



## Licking Memorial Health Systems

1320 West Main Street  
Newark, OH 43055

Please take a few minutes to read this month's report on **Behavioral Health Care**.

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

The Quality Report Card is a publication of the LMHS Public Relations Department. Please contact the Public Relations Department at (740) 348-1572 to receive future mailings.

The articles contained in this publication should not be considered specific medical advice as each individual circumstance is different. Should you need medical advice, consult your physician. Entire publication copyrighted 2009 Licking Memorial Health Systems. All rights reserved.



# Quality Report Card

## Licking Memorial Health Systems

(740) 348-4000 (phone) • [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org)



Volume 10, Issue 6

June 2009

### Health Tips - How Much Is "Too Much"?

Drinking becomes "too much" when it causes or elevates the risk for alcohol-related problems or complicates the management of other health problems. According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, men who drink five or more drinks in a single occasion (or 15 or more per week) and women who drink four or more in a single occasion (or eight or more per week) are at increased risk for alcohol-related problems. Drinking at even lower levels may also be problematic depending on many factors such as age, coexisting conditions, and use of medication.

#### Have you ever:

- Felt the need to cut down on your drinking?
- Felt annoyed by criticism of your drinking?
- Had guilty feelings about drinking?
- Taken a morning "eye opener"?

Any two "yes" answers to the above questions indicate an elevated risk of problem drinking and should be evaluated by a qualified health care practitioner. For a more complete assessment, contact your primary care physician or call Shepherd Hill at (740) 348-4877 or (800) 223-6410, ext. 4877.

# Behavioral Health Care – How do we compare?

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

At Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH), 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.

**1** Behavioral health is a broad term that refers to psychiatric and/or chemical dependency illnesses. Inpatient hospitalization for either condition is often necessary for effective intervention. Licking Memorial Hospital provides a wide range of services for people with behavioral health illnesses at its Shepherd Hill facility. One goal is to transition patients into outpatient settings where they can continue treatment, decreasing the need for readmission.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	Goal
Psychiatric readmissions	0.3%	1.7%	0.5%	less than 5.6%

**2** Chemical dependency, also called addiction, is treated as a chronic, progressive and potentially fatal disease. Although Shepherd Hill staff members work with patients to develop individual treatment goals that will meet the patients' needs, the Shepherd Hill program is built around four consistent treatment goals: education, self-diagnosis, self-responsibility and self-treatment. Recovery is dependent upon completion of all goals, therefore, Shepherd Hill monitors when treatment is incomplete and why. When patients leave Shepherd Hill, staff members encourage continuity of care by referring them to other health care professionals as needed.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	Goal
People with complete treatment	61%	70%	79%	greater than 75%

**3** Outcome studies are conducted to monitor and measure the success of chemical dependence treatment. Our data shows how patients are doing up to two years after completing the program. Information regarding abstinence one year after completing the program is self-reported by patients.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	Goal
Patients remaining abstinent	84%	83%	83%	greater than 85%
Improvement in quality of relationships	95%	99%	91%	greater than 85%
Improvement in overall physical and mental health	93%	98%	93%	greater than 85%
Improvement in overall quality of life	91%	97%	92%	greater than 85%

**4** Detoxification – the safe, medically supervised elimination of addictive substances from the body – is the most intensive care offered for chemical dependency patients. Acute withdrawal symptoms are managed by the appropriate medications for each patient's situation. The length of stay for detoxification depends upon the drug of choice and the severity of the withdrawal.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	Goal
Average length of stay – alcohol treatment	2.6	2.6	2.4	less than 3 days
Average length of stay – opiate treatment	2.7	2.8	2.7	less than 4 days
Average length of stay – tranquilizer treatment	2.2	3.2	2.8	less than 5 days

**5** Family participation is an important component in patients' recovery. For continuity of care, a licensed professional clinical counselor or a social worker will initiate contact with family members of Shepherd Hill psychiatric inpatients and encourage them to participate in a family meeting during the period of inpatient treatment.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	Goal
Attempted to contact family within 24 hours for initial social work meeting	90%	94%	99%	greater than 95%
Social work/family meeting during patient stay	52%	74%	99%	greater than 95%

# Patient Story – James

A teenage boy's simple remark of "duh!" changed the life of a central Ohio man who was falling into the depths of alcoholism. James\* (not his real name) is a 45-year-old practicing physician living in Ohio with his wife, 21-year-old son and 20-year-old daughter. Although James is a dedicated family man, his entire family suffered the effects of each alcoholic beverage that he consumed.



The Shepherd Hill facility at Licking Memorial Hospital provides treatment for those who are suffering from alcohol or chemical addiction.

James first experimented with alcohol in high school, drinking small amounts of beer as a teenager. Later, during college and medical school, he would relax with a couple of beers after studying. Through the ensuing years, as he began his medical practice, married and became a father, this social pastime became something more insidious.

"I cannot tell you when I crossed the line between social drinking and alcoholism," James pondered. "I knew I drank too much at times, and wondered if it got worse after my father's or uncle's death. Either way, I never felt that I drank more than my colleagues."

Those who knew James intimately had a different perspective. In the late 1990s, James was asked to leave a former medical position, and was forced to relocate his family to Ohio where he found new employment. His family often complained that he was becoming detached. "I certainly loved my family and was involved in their lives and activities, but as my drinking problem progressed, I became less involved and more isolated. Life also deteriorated at home. My daughter became withdrawn, and my son empathized with my wife's concerns. I blamed her for my condition. I often thought, 'If she would stop complaining, I would not drink so much.' It was not a healthy family relationship. Understandably, my wife was beside herself because she did not know what to do."

