



Licking Memorial Health Systems

Community Connection

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

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Measurably Different ... for Your Health!

LMH Cancer Program Receives Re-accreditation

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) recently received re-accreditation for its cancer care program under the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Commission on Cancer (CoC) Accreditation Program. The accreditation demonstrates LMH's commitment to improving cancer care across the continuum. The ACS CoC is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival and quality of life for patients with cancer by setting and raising standards.

CoC accreditation is granted to institutions committed to providing high-quality cancer care by demonstrating compliance with the CoC standards. To maintain accreditation, cancer programs must undergo a site visit every three years. In November, LMH underwent a rigorous evaluation and review of its cancer program performance and compliance with the CoC standards. The CoC

accreditation standards supply the structure for providing all patients with a full range of diagnostic, treatment, and supportive services either on-site or by referral, including community-based resources.

As a CoC-accredited institution, LMH also becomes an ACS Surgical Quality Partner. Being a Surgical Quality Partner

signifies an institution's dedication to consistently improving procedures and approaches, while maintaining a critical eye on process at every step. The Surgical Quality Partner designation lets patients know that LMH is dedicated to quality and self-improvement and has been verified or accredited by the ACS. Patients can trust that the care they receive at LMH adheres to the most rigorous standards in surgical quality.



Genetic Testing for Cancer Risk

Knowing family medical history can help people identify whether they may have a greater risk of having inherited medical conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancers. Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) offers a hereditary cancer screening tool for patients to determine if they may be eligible for genetic testing for certain cancers. The program has successfully identified over 900 women who are at high risk for breast cancer.

As part of the program, LMHS employs a Genetics Navigator to work with providers to identify patients who would benefit from genetic testing. Susan Bracken, M.S., M.T., CGRA, works to educate patients and staff about the hereditary cancer risk assessment program. The goal is to identify patients in the general population who have genetic mutations that place them at an increased risk for developing cancers, such as breast, ovarian, prostate, colorectal, or melanoma. Early identification of such mutations allows LMHS to find patients who will most benefit from early screenings to detect

cancer in the earliest stages when it is most treatable.

"It is a simple process, and with the results, we can focus on prevention. We can provide our patients with more information about the types of cancers they could face and help them make the best choice for their care in order to decrease their cancer risk," said Rob Montagnese, LMHS President & CEO.

Prior to an appointment, patients who visit Licking Memorial Oncology, Women's Health, Gastroenterology, Urology, and Family Practice offices will receive a questionnaire about family history of cancers, including colon, uterine, breast, ovarian, prostate, and melanoma. The form is accessible through LMHS' patient portal, MyChart, and may be completed at home, allowing extra time for patients to consult family members about their medical history and provide more accurate information.

Individuals who answer yes to any of the questions may receive free genetic education from Susan. She assists the

patient in determining if they and their family are at risk for a genetic mutation that can cause cancer, and if genetic testing is appropriate. Once a patient has received counseling, they may choose to receive genetic testing, in which a blood or saliva sample is collected. The sample is sent to a referable laboratory. If the test is positive, patients can discuss next steps with Susan and a physician.

It is important to note that genetic testing is a tool that can help to evaluate a person's cancer risk. It does not diagnose cancer and is not a substitute for regular cancer screenings. However, LMHS Oncology patients can benefit from genetic testing as the results can assist in choosing the best possible treatment.

According to the basic population statistics, 30 percent of LMHS patients will meet criteria for genetic testing and slightly fewer will undergo such testing.

Genetic testing may be appropriate for individuals with the following characteristics:

- Family members who had a cancer diagnosis at an unusually young age
- Personal history of multiple types of cancer
- Several close blood relatives with the same type of cancer
- Being a member of a racial/ethnic group that is known to be associated with genetically inherited cancers



MyChart Bedside Improves Patient Experience

In 2021, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) launched a new electronic health record (EHR) and MyChart, giving patients greater access to managing their health information and the opportunity to become more involved in their healthcare experience. Recently, LMHS introduced a new feature in MyChart that enables patients and their families to be more digitally connected with their care team.

MyChart Bedside is an application that allows patients more involvement with their care team during a Hospital admission. With an existing MyChart account, patients can access MyChart Bedside by logging in to the MyChart mobile app on their personal device or a tablet provided by Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH).

When a patient opens the MyChart mobile app while they are in the Hospital, they will see a "Your Hospital Stay" section that contains content

tailored to their current care needs. Through MyChart Bedside, patients can:

- Learn the names and roles of their care team
- Track upcoming appointments
- View scheduled medications
- View test results and vitals
- Access educational materials
- Keep friends and family up to date
- Retrieve an after-visit summary

MyChart Bedside enhances patient engagement and satisfaction through improved communication, which streamlines workflows to increase staff efficiency and responsiveness. Using this new feature ensures that patients feel informed, respected, and actively involved in their care.



New Technologies Offer Better Quality Care and Safety for Newborns

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) is dedicated to improving the health of the community by investing in new technologies that offer the best quality of care for patients. Recently, LMHS has purchased several new technologies to increase safety and quality of care in the Maternal Child Department including new beds for the Special Care Nursery and a new life-like birthing simulator to prepare LMHS staff for all types of delivery emergencies. These new, high-tech devices allow LMHS to remain at the forefront of modern birthing care and safety measures for Licking County residents.

In special circumstances, the Special Care Nursery provides a safe, secure environment for infants born prematurely, as early as 32 weeks gestation, or infants who require medical assistance. Specially trained registered nurses and pediatric provider coverage is available 24 hours, seven days a week, to direct the care. To increase safety of the babies staying in the Special Care Nursery, LMHS invested in the Giraffe OmniBed. The bed creates a stable environment that avoids stress, movement, and temperature instability that can significantly affect babies born prematurely. The Omnibed is crucial in improving the outcomes and promoting healing to fragile newborns by meeting the complex needs with advanced technology that provides supportive, family-centered care, controlled thermal environment, and improved patient/caregiver accessibility.

“Our staff members are very appreciative of the new technology and eagerly learned more about the features and settings to offer our smallest patients exceptional care,” LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese shared. “When researching the options, what was impressive about the Giraffe OmniBed was that the manufacturer had created the design based on feedback from families and the staff members who care for infants.”

The double-walled design of the Omnibed creates a draft-free environment that minimizes heat loss providing a womb-like environment that can minimize fluctuations in the baby’s temperature. The bed also provides thermal guidance by setting and activating the desired temperature. The “Air Boost” feature enhances warm air while the doors of the bed are open to prevent a decrease in temperature. A “Comfort Zone” feature allows for

the bed temperature to be set based on gestational age and weight. Both features allow the infant to reserve energy for growth and development.

The special design of the Giraffe OmniBed minimizes stressful touches for the infant by reducing the need to move or reposition the baby. Certain programmable features allow for X-ray imaging and obtaining the baby’s weight without moving the child. The mattress provides 360-degree rotation and an integrated tilt, which allows for repositioning without disturbing the infant. The Giraffe Omnibed can be converted into a radiant warmer with the touch of a button, which aides in ease of access for healthcare professionals to care for the neonate and perform procedures and exams.

The double-walled design also provides insulation to reduce sounds. Staff members are able to adjust alarm settings, create hands-free alarm silence, and use low-noise producing attachments, which assists in dampening external noise. Less noise promotes developmental care and healthy brain development by promoting rest. The Giraffe Omnibed has display screens that provide parents with information about their baby’s care. The large drop-down doors allow for parental access to assist in caring for the infant and safely transferring the baby for skin-to-skin contact. The ergonomic design promotes safe organization of invasive lines and tubes, minimizing risk of the tubes becoming dislodged.

To prepare employees for emergency birthing situations, LMHS purchased Lucina, a high-fidelity, wireless birthing simulator. The new-mom manikin is built for comprehensive obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN) training for maternal and fetal care. Designed for mobility and realism, Lucina provides feedback on the performance of the staff. The device includes an infant that can be delivered. She can be programmed for numerous clinical scenarios including an emergency where she begins to bleed. Staff members responding to the situation may observe the changes in the manikin’s vital signs as they administer treatment and know immediately if the care is sufficient to assist the mother and child in surviving the event. Lucina can also be moved into a number of different birthing positions to allow OB/GYN staff life-like, hands-on delivery experiences.

Members of the Maternal Child staff have performed training drills with Lucina, and soon, the manikin will be used for training opportunities for staff members in the Emergency Department and the Intensive Care Unit. The multi-disciplinary training assures patients that



Lucina Manikin



Giraffe OmniBed

LMHS staff members are prepared in all situations to care for an unusual labor and delivery experience. Simulated, hands-on drills work best to teach needed competencies, build teamwork, and improve processes. The Maternal Child staff have been very impressed with the realism of the new manikin and look forward to continuing the learning process.

LMH Laboratory Offers In-house Lyme Disease Testing

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Laboratory Services recently launched a new testing platform, the DiaSorin Liaison XS, that will allow Laboratory staff to perform Lyme disease screening and confirmation in-house. Performing this test on-site allows the Laboratory to provide faster, more reliable results for patients. The new test reduces wait time from days to 90 minutes.

The new technology uses a modified two-tiered testing methodology recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). If the initial screening is negative, no further testing is needed. If the result is positive or unclear, an additional test is automatically performed to provide a comprehensive result. A final positive result is issued when the initial screen is positive or unclear, and the subsequent tests are also positive or unclear.

The new testing method is more sensitive for detecting early-stage Lyme disease, provides faster and more objective results through automation, and maintains high precision to

minimize false positives. The modern, evidence-based approach aligns with the Laboratory’s commitment to providing the most accurate and timely patient care.

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is transmitted to humans by the blacklegged tick, also known as the deer tick. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic skin rash shaped like a bullseye. Not all ticks carry the bacteria, and a small bump or redness at the site of a tick bite is common.

Lyme disease cases are increasing in Ohio as the range of blacklegged tick populations continues to expand in the state and human encounters occur more frequently. The blacklegged tick is most often found in wooded, brushy areas but can also be found in tall grass and leaf litter around houses. It is important to take precautions to prevent tick bites and the potential disease that may accompany such bites. Reducing exposure to ticks is the best prevention for Lyme disease.



Corporate Breakfast Reviews LMHS Goals and Future Plans

In February, the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council hosted a Corporate Breakfast for community leaders in the Main Street Café at LMH. President & CEO Rob Montagnese reviewed strategic goals including projects that benefit the community, addressing social determinants of health, improving quality of care and performance, and adopting technology and clinical service at Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) in 2025. He also spoke about the plans and designs for The Center at LMHS, an education and event center that will provide a place to meet, learn, and share in activities that promote healthy lifestyles and offer valuable resources that support the LMHS mission to improve the health of the community.

An important goal for LMHS is maintaining independence as a community hospital while managing operations. Rob shared a number of comparison statistics to demonstrate the efficiency of care provided by LMH. In 2025, the clinical staff worked to improve the way that patients are treated for sepsis, the body's extreme response to an infection. An estimated 750 lives have been saved due to the new model for treatment and LMH has been recognized for the dramatic 57 percent decrease in mortality due to the disease and the high rate of compliance with State and National standards. LMH also offers care for sepsis patients and emergency care at a lower cost than other state and local healthcare organizations.

