

**HAP****2577****THE HOSPITAL & HEALTHSYSTEM ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA**

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

October 3, 2007

Arthur Coccodrilli  
Chairman  
Independent Regulatory Review Commission  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. Coccodrilli,

The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP), on behalf of its (more than 250 acute care and specialty hospitals and health systems in the Commonwealth) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Department of Health's final-form regulations to provide guidelines for the treatment of sexual assault victims at Pennsylvania hospitals.

During the proposed regulation comment period, HAP convened an ad-hoc work group of member hospitals and health systems to gain an understanding of current statewide practices in the provider community around the treatment of sexual assault victims.

Because HAP remains focused on the ability of hospitals and health systems to provide safe, evidence-based, quality care for all citizens within the Commonwealth, HAP acknowledges the Department of Health's efforts to develop a regulatory package that provides a comprehensive approach to the treatment of sexual assault victims. That said, HAP remains concerned about whether the Department of Health has the statutory authority to mandate specific clinical diagnostic testing and/or treatment in regulation.

HAP contends the regulations should focus on the establishment of parameters for providing appropriate and timely care. HAP believes attending providers and health care facilities ultimately should have the ability to treat patients on a case by case basis and have the ability to choose the most appropriate course of treatment based on an individual's presenting physical examination, and in this case, information obtained around the medical history as disclosed during the sexual assault risk assessment, along with current evidence based standards of care.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on behalf of Pennsylvania hospitals and health systems. Please feel free to contact me at (717) 561-5344 or Melissa N. Speck, director, policy development at (717) 561-5356 should you have any questions regarding our comments on this final regulation package.

Sincerely,



Paula A. Bussard  
Senior Vice President  
Policy and Regulatory Services