Mercy General Hospital

October 16, 1997

David Werdegar, M.D., M.P.H.
OSHPD
Health Policy and Planning Division
1600 9th Street, Room 350
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: California Hospital Outcomes Project

Dear Dr. Werdegar:

Mercy Healthcare Sacramento (MHS) is committed to ongoing clinical quality improvement. We support the analytic approach undertaken by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD). The California Outcomes Project provides a unique opportunity to evaluate our performance in relationship to hospitals across the state. In addition, MHS is asking its respective medical staffs to review the information provided.

We call the reader's attention to certain issues to be addressed by the research team:

1. The data released in this report reflects patient care rendered from 1991 - 1993. Due to the age of this data, its uses are significantly limited.

2. The presentation of the two models (Model A and Model B) is confusing. We recommend the OSHPD select only one model for future reporting.

3. We continue to support OSHPD's decision not to report ranks for hospitals. The wide confidence intervals associated with the estimates of risk-adjusted outcomes lead to similarly wide confidence intervals associated with the corresponding ranks. As a consequence, we believe that the hospital ranks are too uncertain to validly order hospitals.

4. The format of the data returned to the facilities needs improvement. We recommend that OSHPD provide the patient medical record number in the report, rather the identifying patients by social security number alone.

5. As indicated in the report, the Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) status of patients is not a risk factor which was available for this reporting period (1991-1993). We believe that this information may have significantly altered the report's outcomes for hospitals that treat a high percentage of DNR patients.

Thank you for allowing us to respond.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Petersen,
Vice President/ Chief Operating Officer

Michael A. Davis, M.D.
Medical Staff President

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4001 J Street
P.O. Box 19254
Sacramento, CA 95819-9990

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