Another important goal for LMHS is working to address social determinants of health, such as transportation, food insecurity, and housing. LMHS continues to support Licking County Transit. In 2025, over 31,000 passengers took advantage of the Main Street route, an increase of nearly 30 percent from 2024. In addition to the Main Street route, four other routes now offer service to 21st Street, Granville, Heath, and Buckeye Lake. The Food Pantry Network Market on McMillen Drive, established by LMHS, is located on one of the bus routes and has also been very successful. More than 34,369 customers visited the market to receive fresh produce, dairy, meat, and nonperishable

items. To address housing issues, LMHS supports the Licking County Housing Investment Fund, the Affordable Housing Trust, and Habitat for Humanity.

Leading in top quality healthcare, LMHS continues to invest in new technologies and methodologies to remain at the forefront of modern care. In 2025, the Cardiology Department optimized practices to improve patient outcomes by increasing use of advanced technologies, such as Shockwave therapy, for the treatment of calcified coronary artery disease. In addition, mobile cardiac telemetry monitoring has been improved by expanding wear options to support monitoring for up to 30 days.

For maternity patients, a new obstetric simulation manikin, known as Lucina, was purchased for comprehensive training of maternal and fetal care. The manikin provides real-time feedback on performance, vital signs, and outcomes. The manikin has just been acquired, and training will begin soon. New infant beds have also been purchased for the Special Care Nursery. The Giraffe OmniBed offers a womb-like, temperature-controlled environment. It reduces stress on the infant by reducing physical movement and repositioning with 360-degree mattress rotation and

automated tilting features. Sound-reduction features promote infant rest while the entire design promotes safety, stability, and reduces risk of tube dislodgement.

Other new technologies include advances in respiratory care, point-of-care blood testing, and new identification software for Laboratory Services to reduce wait time for results for serious diseases such as Lyme disease and tuberculosis. In Radiology, women can obtain an abbreviated breast screening magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Some tumors may be undetectable in X-ray images, particularly if a woman has dense breasts, which have much more fibrous and glandular tissue than fatty tissue. For this reason, an MRI is often recommended as a supplemental screening method for women with dense breasts. This screening tool is also recommended for patients who are at a genetically high risk for breast cancer. Mammography Walk-In Wednesdays have also been implemented.

Assisting residents to maintain a healthy lifestyle includes education pertaining to prevention and healthy choices. To better serve the community,

LMHS is working to build a designated education and event center.

Conveniently located adjacent to the main Hospital campus, The Center at LMHS will feature versatile event spaces to accommodate a variety of program formats and audience sizes. Dedicated learning environments will enable focused instruction and training for professional development. The intimate gathering spaces will promote collaboration and strengthen community partnerships. Construction began in the summer of 2025, and completion is anticipated by fall of 2026.

Corporate Breakfasts are sponsored by the LMH Development Council to inform community leaders about LMHS' new technology and services. The Development Council was established in 1987 to increase charitable giving to the Hospital and to promote positive community relations. Approximately 75 distinguished members of the community volunteer their time to serve on the Development Council.



Licking County Transit Levy Will Be on Spring Ballot

Public transportation is a vital need in Licking County, connecting people to essential resources such as healthcare, nutritious food, employment, and social support. Licking County Transit (LCT) offers a demand response service where individuals may schedule curb-to-curb service for a fee, as well as a free deviated fixed route service that includes multiple routes with designated stops throughout the county. Demand for public transit in Licking County is growing rapidly, and ridership on the fixed route service has more than doubled in the last 4 years.

LCT services are funded, in part, by the Federal Transit Administration, the Ohio Department of Transportation, the Licking County Board of Commissioners, and its users. On May 5, voters will be asked to approve a 0.15 percent sales tax for a period of 10 years to support the county's transit system. The proceeds from this levy would provide additional general revenue for LCT and be used to preserve current services, expand routes, and add infrastructure such as bus shelters.

In 2023, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) partnered with Licking County Transit to establish bus transportation throughout the county. The initial deviated fixed route ran east and west on Main Street, and a second route was added soon after

on 21st Street. To date, there are five routes that provide service to Newark, Granville, Heath, Hebron, and Buckeye Lake. The Licking Memorial Medical Campus, located at 1717 West Main Street, serves as a hub for all routes. LMHS provided funds to subsidize the bus service through the first year of operation to allow residents free access.

"To improve the health of the community, residents must have transportation to obtain proper medical care, get to their jobs, and acquire needed groceries and supplies," said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. "The deviated fixed bus routes have been remarkably successful. The number of riders continues to grow. To accommodate the rising demand, LCT increased the frequency of the Main Street route, which now runs every half hour."

The question posed on the ballot will be: "Shall a sales and use tax be levied by the Licking County Transit Authority for the purpose of providing additional general revenues for the Licking County Transit Authority and to preserve and improve transit services and ensure long-term service availability to support access to transportation at a rate not exceeding fifteen-hundredths of one percent (0.15%) for a period of ten years?" Voters will have the option to vote "For the Sales and Use Tax" or "Against the Sales and Use Tax." If approved, the tax would go into effect on October 1.



Vote YES

Licking County transit



The Effects of Sleep Deprivation on the Heart

In February, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) presented a community education program during American Heart Month to raise awareness about cardiovascular disease. The event was held in the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) First Floor Conference Room. Leslie Solomon, APRN-CNP, of Licking Memorial Cardiac Services, discussed women's heart health and the effects of sleep deprivation on the heart.

Cardiovascular disease refers to several types of conditions that affect the heart's structure and function. It is the leading cause of death in women. Women are more likely to experience atypical symptoms, including neck, jaw, back, or shoulder pain, nausea, vomiting, unusual fatigue, and shortness of breath. These symptoms may feel more like pressure or indigestion rather than crushing pain, and often occur without severe chest discomfort. Women often develop heart disease in the smaller, branching arteries rather than the major arteries, which can present differently. Furthermore, women tend to attribute symptoms to less serious conditions like stress or the flu, causing them to wait longer to seek care. Heart disease may go undiagnosed.

Lifestyle choices affect many of the risk factors that contribute to heart disease. Some risk factors, such as age, family history, race, and gender, cannot be controlled. Risk factors that can be controlled include smoking, obesity, high cholesterol, diabetes, hypertension, physical inactivity, and an unhealthy diet.

Proper sleep can also positively effect heart health. The circadian rhythm is the body's internal, roughly 24-hour clock that regulates the sleep-wake cycle and other physical, mental, and behavioral changes. It is primarily influenced by light and darkness and controls when one feels alert or drowsy. Controlled by a region in the brain called the hypothalamus, along with a hormone release, the circadian rhythm influences body temperature and appetite and synchronizes internal processes with

the day-night cycle. Irregular schedules, screens or travel, can disrupt the rhythm and affects overall health.

Most adults require seven or more hours of quality sleep per night for optimal health. Sleep deprivation occurs when a person sleeps less than seven hours per night consistently, experiences sleep fragmentation, or poor sleep quality. With lack of sleep, cortisol increases causing symptoms such as weight gain, fatigue, sleep issues, mood swings, high blood sugar, and high blood pressure. Inflammatory markers may rise as well due to stress on the immune system. Sleep loss impacts the heart as well by raising blood pressure, increasing insulin resistance, promoting plaque build-up, and triggering arrhythmias.

For women, barriers to quality sleep include giving care to family members instead of sleeping, peri-menopause sleep disruption, mood disorders, shift work, and a multitasking culture. A higher stress response may increase the chance of insomnia. Sleep apnea could also be to blame for poor sleep. Women are typically under-diagnosed with sleep apnea. For women, snoring may not be an issue. Instead, a woman may experience fatigue and mood issues. Untreated apnea increases the risk of heart failure and stroke.

Sleep deprivation also increases sympathetic tone, the baseline, continuous activity of the sympathetic nervous system, which regulates cardiovascular, respiratory, and metabolic functions. It maintains blood pressure and increases alertness by increasing heart rate, dilating pupils, and redirecting energy to essential muscles during stress or danger. Women are more sensitive to sleep-related blood pressure changes and are at a

higher risk of hypertension and altered blood pressure patterns, such as nighttime spikes, especially during hormonal changes such as menopause.

Chronic stress may cause disrupted sleep leading to bi-directional sleep, the two-way street where sleep affects mental, physical, and immune health, and health conditions such as anxiety, pain, inflammation, and neurodegenerative disease impact sleep quality and patterns. Sleep and cardiovascular health have a crucial bi-directional relationship – poor sleep, especially disorders such as sleep apnea, increases risk for hypertension, heart attack, stroke, and arrhythmias, while existing heart conditions can also disrupt sleep, creating a vicious cycle of worsening health through mechanisms such as inflammation, autonomic imbalance, and metabolic changes.

Healthy lifestyle choices assist in heart disease prevention. In addition to quality sleep, regular physical activity, at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity per week, assists in lowering blood pressure and cholesterol, and in maintaining a healthy weight. A nutrient-dense diet, low in salt and saturated fats, is also useful in controlling risk factors such as cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar levels, and weight.

Behind the Scenes – Sleep Medicine

Sleep medicine is a specialty that focuses on the diagnosis, treatment, and management of sleep disorders. Sleep is vital to overall cognitive and physical well-being. It allows the body and brain to recover, repair, and function properly. During sleep, memories are processed, hormones are regulated, and the immune system is strengthened to support learning, emotional regulation, growth, and healing. Lack of consistent, quality rest diminishes concentration, mood, and energy levels while increasing the risk of illness, stress, and long-term health problems. Using specialized training and the latest technological advances, the experienced physicians and health professionals at Licking Memorial Sleep Medicine provide a high level of care to help patients gain and maintain restorative rest.

Licking Memorial Sleep Medicine evaluates patients for a variety of sleep conditions, including sleep apnea, snoring, restless legs syndrome, insomnia, and narcolepsy. The most common disorder is sleep apnea, a condition in which a person's breathing is interrupted repeatedly for 10 or more seconds during sleep. On average, these episodes occur at least five times per hour and possibly hundreds of times every night.

The most common form of sleep apnea is obstructive sleep apnea, a result of an issue in the upper airway. Enlarged or swollen tissues collapse or relax during sleep and block the passage of air leading

to gasping or loud snoring. When breathing stops, the body asserts strong efforts to open the airway and resume the airflow. As the body struggles to breathe, the nervous system releases surges of stress hormones which elevate blood pressure levels and lead to fluctuations of the heart rate. Over time, these ongoing and untreated conditions during sleep can significantly increase a person's risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke. If a sleep disorder is suspected, the patient may undergo an overnight sleep study.

A sleep study, or polysomnogram, is a medical test that is performed while the patient sleeps to evaluate and diagnose a sleep disorder. The test is safe, comfortable, non-invasive, and provides valuable information to physicians. Licking Memorial Sleep Medicine offers the services of a comprehensive Sleep Center. Nationally accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine as a full-service sleep center, the Sleep Center provides prompt testing with fast, accurate results, effective patient follow-up programs, and climate-controlled patient suites featuring comfortable, full-size beds and cable television. Convenient appointment times are also available to accommodate any home and work schedule. The friendly, professional Sleep Center technologists are well trained to ensure that the patient is relaxed and comfortable throughout the study.

Before the sleep study begins, the patient changes into comfortable sleep attire brought from home. The sleep technician applies monitors to the patient's body to record information

while they sleep. The setup includes pad-style sensors that are applied to the head, face, shoulders, chest, and legs with a water-soluble adhesive. The sensors record brain activity, breathing, heart rate, and blood-oxygen levels, as well as chin, eye, and leg movements. This setup is painless and patients may watch television or read during the procedure. After the study, a sleep specialist reviews the results of the test with the patient and explains the diagnosis and options for treatment. Sleep studies are performed on an outpatient basis at the Licking Memorial Sleep Center. The Sleep Center services are contracted through Sleep Care, Inc.

