



## Licking Memorial Health Systems

1320 West Main Street  
Newark, OH 43055

Please take a few minutes to read this month's report on **Patient Safety**.

You'll soon discover why Licking Memorial Hospital is measurably different ... for your health!  
**Visit us at [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org)**

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## Quality Report Card Licking Memorial Health Systems

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### Health Tips - Preventing Spread of Infection

There are easy ways to protect you and your family from the spread of infection at home and in the community.

- Frequent hand washing is especially important before and after preparing food, before eating and after using the toilet.
- Immunizations will reduce your chances of contracting many diseases. Make sure to keep your recommended vaccinations, as well as your children's, up-to-date.
- Antibiotics should be taken only when necessary and prescribed by your physician. Take antibiotics exactly as directed and take the full prescription even if your symptoms go away.
- You should not go to work or school if you are vomiting, have diarrhea or are running a fever.
- Counters and kitchen surfaces need to be clean when preparing meals, and leftovers should be refrigerated promptly.
- You should keep your kitchen and bathroom clean. These two rooms can have high concentrations of infectious agents.
- Personal items such as razors, toothbrushes, combs, drinking glasses and eating utensils should not be shared.
- You should keep your pets' areas clean and take pets to a veterinarian for regular care and vaccinations.

# Patient Safety – How do we compare?

At Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), we take pride in the care we provide. To monitor the quality of that care, we track specific quality measures and compare them to benchmark measures. Then, we publish them so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your health care choices.

Check out our Quality Report Cards online at [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org).

**1** The Institute of Medicine published a report in 2000 that highlighted the stunning effects of medication errors. The report set forth a national agenda for reducing errors and improving patient safety by designing a safer health system. Medication reconciliation is the process of obtaining a complete and accurate list of each patient’s current home medications – including name, dosage, frequency and route – and comparing the physician’s admission, transfer and/or discharge orders to that list. Discrepancies are brought to the attention of the prescribing physician, and if appropriate, changes are made to the orders. Although LMH’s medication error rate is significantly better than the national benchmark, we make continuous efforts to improve the process. LMH dispensed more than 4 million doses of medication in 2008.

	LMH 2005	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	National <sup>(1)</sup>
Medication errors	0.023%	0.018%	0.013%	0.310%

**2** Protecting patients from hospital-acquired infections is a primary patient safety goal. LMH has an ongoing program to prevent and treat infections in patients. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations, LMH tracks high-risk patients, including those with an increased risk of infection due to the presence of an invasive device, such as a ventilator, catheter or central venous line. The following data reflects how many infections occurred during 1,000 patient days compared to the national benchmarks.

	LMH 2005	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	National <sup>(2)</sup>
Infection rate of ICU patients on ventilators	2.4	0	2.0	5.1
Urinary tract infection rate for ICU patients with urinary catheters	4.2	2.6	2.0	3.1
Bloodstream infection rate for ICU patients with central venous catheters	0	0	0	3.1

**3** LMH conducts a comprehensive assessment to determine if a patient is at risk for a fall at admission and during the Hospital stay. Personal alarms and bed sensors help alert staff to a potential fall.

	LMH 2005	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	Goal
Inpatient falls	0.16%	0.21%	0.25%	less than 0.30%

**4** Coumadin is a blood thinner (anticoagulant) used to help prevent and treat blood clots. The most common side effect of Coumadin is bleeding in any tissue or organ. It is important for patients to have their blood tested regularly. The blood test, called prothrombin time (PT) and International Normalized Ratio (INR), helps the physician determine how fast the blood is clotting and whether the dosage of Coumadin should change. The testing is very important and must be accomplished at recommended periodic intervals in order to keep the PT/INR result in the best and safest range for the medical condition.

	LMHP 2005	LMHP 2006	LMHP 2007	Goal
LMHP patients on Coumadin with PT/INR in last two months	95%	92%	96%	greater than 90%

**5** Metformin (trade name Glucophage) is a medication that is used in the treatment of diabetes mellitus and polycystic ovarian disease. It is an effective medication for treatment of both of these unrelated disease processes but must be used cautiously in patients with compromised renal (kidney) function. It is recommended to monitor renal function prior to initiation of therapy and at least annually thereafter. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) has adopted this recommendation as a safety measure and tracks all patients on this medication for initiation and follow-up lab testing.

