**Brackbill, Robert**

**From:** John [elmoe@consolidated.net]
**Sent:** Monday, December 05, 2011 12:34 PM
**To:** Brackbill, Robert
**Subject:** Highmark UPMC controversy

To whom this may concern,
My name is John McDermott and I am effective by this debacle. I feel that Highmark is padding their own pocket by the purchase of West Penn Hospital in the Allegheny Health System. I feel the purchase by Highmark is a CONFLICT OF INTEREST, they say the patient comes first but as we all know if you'd had dealings with an insurance company, the only ones that come first is the INSURANCE COMPANY. I see this as a conflict because Highmark receives the premiums and now they want us to help pay for the acquistion of Western Pa. Hospital by more or less enticing us to use their facility instead of the one we choose. UPMC does have a health plan but my employer doesn't not subscribe to UPMC and thus I don't have any choice but to surrender to others whims.
It seems to me that Highmark by purchasing the Western Pennsylvania Hospital while a worthwhile and noble cause it borders on the previously mentioned conflict of interest. Highmark is telling us that if we continue to see our Doctors that are affiliated with UPMC we will have to pay more to see them. I have several specialists in the UPMC group as does my wife and also my daughter. This is coming at a very bad time for us because of the rise in my insurance premiums thru my employer along with a rise in co-pay for medication. It is difficult to live with the economy the way it is at this moment and this is just adding to alot of peoples problems, including mine. My local hospital is a part of the Allegheny Health System but due to it's lack of highly qualified specialists and 2 near death incidents I was referred and now perfer to see my Doctor's in Pittsburgh, namely UPMC. My wife and I have established a rapport with these physicians and wouldn't feel comfortable having to go thru seeing a new physician all over again, besides these Doctor's already know our medical history and a new physician may miss something our current doctor's already know.
I URGE you NOT to permit the purchase of Western Pa. Hospital because of this.

John D. McDermott
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