Some patients may have the option to complete a Home Sleep Apnea Test (HSAT), offering a convenient alternative to an overnight, in-lab sleep study. The portable test allows patients to sleep in their bed while wearing easy-to-use monitoring equipment that measures breathing patterns, oxygen levels, and other related data. Patients visit the Sleep Center on the evening of the test to retrieve and learn how to use the device before taking it home. They will then return it the following day. The HSAT only evaluates sleep apnea. For other sleep disorders, an in-lab sleep study may be necessary for diagnosis. Patients should also check with their insurance company to determine if the in-home test is covered under their plan.

The recommended amount of sleep for an adult is seven or more hours per night. Occasional sleep interruptions are generally no more than a nuisance, but continuous sleep deprivation can lead to serious consequences including emotional difficulties, memory impairment, poor job performance, clumsiness, and obesity. Common symptoms of a sleeping disorder include severe snoring, arousals with gasping, daytime sleepiness, irritability, memory problems, restless sleep, headaches, dry throat upon awakening, chest pain, and shortness of breath upon awakening. Those experiencing symptoms of a sleep disorder should talk to a primary care physician to see if a referral to Licking Memorial Sleep Medicine is appropriate.



Camp Med...Where Are They Now?

Each summer, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosts Camp Med, a free, two-day summer camp for rising high school seniors who are interested in learning more about medical practices and careers in the healthcare industry. The program offers students the opportunity to speak with healthcare professionals and experience firsthand what a career in healthcare entails. LMHS employees Hannah Bilderback and Lillie Long participated in Camp Med in 2019. They shared how their experiences helped to influence their career paths in the medical field.

Hannah Bilderback

Hannah has been immersed in the healthcare field her whole life. Both of her parents served as first responders – emergency medical technicians – and her father was also a firefighter. Her grandmother worked as a phlebotomist and medical laboratory technician. Through her family, Hannah gained early exposure to the demands of medical service by witnessing her parents respond to medical emergencies. She learned about the Camp Med program through her school guidance counselor during her junior year.

“Everyone at Camp Med was so welcoming. It was incredibly easy to talk to the staff and ask questions, and they enjoyed teaching us about their profession,” Hannah explained. “I have always been a hands-on learner, and Camp Med provided the perfect

opportunity to explore the different professions within the Hospital. Engaging in the clinical simulations and demonstrations allowed me to experience first-hand what it would be like to work in a healthcare setting.”

Hannah joined LMHS in 2024 as a phlebotomist in the Laboratory Department. Her duties include collecting blood samples from patients for testing, preparing samples for the lab, verifying patient information, maintaining sterile conditions, and comforting nervous patients. She also collects blood samples at off-site locations, such as nursing homes and the Licking County Justice Center.

Hannah is grateful for the opportunity she had to attend Camp Med and remembers her experience fondly.

She encourages high school students who are interested in a healthcare career to apply for the Camp Med program.

“Camp Med is a great program for anyone who is considering a job in healthcare because it gives them a chance to ask questions and get hands-on experience,” Hannah said. “It is important that those who choose a career in healthcare are fully committed to their vocation because our patients deserve the highest quality care possible.”



Lillie Long

Lillie has always been interested in the medical profession and knew she wanted to be a nurse by the time she was in middle school. She learned about Camp Med through an announcement in her high school newsletter and thought that the camp would be a perfect opportunity to learn more about the healthcare industry.

“Camp Med was an awesome experience,” Lillie said. “I enjoyed learning about all the different departments in the Hospital and being able to participate in the hands-on demonstrations. My favorite part was visiting the Surgery Department and using the equipment in the operating rooms. I became friends with students from other schools who were participating in the camp, and we are still friends today.”

After graduating from Granville High School, Lillie attended The Ohio State University – Newark for her prerequisite classes, and then she enrolled in the

Mount Carmel College of Nursing. While attending school, she worked at a Columbus hospital in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). After the birth of her son, she took time off to stay at home and raise him.

Lillie joined LMHS in 2025 and works as a patient care assistant (PCA) in the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department (ED). Her duties include checking in squads, taking patient vitals, assisting with traumas and triage, and phlebotomy. She plans to complete her nursing degree with a long-term goal of becoming a travel nurse.

Students can learn more about the Camp Med program by talking with their guidance counselor or calling the Licking Memorial Events Line at (220) 564-1560.

Sports Screening Program Enters Its 3rd Decade

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) is hosting the 21st annual Sports Screening Program for students entering grades 7 through 12 who are involved in sports, marching band, and C-TEC’s Criminal Justice and Physical Therapy programs. Throughout the month of May, the program offers comprehensive screenings at no cost to help Licking County youth safely participate in physically challenging activities. The LMHS Sports Screening Program consists of three major components: Heart to Play electrocardiograms (EKGs) and echocardiograms, Immediate Post-concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing (ImPACT) baseline concussion testing, and state-required pre-participation physical examinations.

EKGs and echocardiograms are provided to students entering grades 7, 9, and 11. These tests can identify heart conditions that place an athlete at risk for a sudden cardiac event even when there are no symptoms. The EKG displays the heart’s electrical impulses, and the echocardiogram screens the functioning of the heart’s valves and muscles. Since the Heart to Play screenings began in 2008, serious cardiac abnormalities have been detected and treated in 92 students who previously were unaware of their conditions.

ImPACT testing is also offered to students entering grades 7, 9, and 11 who participate in a contact sport and do not have testing available at their school. The computerized evaluation

establishes a baseline of the brain’s cognitive functions, such as memory, attention span, and reaction time. If a concussion is suspected, the ImPACT test is re-administered within 72 hours of the injury after a primary care or emergency room physician has evaluated the athlete. When compared to the baseline test, the difference in the scores helps physicians determine the amount of rest and frequency of examinations that will be needed before the student is able to return to competition or activity.

“School sports and extracurricular activities are extremely important to the health and well-being of our youth,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. “LMHS is proud to continue providing physical sports screenings at no cost to Licking County students. Removing the financial barrier increases participation in sports, ensuring that students can meet school requirements and participate safely, which contributes to improved physical and mental health of our youth.”

LMHS medical staff also complete pre-participation physical examinations, which the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) requires annually. Students who have had a checkup with a primary care physician within the past year may submit the OHSAA form to the provider’s office to have it signed. In such cases, eligible students may participate in heart or concussion

screenings without receiving a pre-participation physical exam.

Nine screening dates are available at two locations throughout the month of May. The first two dates are held at the Pataskala Health Campus, and the remainder of the program will take place at Licking Memorial Pediatrics – Tamarack in Newark. Advance registration is required and limited to the first 90 participants each night of the program. Registration opens on April 1 and may be completed online at LMHealth.org/SportsScreenings.

After registering, a student-specific packet of forms will be available to print from the website. Additionally, any student who requires a sports physical must bring a completed OHSAA pre-participation evaluation form (available online at ohsaa.org/medicine/physicalexamform) or an equivalent school form.

It is important to note that LMHS sports screenings are not complete physical exams, which are best performed annually at a primary care physician’s office and can take the place of a pre-participation screening. Since individual physician practices are not directly involved with the program, please refrain from contacting their offices for information regarding the sports screenings. For questions or more information about the LMHS Sports Screening Program, please email sportsphysicals@LMHealth.org.



LMHS Physicians Honored on National Doctors' Day

National Doctors' Day, March 30, is celebrated to acknowledge the contributions of physicians to communities and the lives of individuals. As part of the annual observation, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) honors the Active Medical Staff for their dedicated service and ongoing support of the LMHS mission to improve the health of the community. LMHS also encourages community members to honor physicians for their dedication through a donation to Licking Memorial Health Foundation (LMHF). Physicians who are recognized through a donation receive an acknowledgment of the gift on the donor's behalf.

Jim Cooper, former Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Board Chair, and his wife, Ellen, have honored several physicians with a donation. Giving to LMHF in recognition of a physician allows Jim and Ellen to show their gratitude for the attentive care and services that LMHS provides to their family as well as Licking County. "LMHS has a wonderful staff of physicians and healthcare providers who are all deserving of praise," said Jim.

"We wholeheartedly support their exceptional efforts to improve the health of the community, and encourage others to honor an LMHS physician for their dedicated care."

The LMH Active Medical Staff includes more than 150 physicians and approximately 97 consulting physicians who provide their expertise and care to the community. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) is a group of more than 110 physicians in 46 practices. Physician offices are located throughout Licking County, including Granville, Hanover, Heath, Hebron, Johnstown, Newark, Pataskala, and Utica.

All charitable contributions to LMHS and LMHF are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. In 2026, donations received for LMHF will fund the construction and development

of The Center at LMHS. The facility will serve as a place to meet, learn, and share in activities that promote healthy lifestyles and offer valuable resources. As Licking County continues to grow and thrive, The Center will enhance the opportunity for education, connectivity, and relationships within our community.



Honor a Physician for Doctors' Day

through a gift to

Licking Memorial Health Foundation

To donate:

- Visit LMHealth.org and click Donate.
- Scan the QR code.
- Call (220) 564-4102.



Gifts are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Physician Spotlight – Kevin Finley, M.D.

Kevin J. Finley, M.D., received his Doctor of Medicine degree at the Wright State University School of Medicine in Dayton, Ohio. He completed his family practice residency at Barberton Citizens Hospital in Barberton, Ohio. Prior to joining Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), Dr. Finley was in the U.S. Air Force for four years, serving as the Chief Physician of the Red Team in Primary Care at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base

Hospital. He is board certified in family practice medicine.

Dr. Finley first provided patient care at Licking Memorial Health Systems in Granville and also worked part-time in Licking Memorial Emergency Medicine. In July 2010, he transferred to full-time coverage in the Emergency Department and Urgent Care locations.

Dr. Finley resides in Newark with his wife, Barbra. They have five children: Austin, Mackenna, Zander, Keagan, and Nash.



Ask a Doc – Strep Throat with Kevin J. Finley, M.D.

Question: How do I know if my child's sore throat is actually strep throat?

Answer: A sore throat is generally caused by either a virus or bacteria. Most adults and children contract a sore throat in conjunction with the cold or flu virus. However, about three in ten children will experience a sore throat caused by streptococcus bacterium or strep throat. It is highly contagious, and circulates in winter when groups of people are more likely to be in close quarters. Unlike a conventional sore throat, untreated strep throat can have serious consequences, leading to kidney inflammation or rheumatic fever. Strep throat is most common in children, but can affect people of all ages. Prompt testing and treatment is recommended.

There are discernible differences between a virus-caused sore throat and strep throat. Early symptoms of strep throat develop rapidly including pain in the throat, fever, chills, and loss of appetite. The most notable symptom is a red, swollen throat with white spots and tiny red spots on the roof of the mouth. If symptoms include a cough, hoarseness, red eyes, and runny nose, the issue is most likely due to a virus, the flu, or a different illness rather than strep.

In order to properly diagnose the cause of a sore throat, a physician or healthcare provider will perform an examination, ask about signs and symptoms, and test for streptococcus bacterium. One of two types of tests can be used to diagnose

strep throat. Both use a soft swab brushed over the back of the throat. A rapid strep test or rapid antigen test takes up to 30 minutes to receive results. A throat culture may take longer to process because the swab must be sent to Licking Memorial Laboratory Services. Results can be found in the patient's MyChart.

