

SHARP MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
SHARP REHABILITATION SERVICES  
SHARP OUTPATIENT PAVILION  
SHARP HOME CARE

December 7, 2010

Merry Holliday-Hanson, Ph.D., Manager  
Administrative Data Program  
Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development  
400 R Street, Room 250  
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Ms. Holliday-Hanson:

This letter is in response to our receipt of the 2009 Hospital Inpatient Mortality Indicators. Sharp Memorial Hospital scored worse than expected in three areas: congestive heart failure, pneumonia, and craniotomy mortality. We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback regarding our scores.

In our congestive heart failure data a 7.8% mortality was reported. All cases were carefully reviewed and the following findings were noted:

- Of the 29 cases reported, 52% were above the age of 85 with 24% above the age of 90.
- In 2009 Sharp Memorial Hospital provided the only Heart Transplant and Left Ventricular Assist Device programs south of Los Angeles. Heart failure patients are referred to these programs at Sharp Memorial when there are no further medical/surgical options available to them.

In our pneumonia data a 5.3% mortality was reported. All cases were carefully reviewed and the following findings were noted:

- Of the 37 cases reported, 80% had at least one significant underlying medical condition, such as end-stage cancer, renal failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- Forty-three percent of the patients were above the age of 85, and a third of the patients were transferred to Sharp Memorial from skilled nursing facilities.

In our craniotomy data a 12% mortality was reported. All cases were carefully reviewed and the following findings were noted:

- Of the 12 cases reported, seven were admitted in critical condition through the Emergency Room with complex co-morbidities including use of anticoagulants which increases risk of intracranial bleeding.
- There was no evidence of complications related to the surgical care or technique, and care was found to be thorough and appropriate.

We have reviewed the first three quarters of 2010 and found that our data improved in all three areas. In view of our performance in 2008 where none of these mortality issues were present, and the information above, we feel that the rating, while accurate in number, does not reflect our overall performance in these areas.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim Smith".

Tim Smith  
Chief Executive Officer  
Sharp Memorial Hospital