

Behavioral Health Care – 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 healthcare choices.

Check out our Quality Report Cards online at www.LMHealth.org.

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. LMH 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 2012	LMH 2013	LMH 2014	Goal
Psychiatric readmissions within 31 days	0.9%	3.0%	3.4%	less than 5.6%

2 Outcome studies are conducted to monitor and measure the success of chemical dependence treatment. Our data show 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 2012	LMH 2013	LMH 2014	Goal
Patients remaining abstinent	89%	87%	95%	greater than 85%
Improvement in quality of relationships	93%	92%	96%	greater than 85%
Improvement in overall physical and mental health	94%	95%	98%	greater than 85%
Improvement in overall quality of life	91%	93%	98%	greater than 85%

3 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 2012	LMH 2013	LMH 2014	Goal
Average length of stay – alcohol treatment	2.5 days	2.4 days	2.5 days	less than 3 days
Average length of stay – opiate treatment	2.5 days	2.5 days	2.6 days	less than 4 days
Average length of stay – tranquilizer (benzodiazepines) treatment	2.4 days	3.4 days	2.9 days	less than 5 days

4 Education is considered an essential component of providing complete behavioral health care. A thorough understanding of the diagnosis, the purpose of medications, side effects to medications and the expected response to treatment leads to decreased relapse and readmission rates and increased long-term compliance with medication on an outpatient basis.

	LMH 2012	LMH 2013	LMH 2014	Goal
Diagnosis/disease education provided for patients and/or family	99%	99%	99%	greater than 97%
Medication education provided for patients and/or family	99%	98%	99%	greater than 97%

5 Family participation is an important component in patients’ recovery. For continuity of care, a licensed professional clinical counselor or 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 2012	LMH 2013	LMH 2014	Goal
Social work/family meeting during patient stay	84%	91%	78%	greater than 95%

6 Valproic acid and lithium are two common medications used to treat multiple behavioral health diagnoses. These medications can facilitate control of symptoms and assist in recovery, but both have potentially dangerous side effects. Licking Memorial Behavioral Health professionals monitor their patients’ blood at specified intervals to ensure therapeutic levels of the medications and to observe for toxicity or other negative effects on vital organs.

	LMHP 2012	LMHP 2013	LMHP 2014	Goal
Appropriate testing complete for patients taking lithium (such as Lithobid)	94%	95%	92%	greater than 90%
Appropriate testing complete for patients taking valproic acid (such as Depakote)	95%	95%	94%	greater than 90%

Shepherd Hill Offers Help to Those Suffering from Addiction

Substance abuse and addiction are not limited by geography, occupation or status. Both affect people of all ages and races, and the impact is far-reaching. Without treatment, addiction can cause other diseases to form in the body, damage to the brain, behavioral issues, and may lead to death.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), approximately 85,000 people die annually due to alcohol abuse, 20,000 due to illicit drug abuse, and 20,000 due to prescription drug abuse. In Ohio, unintentional drug poisoning became the leading cause of injury death in 2007, according to the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), surpassing motor vehicle crashes for the first time on record. This pattern has continued through 2012.

The death rate in Ohio, from 2000 to 2012, due to unintentional drug poisonings increased 366 percent. There were 411 fatal unintentional drug overdoses in 2000 which increased to 1,914 annual deaths in 2012. The ODH reports that approximately five people die each day on average due to drug overdose in Ohio.

“Addiction is a growing problem in our community,” said Richard Whitney, M.D., Medical Director of Licking Memorial Hospital’s Shepherd Hill. “There is a tremendous need to expand awareness by educating people on the dangers of thinking chemical dependency can be ignored or that someone who is suffering from this affliction should have the willpower to stop at any time. Addiction is a disease – one that requires and responds to medical treatment.”

Patient Experience at Shepherd Hill

Adam knew he had a problem at an early age – he was only 9 or 10 years old when he began experimenting with drugs and alcohol. Being around older brothers and cousins allowed him access to illegal substances. “My parents and my teachers didn’t know, but I was drinking with older family members all the time and was high at school,” said Adam. He remembers bringing up the issue to his family, mentioning he thought he had a problem, but they minimized it. His family’s doubt made Adam question whether he did have a problem.

“My addiction accelerated very fast,” said Adam. “By the time I was 19, I was into hardcore drugs – Acid, Coke,



Richard Whitney, M.D. (left), and W. Andrew Highberger, M.D. (right), along with other Shepherd Hill staff members, teach patients the tools to help form a solid foundation for a life of recovery.

Crystal Meth. At the time, it didn’t seem like it was fast, but within 9 or 10 years, I went from drinking an innocent sip of alcohol to using substances almost every day.”

It was a progression that left Adam with a life that seemed to be unravelling. He checked himself into a treatment center in Columbus when he was 18 years old, but decided to leave after only two days. Adam had a DUI on his driving record, could not keep a job, and was struggling in all his relationships.

