



# UPMC HEALTH SYSTEM

## UPMC Lee Regional

220 Main Street  
Johnstown, PA 15901  
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December 16, 2002

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

This letter is submitted in response to the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council's intent to release the 2001 Hospital Performance Report.

**DRG 001 – Brain Surgery (Mortality Rate significantly higher than expected)**

- There were a total of six cases in this DRG with 2 mortalities.
- Both mortalities were Do Not Resuscitate.
- One patient was 73-years-old and had not seen a physician, or otherwise been treated for 30 years prior to this hospitalization. The patient had a massive brain stem infarction with extension of infarct; not responsive to treatment.
- The second patient had intracerebral bleed post VP shunt. Patient in need of shunt for at least six months and had refused treatment. Aggressive therapy was refused by the family, following the acute intracerebral bleed.

**DRG 449 Poisoning and toxic effects of drugs, complicated (Short length of stay % - rate significantly higher than expected)**

- Of the total patients in DRG 449, 8 transferred to acute psychiatric hospitals.
- Acute medical care was rendered with the anticipation of eventual transfer to an acute psychiatric unit, as recommended by Crisis Intervention and psychiatric consultation.
- UPMC Lee does not have an acute psychiatric unit.
- Two of the three cases noted for short length of stay were initially 23-hour observation patients prior to being admitted.
- The third case was admitted initially for evaluation of stroke type symptoms as well as a low blood sugar. Stroke was ruled out and the blood sugars were regulated.
- All cases identified for short length of stay were considered medically stable at time of discharge and were not readmitted within 31 days of discharge.

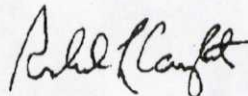
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DRG 277 - Cellulitis (Short length of stay % - rate significantly higher than expected)

- The average age of the patients discharged home with medical follow-up was 53 years of age.
- The patients were noted to be medically stable with significant improvement in cellulitis prior to discharge.
- Eleven patients were residents of nursing home facilities to which they were discharged once the care plans could be managed at the NH level.

DRG 323 - Urinary Stones including Lithotripsy, Complicated (Long Length of Stay % - Rate significantly higher than expected)

- Average inpatient length of stay was 2.8 days with an expected length of stay of 2.5 days. Eight of 28 cases had a length of stay of greater than 2.5 days (0.3 day over expected length of stay).
- 7 of 8 patients had acute medical events requiring additional and unanticipated care during the hospital stay, (generally cardiac or respiratory in nature).
- All patients had urological consultations on admission or within 24 hours.
- Three of four patients included were on anticoagulation therapy requiring regulation of bleeding times.
- The sizes of the stones were large requiring multiple procedures.
- One patient developed aspiration pneumonia which extended the length of stay.



Richard Cartwright, M.D.  
Medical Director