	LMHP 2005	LMHP 2006	LMHP 2007	Goal
LMHP patients on Metformin with creatinine within last year	N/A	95%	95%	greater than 90%

**6** Venous thromboembolism (VTE) is a potentially life-threatening condition that results when a blood clot forms within a vein. If the clot becomes dislodged, it can travel to the lungs or brain and cause serious harm or even death. The risk for developing a clot can be high with some studies estimating that approximately 10 to 20 percent of all hospitalized patients will develop a clot. Risks are even higher for patients undergoing surgery, those who have suffered a stroke or trauma patients. Often, patients will have no symptoms that a clot has formed. By using preventive measures such as blood thinners or mechanical devices, the risk for developing a clot can be significantly reduced. One study<sup>(6)</sup> indicated that nationally, only about 34 percent of hospitalized patients at risk for developing clots receive these preventive measures. Due to the great risk of blood clots for patients, LMH has adopted a prevention protocol that applies to nearly all patients admitted to the hospital to reduce their risk.

	LMH 2006 <sup>(4)</sup>	LMH 2007	LMH Goal
Medical patients receiving VTE prophylaxis within 24 hours of arrival	76%	79%	90%
Surgery patients receiving VTE prophylaxis within 24 hours of surgery	98%	99%	90%

**7** LMHS is committed to providing and encouraging free, easily accessible flu vaccines to all employees. In order to provide safest care to our community, LMHS recognizes the importance of keeping the staff healthy.

	LMHS 2005	LMHS 2006	LMHS 2007	LMHS 2008	National <sup>(5)</sup>	LMHS Goal
LMHS employees receiving the influenza vaccine	46%	67%	56%	70%*	36%	greater than 75%

\*As of December 4, 2008, 70 percent of LMHS employees had received an influenza vaccine.

**Data Footnotes:** (1) *To Err Is Human – Building a Safer Health System*, National Academy Press, Washington D.C., 2000. (2) *CDC National Nosocomial Infections Surveillance System pooled median (ICU only) from January 1992 through June 2004*, published December 2004. Measurement is a rate per 1,000 equipment days. (3) Anderson FA, IMPROVE, Blood, 2003. (4) Partial year – August 2006 through December 2006 only. (5) *American Journal of Infection Control* 2004. Centers for Disease Control estimate.

## Patient Story – Sue Henry-Mounts



Sue Henry-Mounts

Since each of her medications has its own possible side effects, Sue Henry-Mounts of Newark knows that careful monitoring is essential to her health. As a result of multiple health concerns over the past three years, Sue now takes a total of 12 different medicines. Fortunately, she has been able to gradually decrease the amount of medications she is taking, but she is still very careful to watch for adverse interactions.

“I am taking prednisone which makes my skin paper-thin; but at the same time, I take Coumadin, which makes me bleed easily. It seems like any little bump can make me start bleeding,” she said.

In 2006, Sue had her second back surgery in a Columbus hospital. Three months later, she suffered a silent stroke, and not long after the stroke, she discovered a series of five small pea-sized bumps along her temple while she was washing her hair. Her sister had died of a brain tumor, so Sue’s immediate fear was that the bumps indicated a malignancy. She consulted with her family doctor and long-time friend, Licking Memorial Family Practice Physician Richard Simon, M.D., immediately,

and he sent her to Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) for blood work to determine if she had temporal arteritis, an inflammation of the blood vessels in the scalp and head. He prescribed prednisone for her to start that night and made an appointment the next day with Ophthalmologist James Silone Jr., D.O., since this condition often causes blindness. A biopsy at LMH ruled out cancer, but confirmed that she had temporal arteritis.