If the results are positive for strep throat, an oral antibiotic may be prescribed. Antibiotics reduce the duration and severity of symptoms as well as the risk of complications and the likelihood that infection will spread to others if taken within 48 hours of the onset of the illness. Symptoms should begin to clear in a day or two. If there is no improvement after taking antibiotics for 48 hours, contact a physician.

Children taking an antibiotic who feel well and do not have a fever often can return to school or child care when they are no longer contagious, usually 24 hours after beginning treatment. Finishing the prescribed medication is important. Stopping early can lead to recurrences and serious complications.

To assist in relieving throat pain and reducing fever, over-the-counter pain relievers, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen may be used. Use caution when administering aspirin to children or teenagers. Though aspirin is

approved for use in children older than age 3, children and teenagers recovering from chickenpox or flu-like symptoms should never take aspirin because it has been linked to Reye's syndrome, a rare but potentially life-threatening condition, in such children.

Strep throat can lead to serious complications if the bacteria spreads and cause infection in the tonsils, sinuses, skin, blood, middle ear. Strep infection may lead to inflammatory illnesses, including:

- Scarlet fever, a streptococcal infection characterized by a prominent rash
- Inflammation of the kidney
- Rheumatic fever, a serious inflammatory condition that can affect the heart, joints, nervous system, and skin
- Post-streptococcal reactive arthritis, a condition that causes inflammation of the joints

A possible relationship has been suggested between strep infection and a rare condition called pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder associated with group A streptococci (PANDAS). Children with this condition experience worsened symptoms of neuropsychiatric conditions, such as obsessive-compulsive disorder or tic disorders. This relationship currently remains unproven and controversial.

Surgery Care – How do we compare?

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

1. Risk of serious complications exist during and after surgery, and some deaths may be unavoidable. However, LMH has trained, well-organized, and efficient staff members who work to find and treat complications quickly and aggressively. In 2024, 8,746 surgeries were performed at LMH.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽¹⁾
Deaths among patients with serious treatable complications after surgery	4.17%	12.82%	9.37%	15.11%

2. Postoperative patients are at risk for developing other potentially deadly complications such as sepsis, a serious condition in which the body responds improperly to an infection. The infection-fighting process turns on the body, causing the organs to function poorly which can cause damage to the lungs, kidneys, liver, and other organs. LMH works to prevent sepsis by following best practices for patient safety and closely monitoring a patient's condition.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽¹⁾
Postoperative sepsis	0.00%	0.43%	0.44%	0.41%

3. Postoperative patients who lie in bed for long periods are at increased risk of developing a blood clot in their lungs (pulmonary embolism) or legs (deep vein thrombosis). To prevent the formation of these dangerous conditions, LMH uses multiple methods to reduce the risk of blood clots, including the use of blood-thinning medications and mechanical compression devices. In some cases, despite using these interventions, these blood clots may still occur. In addition, LMH staff must also be wary of the formation of a postoperative hematoma – a collection of clotted blood, or hemorrhage – active ongoing bleeding.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽¹⁾
Postoperative patients who developed a pulmonary embolism or deep vein thrombosis	0.00%	0.19%	0.09%	0.31%
Postoperative hemorrhage or hematoma rate	0.12%	0.10%	0.20%	0.23%

4. An unplanned return to the operating room refers to a situation where a patient returns to the Hospital after an initial surgery due to complications or unforeseen issues arising from the original procedure, essentially requiring a second surgery that was not planned beforehand. The return rate is a key indicator of surgical quality that impacts patient outcomes.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Unplanned returns to the OR	0.09%	0.10%	0.50%	<1.4%

5. Delays in surgical procedures are an inconvenience to patients who may have fasted for hours and often are nervous. The LMH Surgery staff makes every effort to timely begin procedures for the comfort of patients and their families.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Surgeries that started on time	85%	96%	89%	Greater than 90%

6. Retained surgical items such as a surgical sponge or instrument part, or unretrieved device fragments, may cause emotional and severe physical harm such as infection, pain, or loss of function. LMH monitors the rate of retained surgical items through a retained surgical item or unretrieved device fragment count to identify trends and implement preventive measures.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Retained surgical item or unretrieved device fragment count	0	0	0	0

Data Footnotes: (1) Population Rate from AHRQ WinQI Annual Quick Report

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



Incision Care

Proper incision care is crucial for optimal healing and to prevent infection after surgery. During surgery, the surgeon creates a surgical cut in the skin to access the area inside the body that requires repair. Following the procedure, the surgeon will close the opening with stitches, staples, or adhesive strips, and an additional dressing may be placed on top. Individuals are given precise post-operative instructions on how to care for the wound. It is important to adhere to these instructions to reduce the risk of infection and ensure a smooth recovery.

Stitches, or sutures, are a common method used to close wounds and promote healing. A physician threads a needle through the edge of the wound and pulls the thread tight to close the incision as the stitches hold the edges together. Sutures are made of sterile, thread-like materials that may be natural or synthetic. Some are absorbable and break down over time in the body, requiring no removal. Other sutures are non-absorbable and will need to be removed. The type of suture used depends on the wound, healing needs, and surgeon preference.

Surgical staples are small, metallic clips used to provide a secure and efficient closure of wounds. Staples help prevent bleeding and infection and can minimize scarring. The most common type of surgical staple used for external wounds is stainless steel. Titanium staples are less likely to cause allergic reactions. Surgical staples are typically removed 7 to 14 days after surgery. There are also absorbable staples that are made from biodegradable materials and dissolve

over time. Staples are faster and easier to apply than sutures and are often less painful.

Adhesive strips are a non-invasive alternative used to close minor injuries without stitches and support wounds after sutures or staples are removed. Adhesive strips contain a sticky glue that helps to hold the skin together and can lead to better cosmetic results with less scarring than stitches or staples. The strips are sterile and hypoallergenic and are available for purchase at most major pharmacies, retail stores with a health section, and online marketplaces.

A dressing is a sterile bandage that keeps the surgical wound clean and dry during the healing process. The bandage protects the incision and creates an environment that promotes new cell growth for faster healing.

Patients receive specific instructions from their surgeon on how to care for their incision. The following incision care guidelines can help to prevent infection and ensure that the incision site heals properly and quickly:

- Individuals and caregivers should always wash their hands before and after touching the incision.
- Inspect the incision site daily for signs of infection such as swelling, pus (yellow, green, or brown drainage), redness or discoloration, bleeding, or the wound appears to be opening.
- Keep the dressing on top of the incision clean and dry, and change the dressing as directed by the surgeon.

- Avoid wearing tight clothing that may rub or cause irritation on the incision.
- Incisions may feel itchy as they heal, and this is normal. Avoid scratching the wound.
- Do not get the incision wet until the physician says it is ok to do so. Carefully wash around the wound with soap and water, then rinse with clean water and pat dry.
- Do not use creams, lotions, or ointments on or around the incision unless instructed by a physician.
- If prescribed antibiotics, follow all instructions and finish the entire prescription.

Adding extra protein to a well-balanced diet can help promote wound healing. Foods that contain protein include lean meat, cheese, milk, eggs, and peanut butter. Getting plenty of rest, staying hydrated, and avoiding smoking also aid in the healing process.

Individuals should call their healthcare provider if they experience any of the following symptoms:

- Severe pain
- Bleeding that does not stop with pressure
- Color changes, swelling, or bruising surrounding the wound
- Foul odor from the wound
- Opening of the incision
- A fever of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Persistent vomiting

New Appointments



Carrie L. Brehm, PA-C, joined Licking Memorial Orthopedic Surgery



Justin M. Gill, APRN-CNP, joined Licking Memorial Emergency Medicine



Erin M. Smith, APRN-CNP, joined the Licking Memorial Health Center at Licking Heights

Preparing for Surgery

Preparing for surgery can feel overwhelming for some individuals. Taking proactive steps can help ensure a smoother experience and better recovery. Whether it is a minor outpatient procedure or a major operation, being well prepared physically, mentally, and logistically can make a significant difference. The following tips can help people prepare for surgery so they can focus their energy on healing.

Follow pre-operative instructions

- Maintain a healthy diet
- Stay hydrated by drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of water each day
- Stop smoking and avoid alcohol for at least two weeks before surgery
- Exercise regularly
- Get plenty of rest
- Complete required pre-operative tests such as bloodwork, imaging, and anesthesia screening
- Provide medical history, current medications, and any allergies
- Make sure insurance cards, pharmacy and drug benefit cards, and driver's license or other photo identification are up to date

Plan for post-operative care

- Arrange for a trusted family member or friend to provide transportation to and from the Hospital and assist during recovery for the first couple of days
- Prepare the home with a comfortable recovery area that includes pain relievers, water, snacks, entertainment, and any assistive devices
- Plan for time off work and delegate responsibilities
- Take medications as prescribed
- Practice relaxation techniques

Individuals should contact their physician or Hospital staff if they have any questions or concerns regarding their surgery.



LMH Recognized for Organ Donation Awareness

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) earned national recognition for efforts to increase organ, eye, and tissue donor registrations through the 2025 DoNation Campaign. The Campaign challenges hospitals and healthcare organizations to educate staff, patients, visitors, and communities about the critical need for organ, eye, and tissue donation, including offering opportunities to register as organ donors.

LMH earned Platinum level recognition for conducting awareness and registry activities. The Campaign is a national initiative that unites the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, and the organ donation community with workplaces across the nation in spreading the word about the importance of donation. LMH partners with Lifeline of Ohio in the outreach efforts. Representatives

from Lifeline of Ohio presented the award to the LMH Organ Donation Council on December 8.



Walk with a Doc

In November, Licking Memorial Health Systems hosted a Walk with a Doc event at the Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-TEC) in Newark. Karen Smith-Silone, D.O., of Licking Memorial Gynecology, led a discussion and answered general questions about gynecological cancer awareness and screenings. During the December event at Johnstown-Monroe Middle School in Johnstown, Phillip Savage, D.O., of Licking Memorial Hospitalists, discussed heart failure. Gurunanthan Palani, M.D., of Licking Memorial Endocrinology, addressed thyroid disease during the January event at the Licking County Family YMCA in Newark.

The monthly program offers community members an opportunity to ask general health questions related to a physician's specialty during a 40-minute walk at various locations in Licking County. For more information on upcoming Walk with a Doc events, visit LMHealth.org/Calendar.





Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Patient Safety

Patient Story – Colette Kosonovich

specialized software, and prediction analytics to assist in diagnosing difficult cases. ID Connect is offered through the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and uses physicians who have additional training and expertise in infectious diseases.

“The consultation was very helpful. I was confused about what was happening to me, and the physician explained my condition in a way that I could understand,” Colette shared. “He spoke in layman’s terms and walked me through the procedure needed to assist in fighting the infection.”

With the assistance of ID Connect, Colette was diagnosed with tuberculous colitis, a rare condition characterized by inflammation of the colon with the formation of nodules or tubercles. The ascending colon and caecum are most commonly affected. The physician

explained that she would have to have a tube placed in her colon for two weeks to drain the infection.

“I was pleased with the results of the consultation and grateful that they did not need to remove the colon completely,” Colette shared.

Since the procedure, Colette has had the tube removed and continues to recover well from the infection. She and her husband, Jim, recently moved to Newark from Chicago. The couple is looking forward to their retirement in the quiet neighborhood they found here. Colette does have a follow-up procedure scheduled. In addition to fighting the infection, any nodules that formed in the colon have to be removed. The gastroenterologist assured her that the procedure could be done during a colonoscopy and there was no need for an invasive surgical procedure.

