



**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!

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*1998, 1999, 2000,  
2001, 2002, 2003, 2005*



# Community Report Card

## Licking Memorial Health Systems

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Volume 8, Number 1

January 2007

## Patient Safety ... A Community Report on Patient Safety

### Health Tips

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Department of Health and Human Services, offers these tips for when you are talking with your physician:

- Don't wait to be asked questions. Provide your doctor with pertinent personal information, even if it makes you uncomfortable.
- Take notes on what your doctor tells you. Ask for written instructions.
- Follow up. Call your doctor's office if you have questions or if your symptoms change. If you have been told to see a specialist, make an appointment.

# Patient Safety – How Do We Compare?

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** 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 1 million doses of medication in 2006.

	LMH 2004	LMH 2005	LMH 1/06-9/06	National <sup>(1)</sup>
% Medication errors	0.016%	0.023%	0.020%	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 Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations, LMH tracks high-risk patients, including those with an increased exposure to infection due to the presence of an invasive device, such as a ventilator, catheter or central venous line.

	LMH 2004	LMH 2005	LMH 1/06-9/06	National <sup>(2)</sup>
Infection rate for pneumonia in ICU patients on ventilators	2.5	2.4	0	5.1
Urinary tract infection rate for ICU patients with urinary catheters	5.5	4.2	1.2	3.1
Bloodstream infection rate for ICU patients with central venous catheters	3.3	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 2004	LMH 2005	LMH 1/06-9/06	Goal
% of Inpatient Falls per 100 patient days	0.24%	0.16%	0.22%	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 Protime (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 10/06	Goal
% LMHP patients on Coumadin with PT/INR in last two months	95%	99%	90-100%

**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 have adopted this recommendation as a safety measure and track all patients on this medication for initiation and follow-up lab testing.

	LMHP 2005	LMHP 10/06	Goal
% LMHP patients on Metformin with creatine within last year	N/A	95%	90-100%

## 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.

# Patient Feature: Quality Care at Licking Memorial



Cleona Wolfe

Cleona Wolfe had just come through knee replacement surgery at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) when her physicians discovered another ailment that required attention. Cleona had atrial fibrillation. “I had noticed that my heart seemed to flutter, but I just dismissed the feeling,” said Cleona. Atrial fibrillation is a heart rhythm disorder (arrhythmia).

It usually involves a rapid heart rate, in which the upper heart chambers (atria) are stimulated to contract in a very disorganized and abnormal manner. “The top chambers of the heart seem to quiver,” said Mark Mitchell, M.D., an Internal Medicine physician with Licking Memorial Health Professionals and Cleona’s physician.

“I am just so grateful that they found this when I was in the Hospital. Who knows what could have happened ...” said Cleona. She now takes Coumadin, a blood thinning medication, to reduce the risk of a thromboembolic event such as a stroke. Licking Memorial Health Professionals are tracking and monitoring this medication because of possible serious risks associated with this type of treatment. Some selected patients with atrial fibrillation, rapid heart rates, and intolerance to medication may require a catheter procedure on the atria called radiofrequency ablation. “Careful monitoring of medications such as Coumadin is important because patient safety is our

number one concern,” said Debbie Young, Vice President of Patient Care at Licking Memorial Hospital. Licking Memorial has implemented several measures for patient safety. Verifying patient name and birth date, surgical site verification, medication reconciliation and fall risk assessments are just a few ways that the Hospital protects the patients.

Cleona now receives follow-up treatment with Dr. Mitchell’s office every three months. She also visits the Anticoagulation Clinic at LMH every 10 to 14 days to monitor and make any adjustments to her Coumadin dosage. The Anticoagulation Clinic provided Cleona with important information about her medication, diet, and controlling other conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart failure. “Atrial fibrillation is usually controllable with treatment; however, it can become a chronic condition. Without treatment, the pulse can become too rapid or too slow, which may reduce the amount of blood the heart can pump and lead to fainting, emboli to the brain (stroke) or elsewhere,” said Dr. Mitchell.