Adam and his wife had a daughter in 2000, and he continued trying to keep his life in order. But, as Adam continued to abuse substances, his life fell apart instead. “I got another DUI, and I lost my job,” said Adam. “I went through a divorce. I was a slave to the drugs, and the resulting high. I wanted help, I wanted to get treatment, I wanted to be normal – but I was scared. A lot of fear and anxiety stopped me from seeking help sooner.” Even after Adam’s divorce, his daughter was frequently in his care. When he used

drugs, he would take her to a babysitter.

Adam checked into the detox program at Shepherd Hill for the first time when he was 30 years old. “I didn’t do the work, put in the effort, or take the time to understand the disease,” said Adam. “And so, it didn’t work, and I ended up right back where I started.” However, two years later, he checked back into the detox program again – this time with a different result.

Adam met with Chemical Dependency Nurse Cindy Barbour, R.N., who challenged him by asking, “What is your plan?” This caused Adam to confront his disease. “She told me, ‘Rehab is YOU. It’s your plan, it’s your work, and it’s your life.’”

Adam explained, “At that point I was doing heroin daily. I couldn’t function, I wasn’t even getting high anymore. I was sick every day. It was like a nightmare you can’t wake up from. I told Cindy I was ready to quit. I ended up on the Suboxone® program, which really saved my life.” Cindy made sure Adam knew if he wanted to start the medication, he needed a full treatment plan. In 2010, Adam went through three days of detoxification, and then enrolled in the intensive outpatient program followed by the aftercare program.

The total process took Adam about 18 months to complete. “Shepherd Hill taught me how to live life,” said Adam. Before this program, I was unreliable, didn’t care about being on time, and called off work whenever I felt like it. Now I pride myself on being dependable. I’m there for my daughter and I have not used a sick day in three years. I learned life skills at Shepherd Hill that I had never known before.”



He is extremely proud of becoming more involved in the community by participating in volunteer and service work, and is a certified umpire and football referee. Adam has a good relationship with his daughter now, taking her to softball practice and helping her play.

The advice Adam gives others who suffer from addiction is this: “I struggled with addiction for 20 years. No two stories are the same, so my lowest point is not the same as another’s. But, I would encourage

For Adam, the hardest part of his experience is sharing. It is emotional for him when he considers missed opportunities. “When I look back at how selfish I was, and the years I’ll never get back with my daughter, it’s heartbreaking,” Adam said. “Life is tough, but I can see the difference in myself now. I’m involved – including a leadership position in my church – and I actually got asked to do that. That was a really big deal to me. I have a new job, and was promoted within six months to a manager position. Shepherd Hill changed my life completely.”

Adam is still aware that one slip could ruin the life he has worked so hard for, so he talks to his AA sponsor every day, shares his experiences whenever he can, and lives every day as if it were his last. “My number one goal, and proudest accomplishment every day is staying sober.” March 3, 2015 marked five years of continuous sobriety for Adam.

those with addiction to ask questions and seek out the answers as soon as possible.”

Providing Treatment and Hope

If you believe you may be suffering from drug or alcohol addiction, contact Shepherd Hill – a nationally accredited treatment center. Care is individualized and effective through a process that matches treatment programs with the severity of illness. Shepherd Hill continues to strive for new ways to provide treatment and hope for individuals suffering from addiction.

At Shepherd Hill, treatment is mental, physical and spiritual. Patients partake in individual and group therapy, therapeutic activities, daily lectures and continued care planning. With this structure, each individual who comes to Shepherd Hill for treatment is given the tools to help form a solid foundation for a life of recovery. For more information, please call (800) 223-6410, or visit www.ShepherdHill.net.



Shepherd Hill provides healing, refuge and treatment for those suffering from addiction.



Licking Memorial Health Systems

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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.

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Health Tips – Possible Signs of Heroin Use

Heroin, an illegal narcotic that is highly addictive, is typically sold in two forms: as a white to light brown powder, or in dark “black tar” form that can be soft and sticky like roofing tar or hard like a rock. Signs of heroin use are not always obvious, and users may offer excuses to explain unusual behavior. Listed below are possible signs that an individual may be using heroin:

Physical Signs

- Droopy eyes, constricted pupils, dark circles around eyes
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Needle marks on arms or legs
- Flushed skin
- Runny nose
- Frequent nosebleeds
- Sores around nose or mouth
- Persistent hacking cough
- Slow breathing
- Constipation
- Lack of appetite, sudden weight loss

Unusual Behaviors

- Falling asleep at odd times – even during conversations
- Seeming disoriented or dazed
- Scratching a lot
- Speaking with a slow, slurred pattern
- Wearing long sleeves to cover needle marks

Other Possible Signs of Heroin Use

- Possession of unusual items, such as aluminum foil, syringes, spoons with burn marks, small plastic bags, small glass pipes or rubber tubing
- Powdery or sticky residue on face or furniture

Shepherd Hill, a treatment center in Newark, offers recovery services for those addicted to heroin or other substances. For more information, call (800) 223-6410 or visit www.ShepherdHill.net. Shepherd Hill is a Licking Memorial Health Systems facility.