After experiencing pain in her abdomen for weeks, Colette Kosonovich visited her family physician to determine the cause. Her physician believed she was suffering from an infection and prescribed antibiotics. However, the antibiotics caused severe side effects and Colette contacted her physician about discontinuing the use of the medication. Her physician informed her she desperately needed the antibiotics and suggested she visit the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department for assistance.

Colette was admitted to the Hospital and given the medication intravenously. While at LMH, Colette was offered a consultation with an infectious disease specialist using Infectious Disease (ID) Connect, a new service that uses the expertise of infectious disease specialists,

Infection Prevention Methods Used at LMH

Healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) develop in a medical setting, such as a hospital, nursing home, or other medical facility. HAIs are caused by bacteria, viruses, or fungi that are present in the healthcare environment and can spread through contact with contaminated surfaces or equipment, respiratory droplets from infected patients or healthcare workers, or invasive procedures such as surgery or catheter insertion. HAIs have a significant impact on quality of care, resulting in longer hospital stays, serious health complications, and higher healthcare costs.

Infection prevention is a top priority at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH). LMH has implemented several comprehensive, evidence-based practices to mitigate the risk of infections and improve patient safety among the five most common HAIs, which include catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs), central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSIs), surgical site infections (SSIs), Clostridioides difficile (C. diff) infections, and ventilator-associated events.

Proper hand hygiene remains the single, most effective way to prevent HAIs. Consistent and correct hand washing or using an alcohol-based hand rub significantly reduces the spread of pathogens, protecting patients from infections. LMH has implemented “secret shoppers” – covert observers who conduct hand hygiene audits on a regular basis and record their observations using a data collection tool. LMH is also a participant in the Ohio Hospital Association’s (OHA) Hand Hygiene Program, which helps hospitals improve patient care by monitoring and enhancing hand hygiene compliance among healthcare staff. LMH employees are observed entering and exiting patient rooms in real time. Data is collected via an online portal that is accessible to staff and provides feedback on compliance and identifies opportunities for improvement.

In addition, the Infection Prevention Team provides surveillance activities

to monitor HAI rates in the Hospital. These include maintaining hand hygiene and personal protective equipment (PPE) compliance, reviewing microbiology records to track and report communicable diseases and HAIs, and reporting those infections and diseases to the health departments and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as appropriate.

Infectious Disease (ID) Connect is an easy-to-use infectious disease tele-consultation. The new service uses the expertise of infectious disease specialists, specialized software that uses a cloud-based, HIPAA-compliant audio-video conferencing platform, and prediction analytics to improve outcomes in a cost-effective, compassionate manner. In addition to ID consultations, antimicrobial stewardship and infection prevention and control are also available for use. ID Connect is offered through the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and uses physicians who have additional training and expertise in infectious diseases.

ID Connect works through telemedicine-based clinical services, giving hospitals the opportunity to access world-class infectious disease expertise and provide patients with the care they need. Through the aid of high-definition video and Bluetooth technology, a nurse telepresenter at the Hospital performs a live, hands-on exam of the patient, and the ID physician will view the exam and consult in real time. ID Connect reduces costs and improves patient care. Healthcare facilities that use ID Connect have decreased readmissions by 30 percent and reduced the number of patients on antibiotic therapy by 20 percent.

Environmental surfaces and patient care equipment can be reservoirs for pathogens, contributing to the transmission of HAIs. LMH has installed the Synexis Dry Hydrogen Peroxide Units in the operating rooms, delivery rooms, and intensive care units. Dry hydrogen peroxide (DHP) is a disinfectant that can sanitize both air and surfaces. The device is placed within

the room’s airflow, and DHP is released into the air to break down organic compounds such as bacteria, viruses, and mold.

When DHP comes in contact with microorganisms, it acts as an oxidizing agent to break down organic matter and converts the contaminants into water and oxygen. DHP does not create any harmful chemicals and is safe to use in occupied settings, making it ideal for use in patient rooms.

The MoonBeam 3 Ultraviolet (UV)-C Disinfection device helps to sanitize high-touch surfaces and can eliminate pathogens within three minutes. UV-C disinfection is an additive cleansing technology and does not replace the Hospital’s cleaning staff. All areas are manually cleaned before UV disinfection occurs. UV light is electromagnetic radiation with wavelengths shorter than visible light but longer than X-rays. UV is categorized into several wavelength ranges, with short-wavelength UV (UV-C) considered “germicidal UV.” When deployed, the device emits UV-C light that damages nucleic acids, leading to inactivation of pathogens such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi.

Three individually adjustable, articulating arms can be positioned at almost any angle to target the UV-C light, enabling improved UV-C dosing with reduced energy. The flexible device is easily positioned throughout a room to enable fast and effective disinfection cycles. Unlike the DHP device, the Moonbeam 3 requires the room to be vacant during the cleaning cycle.


Adherence to infection prevention and control practices is essential to providing safe and high-quality patient care across all settings where healthcare is delivered. Through sustained leadership commitment, communication, frontline engagement, and compliance education and training, LMH has created a robust strategy for preventing HAIs and improving patient outcomes.

Community Education:

The 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer’s

Wednesday, April 29 • 6:00 p.m. • LMH First Floor Conference Room

Licking Memorial Health Systems, in partnership with the Alzheimer’s Association, is offering a special Community Education event: “The 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer’s.” Participants will learn how to recognize common signs of the disease, how to approach someone about memory concerns, the importance of early detection and benefits of a diagnosis, and about possible tests and assessments for the diagnostic process. **René Redd, Program Manager with the Central Ohio Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association**, will lead the informative discussion. Free Alzheimer’s Association resources will be available.



To register, please call the Licking Memorial Events Line at (220) 564-1560.

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 to benchmark measures. Then, we publish the information so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your healthcare choices.

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. Although the medication error rate at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) is significantly better than the national benchmark, we make continuous efforts to improve the process. LMH dispensed 1,026,162 doses of medication in 2024.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽¹⁾
Medication error rate per 1,000 doses	0.009%	0.011%	0.014%	0.31%

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 (CDC) 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 the number of infections per every 1,000 patient days compared to the national benchmarks.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽²⁾
Central line-associated bloodstream infections (ICU and select wards)	1.221	1.085	0.000	0.638
Methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) bacteremia	0.814	2.521	1.352	0.702

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 prevent a potential fall.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	Goal
Inpatient falls, per 1,000 patient days	4.2	3.2	2.9	less than 3.0

4. Inpatient mortality refers to patients who pass away while admitted as inpatients in the hospital. While mortality within the hospital is not uncommon, it can be a valuable indicator in determining how effectively the hospital manages crisis situations as well as its ability to rescue the patient in an emergency. Other factors, such as nurse staffing levels, staff knowledge and experience, and early recognition of patient deterioration all can have an impact on inpatient mortality.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽³⁾
Inpatient mortality	2.18%	1.40%	1.16%	1.84%

5. Sepsis is a body's overwhelming and life-threatening response to an initial infection of microbes that can be bacterial, viral, or fungal. LMHS has safety measures in place to detect early signs of sepsis, and complies with best practice requirements to manage sepsis care through the use of a "sepsis bundle," SEP-1, which are a series of steps taken to reduce the risk of death. Sepsis is a leading cause of death in the hospital; therefore, LMHS closely monitors both the rate of compliance with the sepsis bundle (higher rates are better) and sepsis mortality (lower rates are better).

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	State ⁽⁴⁾	National ⁽²⁾
Sepsis mortality rate	10.9%	8.79%	8.13%	14.9%	64%
SEP-1: Perfect Care for Sepsis	76%	83%	85%		

6. During the annual influenza (flu) season, keeping the LMHS employees healthy by providing flu vaccinations can, in turn, protect patients from potential influenza infections. LMHS is committed to encouraging and providing free, easily accessible flu vaccines to all employees.

	LMHS 2022	LMHS 2023	LMHS 2024	LMHS Goal	National ⁽⁵⁾
LMHS employees receiving the seasonal influenza vaccine	82%	83%	85%	greater than 80%	81%

7. Venous Thromboembolism, also known as blood clots, are a potential risk for patients to develop while in the hospital. LMHS follows best practice guidelines to protect patients from developing blood clots while in the hospital by administering medications or through the use of air compression devices. LMHS tracks compliance with implementing these protective measures (higher rates are better).

	LMHS 2022	LMHS 2023	LMHS 2024	National ⁽²⁾
Venous Thromboembolism Prophylaxis	N/A	96%	98%	89%

8. Patients who are hospitalized are at greater risk of developing pressure ulcers, also known as bed sores, due to inactivity, or other factors such as poor nutrition, poor mobility, and chronic disease. While some pressure ulcers cannot be prevented, appropriate care administered by hospital staff can reduce the potential for developing a bed sore. Hospitals are scored by Medicare on the rate of bed sore development in hospitalized patients (lower rates are better).

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽⁶⁾
Pressure Ulcer Rate	1.23	1.59	0.56	0.63

9. The Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ) has developed a patient safety composite score made up of many important patient safety indicators. Many events are not preventable and to some degree are expected. AHRQ reports these results as a ratio, with a score of 1.0 denoting that the hospital had a similar number of safety events as expected. A rate higher than 1.0 indicates that more events than expected occurred, whereas a rate lower than 1.0 indicates that fewer events than expected were found.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽⁶⁾
Patient Safety & Adverse Events Composite	1.18	1.23	1.00	1.0%

10. Warfarin (also known as Coumadin) is a blood thinner, which also is called an anticoagulant. It is used to help prevent and treat blood clots. The most common side effect of warfarin is bleeding in any tissue or organ. It is important for patients to have a prothrombin time (PT) and International Normalized Ratio (INR) blood test regularly to help the physician determine the blood clotting rate and whether the dosage of warfarin should change. The testing is very important and must be accomplished at recommended intervals in order to keep the PT/INR result in the best and safest range for the medical condition. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) has adopted this recommendation as a safety measure.

	LMHP 2022	LMHP 2023	LMHP 2024	LMHP Goal
LMHP patients on warfarin having a current PT/INR within recommended guidelines	98%	98%	98%	greater than 90%

11. 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. LMHP has adopted this recommendation as a safety measure.

	LMHP 2022	LMHP 2023	LMHP 2024	LMHP Goal
LMHP patients on Metformin with a renal function test within last year	89%	88%	90%	greater than 90%

Data Footnotes: (1) *To Err is Human – Building a Safer Health System*, National Academy Press, Washington D.C., 2000. (2) National performance from Hospital Compare Preview Report, Q1 2024 – Q4 2024. (3) Comparative data from the Midas Comparative Database. (4) Ohio Hospital Association. (5) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Influenza and Up-to-Date COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage Among Health Care Personnel – National Healthcare Safety Network, United States, 2023-24 Influenza Season*. (6) National performance from Hospital Compare Preview Report, Q3 2022 – Q2 2024.



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



Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Heart Care

Patient Story – Albert “Al” Lewis

experiencing a life-threatening event such as a heart attack. A code blue is activated and the medical emergency is announced over the public address system. The team members quickly access the patient and take action. In Al’s case, he was taken to the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, a special operating room equipped with the technology to perform heart procedures such as opening clogged arteries and placing stents.

“I was told they worked for 22 minutes to restart Al’s heart,” Marla remembers. “They had to use a defibrillator to shock him twice. He became responsive five hours later and by eight the next morning he was awake, taken off the ventilator, and talking. The entire team was just amazing.”