"Things were pretty dark then, and I could not put my finger on the problem," James continued. At the same time, things were not going well at his new job. In 2002, a small group of fellow physicians within the practice confronted James with an intervention, a meeting designed to confront a problem and convince an individual to seek help. "They had noticed the smell of alcohol on my breath early in the morning. I was not drinking in the morning, but I drank so much the night before that I was still under the influence." The group asked him to visit the Shepherd Hill facility at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) for evaluation and treatment.

"My first impulse was to run," James remembered. "But I called a family meeting. I still was not convinced I

had a problem that needed help, but I asked my family what they thought I should do. My teenage son just said, 'Duh! Go in for treatment.' To him, it was that obvious."

Still doubtful that he had a real problem, but wanting to save his family and working relationships, James turned to Shepherd Hill at LMH. He checked into treatment and stayed for a three-month chemical dependency program. "The first couple of months were the most painful times in

my life," he said. "It took a while to convince me that I was not in control. Even as a physician, I considered alcoholism to be a lack of willpower. During sessions with my counselor, J R Abrahamsen, I came to realize that alcoholism is a medical disease. I needed medical treatment, just the same as with other medical conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease."

"Any chemical dependency, including alcoholism, causes changes in brain chemistry," explained Shepherd Hill counselor J R Abrahamsen, LICDC, NCAC I, ICCS. "Once James understood that we needed to treat the disease medically, he was able to let go of his inner struggle, thinking he only needed to summon up sufficient willpower to quit drinking. He was able to concentrate on healing, instead of dealing with guilt and shame. This was also the time to begin the healing process for the entire family."

To achieve optimum results, the chemical dependency program at Shepherd Hill treats addiction as a family illness. Family members are encouraged to participate in the Family Education Program. James' wife and children attended weekly meetings, and their family dynamics began to improve. "Over time, I regained my children's trust and respect, and I am very close with them now. My relationship with my wife is now as good as it has ever been."

After James' residential treatment at Shepherd Hill, his entire family attended Alcoholics Anonymous for a length of time. James also continued regular visits to the Shepherd Hill Aftercare and Caduceus Group for two years. Aftercare is a weekly facilitated group that provides follow-up support for one year after treatment, and Caduceus Group is an additional aftercare group designed specifically for health care professionals who have completed treatment of their addictive disease.

James has now been sober for more than six years. He no longer craves alcoholic beverages, and knows that he needs to continue to abstain from the substance

altogether. “I tell the people I sponsor, ‘Basically, we all start out as cucumbers, and some of us become pickles. But, once you become a pickle, you can never go back to being a cucumber again,’” he said.

James has resumed an active lifestyle. He volunteers with charity associations, plays tennis and works around the house. In addition, he sponsors several recovering alcoholics, providing advice, friendship and support. He also has invaluable advice for friends who ask him about alcoholism. “There is no set level of drinking that determines if a person is an alcoholic or not – it is a very individual thing. I also tell them that if drinking seems to be causing problems, it probably is a problem.”

The staff at Shepherd Hill can help determine if the use of alcohol or any other chemical substance has become an addiction. Treatment plans for adults are available through residential or outpatient programs. For more information, call Shepherd Hill at (740) 348-4870 or

toll-free at (800) 223-6410. Information is also available online at [www.shepherdhill.net](http://www.shepherdhill.net).

*\*We have used the name “James” to safeguard the patient’s confidentiality, however all the other details of his case are factual. The patient has agreed to share his story in the hope that the information may inspire others with chemical addiction to seek help.*

## Services Offered at Shepherd Hill

The Behavioral Health Department of Licking Memorial Hospital, also known as Shepherd Hill, specializes in providing psychiatric and chemical dependency treatment to adults. Services offered are:

**Inpatient psychiatric treatment and inpatient detoxification** – Shepherd Hill provides an acute care inpatient unit with crisis intervention to patients with psychiatric illness. It has an emphasis on stabilizing and strengthening the individual’s coping skills. The inpatient unit also provides intensive medically managed detoxification services to safely withdraw a patient from addictive drugs and/or alcohol.

**Outpatient chemical dependency** – Alcoholism and drug addiction are treatable disorders. Through treatment tailored to individual needs, patients can learn to control their conditions and live healthy, productive lives. Shepherd Hill offers three treatment programs:

- Residential 28-day program where patients live on the Shepherd Hill campus while receiving intensive treatment services
- Extended residential treatment (used when treatment beyond primary residential treatment is recommended)
- Intensive outpatient program with patients living at home and attending treatment sessions during the day

**Outpatient psychiatric services** – Diagnostic services, medication management and therapy are provided by a psychiatrist in an office setting by appointment. Additionally, individual counseling is provided by a licensed independent social worker. Offices are located both in Newark and at One Healthy Place in Pataskala.

Ask-the-Doc is offered at Shepherd Hill every Saturday morning from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. for anyone interested in an open forum with a chemical dependency physician. For more information on services offered at Shepherd Hill, please visit [www.ShepherdHill.net](http://www.ShepherdHill.net) or the Behavioral Health Services on the Licking Memorial Web site: [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org).