



We Treat You Like Family

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September 19, 2007

Mr. Marc P. Volavka
Executive Director
PA Health Care Cost Containment Council
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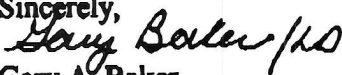
Dear Mr. Volavka,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the 2006 Hospital Performance Report. We compliment your efforts to encourage hospitals to improve quality of care and contain associated costs for the patients in our community. The report indicates that our mortality and re-admission rates at Memorial are higher than expected for CHF.

We re-reviewed the involved mortality charts. To summarize, five of the 78 patients died during the time frame. The average age was 81 with the range from 67 to 99. All had multiple co-morbidities and all except one was a "do not resuscitate" from the beginning of the hospitalization. All had echocardiograms except the 99-year-old, and all but one showed very poor heart function. All the patients received standard of care treatment for what they were willing to undergo and three of them were in ICU. All had conditions listed as "end stage," noted in their lists of discharge diagnoses.

We also re-reviewed the CHF patients who were readmitted within 30 days. Half were not readmitted with CHF, which compromises the very data being analyzed. Home Health nurses were managing two of the nine and patient compliance problems were described in two others. There were no indications of premature discharge in any of the cases. All of these patients had been part of the core measure data abstraction performed as a requirement for CMS and Joint Commission. We are striving to make improvements to ensure that all cases meet all of the indicators each and every time. We perform a concurrent review of CHF patients during their hospitalization to ensure that we are providing all of the recommended standards of care.

Our Board of Trustees are very involved in the performance improvement process in our organization. Many have performance improvement experience in their businesses, which compliments this effort.

Sincerely,

Gary A. Baker
President and CEO