During the catheterization procedure, Hassan Rajjoub, M.D., found a 100 percent blockage in the largest artery in the heart which is often referred to as a widow-maker heart attack. According to the American Heart Association, the survival rate following a widow-maker heart attack is only 12 percent when it occurs outside of a hospital or advanced care center. Al spent eight days at LMH. During that time, the team from the Cath Lab and ED stopped by his room to check on his progress and make sure he was recovering fully.

“Everyone was so kind and hospitable, allowing my family to completely take over the waiting room during the procedure,” Marla shared. “We felt so supported and comforted by their presence. Dr. Rajjoub spoke to us and assured us he had done all he could to re-open the artery and the remainder of the recovery was up to Al.”

Al and Marla have five adult children and 10 grandchildren. They are excited for the arrival of two more grandchildren and a great-grandchild. The couple owns a tire shop in Newark. Al was able to return to work and participate in cardiac rehabilitation at LMH in the days following the procedure. In July, Al and Marla registered for Licking Memorial Health Systems’ “For Your Health” 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk at The Dawes Arboretum and walked the 5K course.

As Al continues to recover, he has experienced a few other concerns with his heart. He has an enlarged aorta and was also experiencing an atrial flutter. He has visited Vascular Surgeon Mark T. DeFransco, D.O., and Electrophysiologist John J. Keller, M.D. Dr. Keller performed an ablation, a procedure using small burns on the heart cells to stop the fluttering. Since that procedure, Al has continued to do well. He and Marla make a point to visit the men and women who came to his rescue during his heart attack bringing small tokens of appreciation such as cookies or donuts. The couple also enjoyed reconnecting with the team during the annual Interventional Cardiology Reunion held at LMH.

While Al survived the heart attack and is recovering well, it is important to note that anyone experiencing symptoms of a heart attack should call 911 immediately instead of trying to travel to a hospital by themselves. Area Emergency Medical Services (EMS) squads are equipped with electrocardiogram machines and defibrillators. The EMS crew communicates with LMH and the Interventional Cardiology team is waiting when a patient arrives. The faster response to a heart attack saves precious heart tissue.

In May 2025, Albert “Al” Lewis experienced a heart attack. He told his wife, Marla, he was not feeling well and just needed to sit by a window and breathe in the fresh air. He and Marla were preparing to leave the house for a visit with their son in Columbus. As Marla completed her preparations, Al tried to relax and determine exactly why he did not feel quite like himself.

“There was not a feeling of pressure or pain in my chest,” Al said. “I just felt a bit off. I was unsure what was happening, and I did not want to alarm my family.”

When Marla returned to check on Al, she asked if he was feeling any better. When he said no, she asked if he thought he should go to the Emergency Department (ED) at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH). Al agreed it might be wise to have a physician determine the cause of his sudden weakness. They got into their car and Marla began driving to LMH while trying to watch Al. He said he felt lightheaded, and then he slumped over in his seat.

“I yelled his name and pushed on his arm,” said Marla, “But there was no response. I was panicked. When I arrived at LMH, I stopped in front of the ED doors and ran in screaming for help. A nurse ran out and pulled Al from the car, placed him on the ground, and started performing CPR. That is when I was told he had no pulse. His heart stopped on the drive to the Hospital.”

LMH has a designated team of healthcare professionals specifically trained to respond when a patient is

Treating Arrhythmias after a Heart Attack

A heart attack, or myocardial infarction (MI), is a medical emergency that occurs when the heart muscle begins to die due to severely reduced blood flow or blockage. When someone experiences a heart attack, the treatment is focused on restoring blood flow to the affected heart muscle as soon as possible to prevent further damage.

Immediate care may include clot-busting medications or opening blocked arteries with a balloon or stent. While these modern treatments have reduced the risk of serious complications after a heart attack, some patients still encounter problems such as heart arrhythmias, which can increase the risk of sudden death.

The heart is divided into four asymmetric chambers. The two upper chambers contain the right and left atrium which collect the blood coming from the body. The two lower chambers contain the right and left ventricles, which pump the blood out to the body.

For the heart to pump blood properly, the muscles of the heart must contract in rhythm at the correct moment. The heart’s electrical system keeps this rhythm synchronized. An arrhythmia is an abnormal heartbeat that occurs when the heart’s electrical system is disrupted, causing the heart to beat too fast, too slow, or with an irregular rhythm. Arrhythmias can occur after a heart attack because the damaged heart muscle can disrupt the electrical signals that control the heart’s rhythm.

The most common arrhythmias after an MI include atrial fibrillation (AFib), bradycardia, and ventricular arrhythmias.

AFib causes rapid, irregular muscle contractions in the heart’s upper chambers. Symptoms of AFib include heart palpitations, chest pain, dizziness, fatigue, and feeling out of breath. Due to the irregular heart rate, blood may gather in the atrium and form clots, which could cause a stroke if blood flow to the brain is blocked.

Bradycardia is an abnormally slow heartbeat when the patient’s resting heart rate is less than 60 beats per minute. Symptoms may include chest pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, lightheadedness, and confusion.

Ventricular arrhythmia is an abnormal heartbeat that begins in the lower chambers of the heart and can be life-threatening. Ventricular tachycardia (V-tach) is a fast but regular heartbeat originating in the ventricles. Ventricular fibrillation (V-fib) occurs when the ventricles beat in an erratic, quivering way and are unable to pump blood normally. Both conditions can be life-threatening and lead to sudden cardiac arrest.

Treatment for post-MI arrhythmias depends on the type and severity and may include medications, an implantable cardiac device, or ablation therapy. An implantable cardiac device, such as a pacemaker or implantable cardioverter-defibrillator, connect to the heart and

deliver electrical impulses to regulate the heart’s rhythm or deliver a shock to correct a life-threatening arrhythmia.

Ablation therapy is another procedure used to treat post-MI arrhythmias. Ablation is a minimally invasive procedure that uses heat or cold energy to create scar tissue in the heart. During the procedure, a doctor guides a catheter through a vein into the heart. A device at the tip of the catheter emits energy to destroy small areas of heart tissue that are causing the heart’s electrical signals to misfire. Scar tissue blocks the faulty signals, helping to restore a regular rhythm to the heart.

Post-MI arrhythmias are a serious complication that can often be managed with prompt recognition and appropriate interventions, significantly reducing the risk of sudden cardiac death. Ongoing follow-up with a cardiologist or electrophysiologist, adhering to prescribed therapies, and lifestyle changes are essential for optimizing long-term outcomes.

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Sign Up, Today!

The **Active•Senior** program is designed to promote healthy lifestyles for adults, ages 60 and older, through various goals. These goals have been created, reviewed, and approved by medical staff to ensure a well-balanced program.



To register, visit LMHActiveSenior.org



Heart Care – 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 to benchmark measures. Then, we publish the information so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your healthcare choices.

1. The first step in heart attack treatment is to confirm that the patient is truly experiencing the symptoms of a heart attack upon arrival to the Emergency Department (ED). An electrocardiogram (EKG) measures the electrical activity of the heart and is one diagnostic tool used to determine if a heart attack is occurring. Performing the test promptly is critical.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National Average ⁽¹⁾
Median time from arrival to completion of EKG	2 minutes	2.5 minutes	2 minutes	7 minutes

2. In patients having a heart attack, emergency angioplasty restores blood flow to the heart muscle by re-opening blocked or clogged arteries. This is completed by inserting a catheter into the artery that feeds the heart, inflating a balloon and placing a stent inside the artery to keep it open. This procedure can help reduce damage to the heart muscle, and has the best results when performed within 90 minutes after arriving in the Emergency Department (ED). Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) began performing this procedure in 2008.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National Goal ⁽²⁾
Average time from arrival until balloon angioplasty performed	66 minutes	66 minutes	66 minutes	90 minutes
Time to balloon within 90 minutes	100%	100%	96%	95%

3. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are often the first to evaluate and treat patients experiencing heart attack symptoms. EMS acquires a baseline EKG to wirelessly transmit to the LMH ED physician for interpretation and early identification, so that the Catheterization Lab team can be alerted quickly. Medical contact to reperfusion refers to the time it takes in minutes from the first medical contact by EMS with a patient experiencing heart attack symptoms, to the opening of the artery to allow blood flow to return to the heart muscle.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National Goal ⁽²⁾
Medical contact to reperfusion	87 minutes	72 minutes	85 minutes	Less than 90 minutes

4. When performing certain heart procedures, such as a catheterization, a cardiologist may choose to access the heart through the radial artery, located in the wrist, or the femoral artery, located in the upper thigh. Transradial artery access improves outcomes and reduces cost. Accessing the radial artery requires advanced skill; however, radial access offers quicker recovery time and decreases the risk of bleeding. LMHS' cardiologists possess the advanced skills needed for the procedure and offer the safer alternative to patients; however, it may not be an option for some patients due to a risk of spasms or the size of the artery.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Heart catheterization procedures	554	539	556	
Percentage of radial access	98%	99%	99%	83%

5. Hospitals report the rate of patients who died within 30 days of being admitted to the hospital for an acute myocardial infarction (AMI) or heart attack to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The hospital data is risk-adjusted to the complexity of each hospital's patients to calculate a rate as compared to national averages. Lower rates are better. The data reflects a three year period rather than a year-to-year calculation.

	LMH 2022 (2018-2021)	LMH 2023 (2020-2023)	LMH 2024 (2021-2024)	National Rate ⁽³⁾
AMI 30-day mortality rate	12.4%	12.6%	11.3%	12.2%

6. Hospitals also report the rate of patients with AMI who are discharged and then readmitted back into the hospital within 30 days of discharge for any reason to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The hospital data is risk-adjusted to the complexity of each hospital's patients to calculate the rate of readmission. Lower rates are better. The data reflects a three year period rather than a year-to-year calculation.

	LMH 2022 (2018-2021)	LMH 2023 (2020-2023)	LMH 2024 (2021-2024)	National Rate ⁽³⁾
AMI 30-day readmission rate	15.1%	13.7%	13.3%	13.6%

7. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) physicians monitor the usage of antiplatelet drugs, such as aspirin or an antithrombotic drug, in patients with coronary artery disease (CAD). The usage of these medications lowers the risk of acute myocardial infarction (AMI) or death in patients with CAD.

	LMHP 2022	LMHP 2023	LMHP 2024	LMHP Goal
LMHP CAD patients with aspirin and/or antithrombotic prescribed	87%	87%	85%	Greater than 85%

8. LMHP physicians monitor the cholesterol levels, specifically the LDL (bad cholesterol) levels of their patients with diagnoses of CAD. Elevated LDL cholesterol level is a risk factor for AMI, but is reversible through medication, diet, and exercise.

	LMHP 2022	LMHP 2023	LMHP 2024	LMHP Goal
LMHP CAD patients with LDL less than or equal to 100 mg/dl	71%	79%	79%	Greater than 50%

Data Footnotes: (1) Hospitalcompare.hhs.gov national benchmarks. (2) American Heart Association website (3) National Performance from Hospital Compare Preview Report, Q3 2021 – Q2 2024.



