



PHYSICIAN & PATIENT SERVICES DIVISION  
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September 19, 2007

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

Dear Mr. Volavka:

We appreciate the opportunity to be able to submit comments regarding the soon to be released 2006 Hospital Performance Report and applaud the Council for its ongoing efforts to inform the public of performance outcomes on these common medical procedures.

The performance report indicated that Lehigh Valley Hospital – Cedar Crest's mortality rating was greater than expected for DRG 554 – Vascular Procedures excluding Heart, Complicated, without Major Cardiovascular Condition. Upon review of these three cases, we would like to make two comments:

- 1) All patients had multiple end stage disease comorbidities.
- 2) Appropriate care was provided in all cases including appropriate interventions to reduce the risk of post operative complications.

As part of our ongoing peer review process, all mortalities are reviewed and no quality concerns were identified.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to comment on this report. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 610-402-8656.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ardire' followed by a stylized 'MD'.

Anthony Ardire, MD, MPH, CPE  
Senior Vice President, Quality and Patient Safety