Overall, Cleona has been very impressed with all of her care at Licking Memorial. “The nurses and doctors for my surgery, Dr. Mitchell and his staff, and the staff at the clinic have all been wonderful,” said Cleona. “I just can’t thank everyone enough for all that they have done for me.”

## Licking Memorial Improves Patient Care as Part of National Campaign to Save 100,000 Lives

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) is proud that after 18 months of participation in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement’s landmark 100,000 Lives Campaign, they dramatically improved how patients are cared for when they’re most at risk for infection, complications and adverse outcomes. Initially launched in January 2005, the 100,000 Lives Campaign was the first-ever national campaign to promote saving a specified number of lives in hospitals by certain dates through the implementation of proven, evidence-based practices and procedures. The campaign officially ended June 14, 2006; hospitals participating in the campaign have saved an estimated 122,300 lives.

LMH has implemented the following practices:

- Activate a Rapid Response Team at



Licking Memorial participated in the 100,000 Lives campaign, which was a national campaign aimed at improving patient safety in hospitals nationwide.

the first sign that a patient’s condition is worsening and may lead to a more serious medical emergency.

- Prevent patients from dying of heart attacks by delivering evidence-based care, including appropriate administration of aspirin to prevent blood clots and Beta blockers to prevent further heart attacks.
- Prevent medication errors by ensuring that accurate and continually updated lists of patients’ medications are referenced during their hospital stay, particularly at transition points.
- Prevent patients who are receiving medicines and fluids through central lines from developing infections by

**Licking Memorial Improves Patient Care as Part of National Campaign to Save 100,000 Lives (continued on next page)**

## Licking Memorial Improves Patient Care as Part of National Campaign to Save 100,000 Lives (continued from previous page)

following five steps, including proper hand washing and cleaning the patient's skin with chlorhexidine (a type of soap).

- Prevent patients undergoing surgery from developing infections by following a series of steps, including the timely administration of antibiotics.
- Prevent patients on ventilators from developing pneumonia by following four steps, including raising the head of the patient's bed between 30 and 40 degrees.

The accomplishments of the 100,000 Lives Campaign nationally include the enrollment of more than 3,000 hospitals – comprising an estimated 85 percent of the acute care hospital beds in the country – and the creation of a national infrastructure of campaign field offices that offer resources and support to participating hospitals throughout the United States. The International Health Institute listed the following successes of the campaign:

- The institutionalization of these standards will continue to save lives and improve health care.
- More than 20 hospitals have reported that they have gone a year without a case of ventilator-associated pneumonia, demonstrating that complications like this can be avoided and are not inevitable.
- More than 50 health care organizations (hospital associations, quality improvement organizations, etc.) that served as “nodes” for the campaign are continuing to coordinate technical assistance, and promote new initiatives to improve patient safety and care.
- More than 90 national partners (including American Medical Association, American Hospital Association, Center for Disease Control and Prevention) continue to be actively involved in supporting the initiatives of the campaign.
- Nearly 100 hospitals that demonstrated success with their initiatives are acting as “mentor hospitals” sharing their knowledge and experience with other hospitals.
- Hospitals have begun to cooperate at unprecedented levels without regulatory mandates or financial incentives.

Licking Memorial's performance is summarized in the Report Card statistics. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement utilizes a bundle monitoring technique; this is an all-or-none methodology that requires all elements of each initiative to be satisfied on each patient to receive any credit for the case. “Analyzing numbers is interesting, but it is important to realize that by complying with these initiatives, we actually save lives,” said Craig Cairns, M.D., M.P.H., Licking Memorial Health Systems Vice President of Medical Affairs. “Throughout the campaign, it has been reiterated that although 100,000 deaths is a statistic, one death is a tragedy and that is why we believe in verifying our patients' safety.”