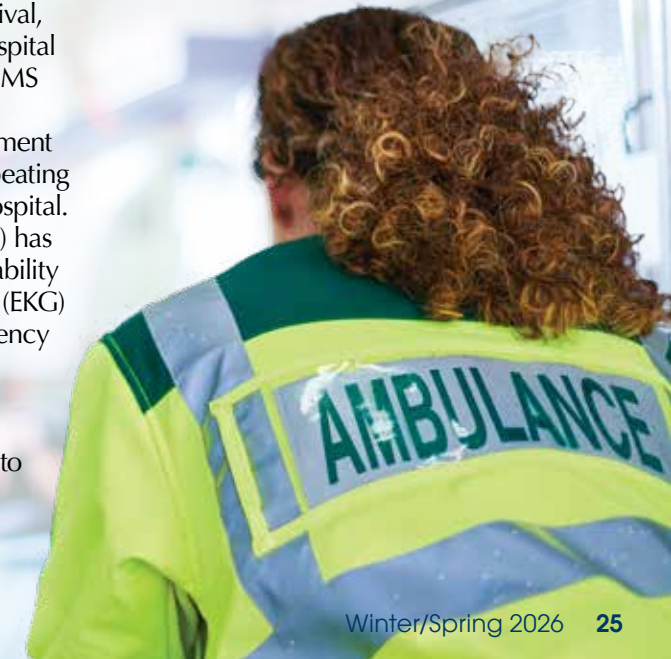
Check out our Quality Report Cards online at [LMHealth.org](https://www.lmhealth.org).

Call 911 If Heart Attack Symptoms Occur

A heart attack is a life-threatening emergency, and treatments available are most effective when administered as quickly as possible. Symptoms of a heart attack include chest pain or pressure, pain in the arms, neck, jaw, or stomach, shortness of breath, sweating, nausea, and light-headedness. Some may think it is faster to drive a person with mild symptoms to the hospital themselves. However, symptoms can quickly worsen, and time is of the essence. If someone is experiencing a heart attack, the best course of action is to call 911.

By calling 911, emergency medical services (EMS) providers can begin evaluating, monitoring, and treating

the patient immediately upon arrival, transporting the patient to the hospital in the shortest amount of time. EMS technicians are equipped with knowledge and life-saving equipment in case the patient's heart stops beating while being transported to the hospital. Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) has provided area EMS with the capability to transmit an electrocardiogram (EKG) electronically to the LMH Emergency Department. This allows the ED physician and staff to evaluate the EKG and notify the Cardiac team prior to the patient's arrival to expedite emergency care.



Licking Memorial Health Foundation Recognizes New Donors

The William Schaffner Society

The William Schaffner Society was created in memory of William Schaffner, the first Chair of the Licking County Hospital Commission in 1961, and an instrumental player in the county bond issue that financed the current location of LMH. He dedicated his life to providing quality healthcare services to our community. Membership is extended to those who make a commitment of \$10,000 or more paid over a period of 10 years, and a donor affirms William Schaffner's belief in the need for excellent healthcare at the local level.

Tracy Carr, M.S.N., M.B.A., C.C.M., B.S.N., R.N.

Tracy Carr recently accepted a glass recognition piece from President & CEO Rob Montagnese and Vice President Development & Public Relations Veronica Patton to honor her pledge of financial support through membership in The William Schaffner Society.

Tracy rejoined Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) in 2025 as the Director of Case Management. She earned her Master of Science in Nursing and Master of Business Administration degrees from the University of Phoenix and a

Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Capital University. She has over 15 years of experience in Acute Hospital Case Management and is a Certified Case Manager.

Tracy leads the Inpatient Case Management Department to ensure the efficiency of patient care, payment for services rendered, and improved care transitions. She has previously held leadership positions in Case Management and Revenue Cycle at LMHS, The Ohio State University, and Trinity Health.

She is a member of the American Case Management Association and the Case Management Society of America.

In her free time, Tracy enjoys reading, walking the bike paths, and going on mini trips and adventures. She and her husband, Clifton, reside in Johnstown and have two adult children, Angel and James, and a new grandson, Oliver James.



Mary Riley, B.S.N., R.N.

President & CEO Rob Montagnese and LMH Board President Jim Cooper recently presented Mary Riley with a glass recognition piece honoring her pledge of financial support through membership in The William Schaffner Society.

A lifelong Licking County resident, Mary joined LMHS in 2014 as a registered nurse and clinical coordinator in the Coronary Care Unit. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Chamberlain College of Nursing in

2019. Mary is also a nursing instructor at Central Ohio Technical College. She enjoys helping students gain confidence in their care of critically ill patients.

Mary was nominated for the Clarissa Ann Howard Nursing Award for Clinical Excellence in 2020, and she received the Patient Experience Award in 2021. She is a member of the LMH Nurse Practice Council and the Central Ohio Nurse Honor Guard.

Mary and her husband, Andrew, reside in Newark with their children, Guinevere and Graham, and their goldendoodle, Archie. In her free time, Mary enjoys cooking new recipes, exploring local destinations with family, dining with friends, and watching television series and documentaries that spark curiosity and offer fresh perspectives.



Candace Rogers, B.S.N., R.N.

Candace Rogers recently accepted a glass recognition piece from President & CEO Rob Montagnese and LMH Board President Jim Cooper to honor her pledge of financial support through membership in The William Schaffner Society.

Candace joined Licking Memorial Surgical Services in 2010 and was

recently promoted to Director of Operating Room, GI Lab, and Sterile Processing. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Mount Vernon Nazarene University. She is a member of the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation and the Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses.

Candace and her husband, Jon, reside in Baltimore with their children, Clark, 9, and Karra, 6. She enjoys cheering for her children at sporting events, gardening, traveling, and being outdoors.



LMHS is proud to acknowledge those who make significant contributions to support its mission to improve the health of the community. Charitable contributions to LMHF are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Contributions are used for capital expansion, renovation projects, or equipment needs. Contributions are not used for operating expenses, salaries, or other day-to-day expenditures.

Donors

Contributions to Licking Memorial Health Foundation (LMHF) will help fund the construction and development of The Center at LMHS. The facility will serve as a place to meet, learn, and share in activities that promote healthy lifestyles and offer valuable resources.

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In honor of Todd F. Lemmon, M.D.,
and grandson Rory
By: Mr. and Mrs. Tracie Hill
In honor of Licking Memorial
Accounting Department
By: Steven Zima
In honor of Licking Memorial
Cardiology Department
By: Michael Lorenz

John Alford Fellowship

Laura Conley, B.S.N., R.N.
Deborah Kohman
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Memorial

In memory of James Bradley
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In memory of John A. Dorsey
By: John D. Dorsey
In memory of G. Frank Gabe
By: Barbara Gabe
In memory of Carol Guanciale
By: Barbara Cantlin
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Veronica and Mark Patton
Robin Pierce
John H. and Sarah R. Wallace
Cindy and Thaddeus Webster
In memory of Molly Lee
By: Mr. and Mrs. William Orndorff
In memory of Jack Parmer
By: Thomas and Debi Lenzo
In memory of G. Jackie Parmer
By: Thomas and Debi Lenzo

Paving Our Future

Lori J. Elwood, M.D.
Joseph E. Fondriest, M.D.
Daniel Kennedy, M.D.

William Schaffner Society

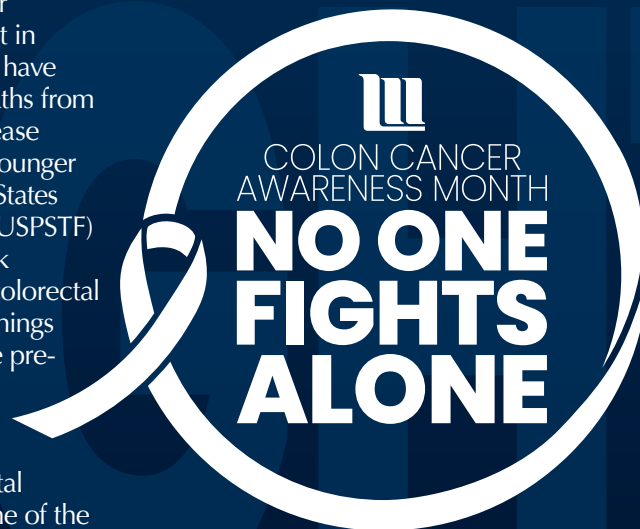
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Candace Rogers, B.S.N., R.N.
Kelly & Doug Stutz
Derek Turner
Brad and Tricia Zellar

LMHS Raises Awareness During Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

In March, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) observed National Colon Cancer Awareness Month by providing information and resources to the community that highlights the importance of colon screenings and colon health. Colorectal cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among both men and women in the United States. The American Cancer Society estimates that more than 108,000 people will be diagnosed with this highly preventable disease in 2026. Increased colon cancer screenings and the advancement in treatments for colorectal cancer have contributed to a decrease in deaths from these cancers; however, the disease has been rising among people younger than 50. Therefore, the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends that all average-risk individuals begin screening for colorectal cancer at age 45. Regular screenings are critical to detect and remove pre-cancerous polyps, which often are present without symptoms.

may vary, and patients should contact their insurance company to determine coverage of screenings and other types of colonoscopies.

In conjunction with Colon Cancer Awareness Month, LMHS will provide a free initial colonoscopy screening to 10 eligible Licking County residents. Individuals, at least 45 years of age, with no pre-existing conditions, have little or no insurance, and are low-income may be eligible to receive the free screening.



When discovered early, colorectal cancer is highly treatable and one of the most curable cancers. Most colorectal cancers can be treated with surgery followed by chemotherapy to decrease the risk of recurrence. There are several colorectal cancer screening methods; however, colonoscopy is considered the “gold standard” and has several advantages compared to other tests.

Those who have a family history of colorectal cancer or certain risk factors, such as inflammatory bowel disease, should start screening earlier and more frequently. There are often no signs or symptoms of colorectal cancer, which is why regular screening is so important. Many symptoms of colorectal cancer can also be associated with other health conditions. Only a physician can determine the cause. Do not delay seeking treatment if symptoms worsen.

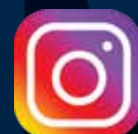
Simple lifestyle changes such as regular exercise and healthier eating can help decrease the risk of colorectal cancer. Eating plant-based foods such as vegetables, fruits, legumes,

and whole grains help maintain a healthy weight and can aid in weight loss. A diet containing fiber-rich foods such as raspberries, pears, apples, bananas, oranges, cooked artichokes, peas, broccoli, corn, whole grains, and legumes promotes regularity and prevents constipation.

Research shows that regular exercise may reduce the risk of colorectal cancer by improving immune function, reducing inflammation, and moving food more rapidly through the colon. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise each week. In addition to regular exercise, people who spend long periods sitting, such as those who work desk or driving jobs, would benefit from finding ways to be more active throughout the day. Studies have also shown a sedentary lifestyle or prolonged periods of sitting may increase the risk of colon cancer. Small steps, such as standing every hour to stretch or take a walk, are beneficial.

Throughout March, LMHS held events to increase awareness of colorectal cancer and the importance of preventative screenings, including a Walk with a Doc event on March 14. Esteban Grovas-Cordovi, M.D., of Licking Memorial Gastroenterology, led the walk. In addition, LMHS employees participated in Wear Blue for Colon Cancer Awareness Day on March 6, and the Main Street Café featured high-fiber specials during the week of March 16. For additional resources about colorectal cancer prevention Licking Memorial Hospital, visit www.lmhealth.org/ColonHealth.

For more resources, visit LMHSColonHealth.org



Development Spotlight – Cindy Young

Cindy Young has worked in healthcare for more than 40 years, and gained a deep understanding of the industry. Her experience provides a unique perspective that she has shared with the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council on two separate occasions. After leaving in 2010 due to work distance, Cindy was excited to rejoin the Development Council in 2023 and to once again offer her advocacy and support to LMH.

