



December 16, 2008

Joseph Parker, PhD
Director
Healthcare Outcomes Center Office of
Statewide Health Planning and Development
400 R. Street, Room 250
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Dr. Parker,

This letter is in response to the Hospital Inpatient Mortality Indicators for California 2006 and 2007, in which the Carotid Endarterectomy rating was designated as "worse" for USC University Hospital. While we acknowledge that the mortality rate of 3.8 is higher than other hospitals, we feel there are factors that account for this finding.

There were sixteen Carotid Endarterectomies in 2006 with a single death that had two procedures at the same time, a Carotid Endarterectomy and Cardiac bypass. There were twenty-four cases in 2007 with no mortalities. The one case in 2006 was transferred from an outside facility on dialysis with several co-morbidities.

At USC University Hospital, a large majority of patients are referred from other facilities for higher level of care considerations. A raw mortality rate of 7 (1 out of 16), is risk and complexity adjusted to 3.8, reflective of the severity of illness and co-morbidities observed in this single patient.

We are committed to delivering high quality of care to all of our patients. We are proud of the care that we provide to critically ill patients who have been referred for our clinical expertise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Debbie Walsh".

Debbie Walsh
President and CEO