Sue began visiting the Anticoagulation Clinic at LMH weekly for Coumadin therapy treatments to thin her blood. “I was so lucky that Dr. Simon made the correct diagnosis,” Sue said. “Temporal arteritis is rather rare, and Dr. Simon and General Surgeon Larry Pasley, M.D., who did the biopsy, both said this was only the second case they had each seen in 30 years.” Sue also began taking chemotherapy to treat the benign condition. The LMH Anticoagulation Clinic staff made sure Sue knew about any possible side effects from the medications and even cautioned her about dietary risks.

In 2007, Vascular Surgeon Howard Reeves, D.O., performed two surgeries to prepare Sue for vascular surgery on her leg to heal a staph infection that had lasted for several months. She also required a hysterectomy later

that year. With each procedure, LMH staff members were careful to review her current list of medications to make sure the surgeries would be performed safely without any adverse drug interactions.

Even with her frequent hospital visits over the past three years, Sue hangs on to her positive attitude. “I have to,” she insisted. “We have a good hospital here – it is so wonderful. The people in the Anticoagulation Clinic are great! Jason Sturgeon and all the other pharmacists are my good friends now, and I look forward to going there – almost!” she joked.

At 76 years of age, Sue still finds quality time for her husband of 17 years, Lewis (Lew) Mounts, her four children and his three children, their grandchildren and a myriad of community activities. Sue and Lew enjoy traveling, hiking, golf, tennis, bowling and playing bridge and euchre several times a month. Knowing how important exercise is, Sue and Lew exercise regularly

at the Advantage Club. She loves to cook, and to many friends she is known as “the Bread Lady.”

She has been a strong supporter of LMH for more than five decades. In the 1950s, she was a volunteer with the TWIGS (Togetherness, Willingness, Imagination, Giving and Sharing) group that operated a snack bar in the former Newark Hospital on Everett Avenue. Today, she still helps raise funds for LMH through her participation with TWIGS 6 that operates the TWIGS Thrift Shop in Granville and TWIGS 14 that conducts the annual Holiday Tour of Homes. She is a member of the LMH Cornerstone Club and the 20th Century Club. She also volunteers with Hospice of Central Ohio and the American Cancer Society, and she continues to work as a real estate agent at Pinkerton Real Estate.

## LMH Changes Wrist Band Colors for Patient Safety

In an effort to maximize patient safety, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) is following recommendations by the Ohio Patient Safety Institute (OPSI) for all Ohio hospitals to standardize color-coded ID wrist bands for patients. Prior to the standardization, a survey of Ohio’s hospitals showed that many different colors of wrist bands were being used for very important alerts to clinical staff. Across the state, six different colors could indicate patients who are at risk for falls; eight different colors could indicate patients who may receive blood products; nine different colors could indicate patient who have allergies and 12 different colors were being used to identify patients who had signed a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order. The American Hospital Association has also called for hospitals across the entire United States to adopt standardized color coding to prevent errors.

“The significance of the wrist band colors is part of LMH’s training for every new employee,” stated Vice President of Medical Affairs Craig Cairns, M.D., M.P.H. “LMH has never had a case where a patient was harmed by confusion over a patient’s wrist band; however, we believe the OPSI’s recommendations are very sensible.



Joining a statewide initiative to improve patient safety, Licking Memorial Hospital is changing the colors of patient wrist bands used to alert staff about various conditions.

They will reduce the risk of human error when new staff members come to LMH or work at more than one facility. We welcome the proactive opportunity to keep our patients as safe as possible by adapting to the new guidelines. We encourage other health care facilities to join us in this effort to make continuous improvements in patient safety.”

The wrist band changes at LMH take effect in January 2009. Under the new policy, a white wrist band is used for the patient’s

identification information, a red wrist band indicates the patient has allergies, a yellow wrist band indicates the patient is at risk for falling, a green wrist band will indicate patient identifications for administration of blood products, and a purple band will indicate the patient has a completed DNR form on file.

The white patient identification wrist band has been used at LMH for many years. It includes bar coded information that allows staff members to access the bedside medication verification system to check that each patient receives the right medication in the right dosage at the right time.