During her first term as a Development Council member, Cindy served as the Chair of the Community Relations Committee. When Cindy rejoined the Development Council in 2023, she became a member of the Annual Support Committee. The Annual Support Committee is responsible for the philanthropic support of LMH, and oversees fundraising events and solicits gifts from all sources, including special contributors such as The William Schaffner Society, The Caduceus Society, and The John Alford Fellowship.

In addition to supporting LMHS as members of the Development Council,

Cindy and her husband, Jim, have contributed to LMHS’ efforts to provide local, exceptional care by donating to The John Alford Fellowship. In 2024, Cindy and Jim also served as Honorary Chairs for the LMH Golf Gala to benefit technological advances at LMH. “I have always been a believer in the importance of community hospitals, and am happy to advocate for LMH,” said Cindy. “LMHS goes above and beyond to offer the best quality care and ensure that residents are able to maintain a healthy lifestyle.”

Cindy specifically commends LMHS’ focus on how social drivers, such as food insecurity and transportation, affect community health. Partnering with the Food Pantry Network (FPN) of Licking County, LMHS helped to open the FPN Market to supply food assistance to an area not previously served by the FPN. LMHS also worked with Licking County Transit to establish bus transportation throughout the county. “LMHS leadership makes very smart and deliberate choices and partnerships,” Cindy said. “They are always looking for ways to evolve and grow that makes the most sense for the community.”

Cindy earned a bachelor’s degree in journalism from The Ohio State University and received her Master of Business Administration degree from Ohio University. She is currently the Assistant Vice President Growth and Community Engagement at Molina Healthcare of Ohio. Cindy serves on the Ohio Medicaid Advisory Committee, the National Advisory Committee – Women for Economic and Leadership Development, and the Licking County Aging Program Planning Committee. She is also the past President for the Newark Rotary Club and a former Board Member for the Midland Theatre and United Way. Cindy and Jim’s family includes son, Alex Steen, partner Megan Wojtkowiak, and grandson Oliver; daughter, Chelsea Steen and daughter-in-law, Victoria Perez; daughter, Ashley Winters, son-in-law, Jim and granddaughter, Aubrey. She enjoys the performing arts, traveling, and hiking.



LMH Celebrates Birthday by Donating to Local Organizations

Each year, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) observes the date of January 18 to commemorate the establishment of the first Hospital in Newark. This year, LMH celebrates 128 years of healthcare in the Licking County community. As part of an annual birthday tradition started 22 years ago, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) employees generously provided monetary donations and cold weather items, such as new outerwear and blankets, to donate to The Center for New Beginnings and The Salvation Army.

“Improving the health of the community requires more than just providing quality healthcare. Our employees are dedicated to giving back to the community as well,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob

Montagnese. “The annual birthday celebration is a wonderful display of the staff’s compassion and concern for the well-being of others, and 128 years of providing care to our community shows the lasting success of LMH and the trust that residents have in our community Hospital.”

For the birthday gift collection, a friendly interdepartmental competition was established. Various departments were organized into teams and competed to determine which team donated the largest

amount of cold weather items in pounds and the largest monetary donations. Total contributions of cold weather items equaled 89.8 pounds and monetary donations totaled \$9,252. The donations were divided equally, and Rob personally delivered the items to The Center for New Beginnings and The Salvation Army.



Volunteer Spotlight – Jeri Good

Jeri Good joined as a volunteer for Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) after encouragement from a fellow volunteer and long-time friend, Pat Law. Although she admits she was nervous at first, Jeri attended the Volunteer Recruitment Event where her questions were answered, giving her the confidence to take the next step.

On Tuesdays, Jeri volunteers as a wayfinder at 1717 West Main Street, where she enjoys seeing familiar faces week after week. On Thursdays, she volunteers at the Food Pantry Network (FPN) Market checking in visitors and meeting them with compassion and respect during what can be a stressful time.

One of Jeri's favorite stories about the volunteers highlights the true spirit and heart of LMHS. On Christmas Eve, a day which the FPN Market was planned to be closed, LMHS decided to allow the location to remain open to serve those in need since many of her fellow volunteers offered to assist. The Market was the only pantry open, ensuring that many would have food essentials during the holidays. Jeri is proud to be associated with an organization that supports their community.

A proud Licking County native, Jeri's roots in the community run deep. Her family history in the area dates back to the 1800s. After high school, Jeri moved to Los Angeles where she began to accumulate a wealth of professional experience, with a brief time in New York working for Liz Claiborne, Inc. During her career in Los Angeles, Jeri was a program coordinator for a graduate school of organizational psychology and an executive assistant at Fox Sports West, home of the Lakers, Clippers, and Dodgers, and retired from the Digital Communications division for Nestlé USA after 13 years of service.

In addition to her volunteer work at LMHS, she is involved in other volunteer positions and community leadership roles. Jeri serves as a Board Member for Together We Grow Gardens and The Licking County Community Center. She is the Vice President of the Newark Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association, a member of the Advisory Board for Catholic Social Services, and volunteers for the Midland Theatre, Downtown Newark Association, and Licking County Historical Society.

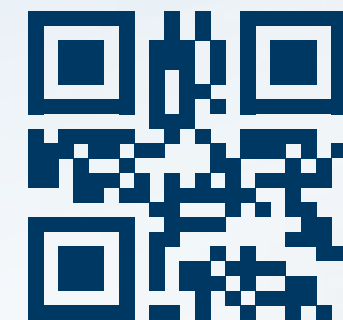
When asked about her experience at LMHS, Jeri shared, "LMHS treats their volunteers so well, they speak highly of us, and take care of us – that is so important."

When she does have extra time, she enjoys working in her community garden, tending to her two raised beds from May through September – her favorite pastime. She also loves baking, especially during the holidays. Every Christmas, Jeri prepares 10 dozen fully decorated sugar cookies, carefully boxing and shipping those to family and friends.



Active•Fit YOUTH WELLNESS PROGRAM

The **Active•Fit** program promotes healthy lifestyles for youth ages 6 to 12. Participants who complete the free program will be entered into a drawing to win prizes!



Sign Up, Today!

To register, visit ActiveFit.org



Active•Fit Period 1 Prize Winners

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) recently recognized the Active•Fit prize winners from Period 1. Participants in the Youth Wellness Program who completed their fitness goals between September 1 and December 31 were entered into a special drawing. Winners received their prizes from LMHS as special recognition for their achievements.

Meta Quest 2 Virtual Reality Headset & Fitness Software

Joel Baraily
Carter Smith
Aria Warren

Bicycle & Helmet

Aarov Gajmer
Margot Smith
Mackenzie Endicott

Athletic Shoes

Maelee Thompson
Lilley Liston
Josey Curmode

iPad & Fitness Software

Aiden Mader
Emiliano Rodriguez-Moody
Wesson Mays

\$100 Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Card

Santi Sinanaji	Eli McArthur	Jet Lewis
Aaradhya Bastola	Dalton Bailey	Brooklyn Jennings
Hunter Lopez	Emery Johnson	
Guils Stollings	Loueva Schweers	

\$50 Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Card

Romi Lovell	Presely Stepp	Arosh Adhikari
Cheyenne Cummings	Lousia Wagner	Audrey Martin
Harper Lyle	Sarah Khanal	Ayden Salas
	Lilah McFarland	

The Active•Fit Program has registered over 14,200 participants who select health-related goals and track their progress at ActiveFit.org. There are exciting Active•Fit events and opportunities for children to get active and learn about their health during the year. Period 2 for 2025-2026 began on January 1 and runs through April 30. For more information, or to register for the Active•Fit Youth Wellness Program at any time throughout the year, please visit ActiveFit.org.

Retiree Spotlight

Jamie Hartman, a former Licking County resident, retired from Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) in 2026 after 28 years of service. Prior to retirement, she served as a nurse for Licking Memorial Orthopedic Surgery, working closely alongside Andrew Terlecky, D.O. and Anthony D'Amico, PA-C, and experienced some of the most fulfilling moments of her career. In addition to Orthopedic Surgery, she enjoyed a wide range of professional growth as she provided care for patients in the Emergency Department and Licking Memorial Pediatrics, as well as managing a number of Licking Memorial Health Professionals physician practices including Gastroenterology, Family Practice, and Dermatology, in addition to serving as a Quality Manager.

When reflecting on her time at LMHS, Jamie says that her most enjoyable memories center on taking care of patients and building lasting relationships with coworkers. "What I miss most since

retiring are the relationships that I built with the orthopedic surgeons," Jamie said. "They were friends who treated me with respect." Among her greatest memories is the enduring friendship she formed with fellow nurse, Judy Lefever. The two worked side-by-side for 15 years, developing a bond that extended beyond the workplace.

In 2007, while working in Pediatrics, Jamie was honored with the Clarissa Ann Howard Nursing Award for Clinical Excellence in recognition of her exceptional care and commitment in the workplace. She is deeply proud of this achievement.

In retirement, Jamie is embracing time with family and the activities that she enjoys most. Most days, Jamie can be found tending to her horses and trail riding, and spends much of her free time cheering on her grandchildren at football and basketball games. She is a proud grandmother of six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. She and her

husband of 35 years, Fred, currently reside in Knox County and share two children, Tyler and Jess.

Jamie and Fred travel weekly to Newark from Knox County to attend church at the Newark Church of the Nazarene, a commitment that continues to be an important part of their lives. In the near future, she is looking ahead to an exciting adventure – volunteering for the Glory Reins Stable, an organization that connects abused children with horses to find hope and healing.





Licking Memorial Health Systems

1320 West Main Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

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Community Events

Walk with a Doc

Saturday, May 9, 9:00 a.m.
Wildwood Park
785 West Broadway, Granville

Brent Savage, M.D., of Licking Memorial Surgical Services, will lead a discussion and answer general questions about Hernias.

Saturday, June 27, 9:00 a.m.
The Dawes Arboretum
7770 Jacksontown Road, Newark

Andrew C. Seipel, M.D., of Licking Memorial Family Practice – Licking Valley, will lead a discussion about the diabetes.

Walk with a Doc events are free of charge; however, registration is required. Each walk lasts approximately 40 minutes. Healthy snacks and blood pressure screenings will be provided.

To register, call the Licking Memorial Events Line at (220) 564-1560.

First Impressions – Maternal Child Classes

- Boot Camp for Dads
- Pregnancy & Childbirth Education Classes
- Grandparenting
- Childbirth & Mother-baby Basics One-day Course
- Prenatal Breastfeeding Basics Class
- Sibling Preparation Class

Unless otherwise noted, classes are located in the Licking Memorial Hospital First Floor Conference Room.

To register for classes, visit LMHealth.org or call (220) 564-3388.

Diabetes Self-management Education and Support (DSMES)

Class sessions are offered twice a month:

Session 1

First two Wednesdays of each month, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
Licking Memorial Diabetes Learning Center
1865 Tamarack Road, Newark

Session 2

Third and fourth Wednesdays of each month, 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.
Licking Memorial Diabetes Learning Center
1865 Tamarack Road, Newark

Registration and physician referral are required. To register for classes, call (220) 564-4722. For information on course fees, call (220) 564-4915. Fees vary depending on insurance coverage.

Please take a few minutes to read this issue of **Community Connection**. You will once again see why Licking Memorial Health Systems is measurably different ... for your health! **Visit us at LMHealth.org.**

A publication of the LMHS Public Relations Department. Please contact the Public Relations Department at (220) 564-1572 to receive future mailings.

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