



# Licking Memorial Health Systems

March, 2000 • Vol. 1, No. 2

# Taking Quality To Heart... a community report on patient care quality

At Licking Memorial Hospital, we take pride in the care we provide. And we want you to know why. Each month we're producing a community report card. In this report, we'll give you a more in depth look at our services, share care experiences and health advice, and show you how our quality indicators compare to industry standards.

You'll soon discover why Licking Memorial Hospital has made the nation's 100 Top Hospitals list for two consecutive years.

## Cancer Care How do we compare?

### Standards of Care

There are 10 standards of care established by the Commission on Cancer (COC) of the American College of Surgeons. The Commission is recognized by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), the American Cancer Society and numerous other healthcare organizations as the best source for standards on cancer diagnosis and treatment. The standards are:

**1. Specific resources for state-of-the-art diagnosis and treatment of cancer are available on-site or through referral. The healthcare organization is accredited by a recognized authority.**

LMHS is surveyed every three years by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and has always received maximum accreditation. The hospital offers a full spectrum of cancer services, including chemotherapy and surgery. Radiation therapy also is available through Newark Radiation Oncology.

**2. A multidisciplinary cancer committee plans, initiates and assesses all cancer-related activities. Membership includes physicians and other health professionals from 11 different specialty areas. The committee meets at least four times a year.**

LMHS has a 31-member Comprehensive Cancer Care Committee, with representation from all 11 specialties recommended by the Commission On Cancer (COC). This committee meets six times a year to provide program oversight.

**3. Multidisciplinary, patient-oriented treatment planning conferences are held monthly. 51% of the patient cases discussed are "prospective," meaning the case is reviewed when patient care can still be influenced.**

LMHS exceeds this standard by holding care conferences twice a month. 95% of the cases discussed are prospective.

**4. The complex needs of cancer patients and their families require specialized cancer services. The organization has a designated inpatient area, specially trained nurses and a full range of cancer care services available.**

LMHS has a dedicated oncology unit with both inpatient rooms and outpatient chemotherapy services. The unit is staffed with experienced oncology nurses who are certified chemotherapy providers. LMHS offers all services recommended by the COC.

**5. Cancer patients have access to rehabilitative, supportive and continuing care services. The institution partners with the American Cancer Society and other agencies as necessary.**

LMHS offers all recommended therapies as well as in-home case management for cancer patients. Support services include a cancer support group and a new Cancer Resource Center, which is certified by the American Cancer Society. The hospital also works cooperatively with Hospice of Central Ohio.

**6. The institution has a minimum of 2% of its newly diagnosed and/or treated cancer patients on clinical research protocols. (4% is considered desirable and 6% is commendable.)**

LMHS participates in clinical research trials through the Columbus Community Clinical Oncology Program (CCOP),

which provides access to national research protocols. In 1999, 6.1% of the 380 newly diagnosed and/or treated patients at LMHS were placed on clinical research protocols. LMHS patients are currently participating in 23 different clinical trials.<sup>1</sup>

**7. The quality of cancer patient care is measured, evaluated and improved. The cancer committee is responsible for establishing quality priorities and providing quality monitoring.**

The LMHS Cancer Committee compares local cancer data to national statistics. The committee will monitor over 20 physician-specific and process-related quality indicators in the year 2000. Priorities in 2000 include the cancer staging process and a lung cancer study.

**8. A cancer registry is maintained on cancer patients either diagnosed or treated at the institution. It is preferably overseen by a Certified Tumor Registrar (CTR).**

LMHS has reported cancer incidence to the state registry since 1992. In 1999, the hospital hired one of only 1500 Certified Tumor Registrars in the U.S. LMHS also implemented an electronic registry service, which enables up to 500 pieces of information to be stored on an individual cancer patient. Information from the registry will be reported to the community once a year.

**9. Public education programs are offered to the community.**

LMHS offers a regular schedule of education programs and screenings. As part of Cancer Awareness Month in April, LMHS is sponsoring an education series called Medical Mondays. These free programs will feature a physician speaker and include an optional screening. Call 348-4YOU to register. All programs begin at 7 p.m. at Licking Memorial Hospital.

- April 3 .....Skin Cancer
- April 10 .....Breast Cancer
- April 17 .....Colorectal Cancer
- April 24 .....Prostate Cancer

**10. Each member of the cancer team has access to at least one educational opportunity per year.**

100% of the cancer team participates in annual education. Team member education is provided at each of the 24 LMH Care Conferences. Cancer nurses also maintain clinical certification in chemotherapy administration. Cancer team members attend state and national professional conferences in addition to LMH-sponsored programs.

Licking Memorial Health Systems meets or exceeds all 10 standards of the Commission on Cancer. The COC will be conducting an on-site review of the LMH cancer program in September. We will report the results of this peer review in a Community Report Card this fall.

<sup>1</sup>All research projects are approved by the Food and Drug Administration and the National Cancer Institute.

### SUCCESS STORY

There is a saying that to truly understand another, you must walk a mile in their shoes. Patient Care Technician Martha Poulton understands this concept all too well.

Martha was diagnosed with breast cancer in February of 1998. She was surprised by the diagnosis because there wasn't any breast cancer in her family, and she had a normal mammogram just 11 months before. "It just shows the importance of breast self-exams," Martha said.

Through surgery and chemotherapy, Martha has overcome her cancer. However, it was an experience she didn't want to forget. Martha decided to put her new insights to good use. After working 18 years in intensive care, she approached the oncology unit about going to work there.

"When I had my cancer, I really relied on my family and co-workers. I know how important this support is and I wanted to help others," she explained.

Now Martha spends her days preparing patients for chemotherapy treatment. Her preparation, however, includes more than technical work. "I always was compassionate with people, but I think I am even more compassionate now."

Martha participated in a clinical research protocol as a part of her care. 6.1% of LMHS cancer patients participate in clinical research trials.

**The American Cancer Society recommends women practice the Triple Touch approach to breast health:**

- Annual physician check-ups
- Monthly breast self-exams
- Regular mammograms

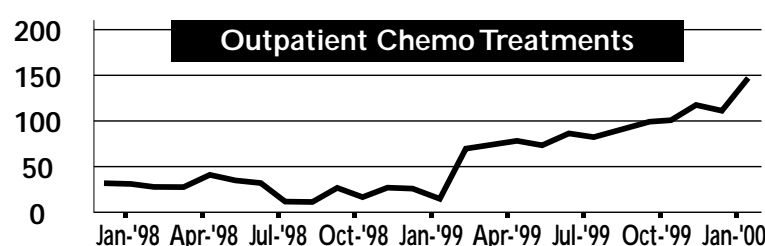


LMHS oncologist Dr. Jacqueline Jones with patient Martha Poulton.

"It just shows the importance of breast self-exams."

### Fast Facts

- LMH's smoking cessation program has a 44% long-term success rate. The American Lung Association's long-term success rate is 23%. Long-term success is defined as at least one year living smoke-free (self-reported).
- LMHS has a new board-certified oncologist on the medical staff. Patrick Elwood, M.D., comes from the National Cancer Institute in Maryland where he worked in cancer research. He will join Jacqueline Jones, M.D.
- A five-point check system at LMHS has resulted in zero medication errors for chemotherapy in 1998 and 1999. The national rate for medication errors is 1%, reports the Institute for Safe Medication Practices.
- LMH has a state-of-the-art mammography suite accredited by the American College of Radiology.



While outpatient chemotherapy visits have climbed recently, zero medication errors have occurred.

If you need more information on cancer, call or visit our new Cancer Resource Center in room 425 of Licking Memorial Hospital. Our phone number is 348-4456