcare in Pennsylvania. After careful review of the report, we would like to provide these additional observations.

Only one condition with a greater than expected mortality rate was reported for Pennsylvania Hospital. The mortality rate in the Gallbladder Removal – Laparoscopic condition was related to patients who were admitted with complex medical conditions and significant co-morbidities. All three of the patients were admitted from the emergency department and required stabilization prior to surgery. Two of the patients had requested "Do Not Resuscitate" orders. One patient had cancer, which was the actual cause of death.

We continuously review the quality of patient care at Pennsylvania Hospital for improvement opportunities. Thank you for the inclusion of this information with the published report.

Sincerely,

  
Timothy O. Morgan  
Executive Director

  
R. Michael Buckley, MD  
Chief Medical Officer