



Licking Memorial Health Systems

Community Connection

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Measurably Different ... for Your Health!

Celebrating 20 Years of Service as President & CEO

Since becoming President & CEO of Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) 20 years ago, Robert Montagnese, B.A., M.H.A., C.P.A., has continued to embrace the organization's mission of improving the health of the community by offering residents specialized, high-quality care within Licking County. He has been a champion for expansion and new technologies and has worked to introduce new programs that focus on healthy lifestyles and prevention. Rob began his career with LMHS as a summer intern and joined the organization on a full-time basis in 1993. He served as Controller and Accounting Manager, Senior Vice President Financial Services, and Executive Vice President before attaining his current position in 2006. Rob holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration degree with a concentration in accounting from Wittenberg University and a Master of Healthcare Administration from The Ohio State University. Additionally, he is a certified public accountant (CPA) and a member of the Ohio Society of CPAs and the Healthcare Financial Management Association.

Under his leadership, LMHS expanded the main Hospital campus with new medical areas including the John & Mary Alford Pavilion Surgery and Emergency Care addition, opened three community off-campus Urgent Care facilities, several new physician practice locations, the Licking Memorial Medical Campus on West Main Street in Newark, and acquired the Licking Memorial Hospital – Tamarack location. Rob is dedicated to ensuring those living in the area have less need to travel to facilities in larger cities to obtain specialized medical care. His efforts have assisted in recruiting physicians and surgeons who specialize in vascular surgery services, interventional cardiology, orthopedic surgery, and oncology, among others. The services are available to all residents regardless of insurance coverage or financial resources.

To reach and care for the underserved facing financial and transportation barriers, Rob supported the construction of a facility in Downtown Newark which offers Urgent Care services. Offering these services financially benefits patients by preventing visits to the Emergency Department. The second Hospital location on Tamarack Road also offers numerous benefits for patients including an outpatient surgery clinic in addition

to pain and wound clinics. Rob also advocated for the creation of the LMHS Ride Program. The program offers free transportation for non-emergent medical and healthcare appointments to Licking County residents.

In addition to facility expansion, Rob champions the purchase and use of new technologies and procedures to improve patient care and recovery. Rob has sought technologies that are far beyond the expectation of a community hospital. Obtaining the most up-to-date technologies has led to improved patient outcomes for surgeries and faster, more accurate laboratory results. Many patients also experience quicker recovery times which reduces time spent in the Hospital.

Thanks to Rob's efforts, LMHS was the first facility in Ohio to acquire EarlySense. The EarlySense monitoring system fits easily underneath a patient's mattress and tracks vital signs and other indicators of a patient's health status. EarlySense then collaborated with HillRom to create the Progressa+ True ICU bed which contains the in-bed technologies that optimize patient care and accelerate recovery, resulting in decreased time spent in the ICU and a reduction in hospital costs. Again, LMHS was among the first in the

nation to purchase and use the new beds. In addition to the advanced monitoring system, the beds offer advanced support surface features to protect the patient's skin integrity to prevent pressure injuries, deliver pulmonary therapies to reduce respiratory complications associated with long periods of immobility, and offers flexible frame options to move patients safely and easily. Since implementation of EarlySense and the Smart beds, LMHS has experienced a major decrease in sepsis cases. The advanced technology also has helped to reduce the number of Code Blue or heart attack alerts on the inpatient units as the system allows staff to be proactive with the care they provide.

To provide better communication for patients, Rob advocated for acquiring a new nurse call light system and new electronic health record software. The call light system uses a set of colored lights to alert staff members of specific patient needs, creating a more efficient means of communication and resulting in quicker response times. The electronic health record provides a continuum of patient care across the organization as well as to other healthcare facilities that use Epic, increasing the quality of care provided to Licking County residents.

With Rob's support and leadership, the LMH Laboratory Department was renovated and updated. The Lab provides an extensive offering of molecular testing, rare for most community hospitals. In an effort to increase the speed and accuracy

of testing, Rob was instrumental in the acquisition of the BioFire® FilmArray® Torch, the latest advancement in molecular infectious disease diagnostics. First used by the military to identify bioterrorism in the field, this technology has been adapted to appropriate medical use. With additions to software, automation, and other equipment purchases, the Laboratory staff offers testing that can confirm a heart attack, traumatic brain injury, and diseases such as Lyme disease. They can even perform certain blood tests in a patient's room for the fastest results possible.



Seeing the community's need for accurate and fast computed tomography (CT) scans, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), Positron Emission Tomography (PET), and X-rays, Rob made it a priority to update the Radiology Department. The CT scans were upgraded to offer better quality and more detailed images. Patients now have more access to a high-performance, energy-efficient PET/CT scanner with a wide range of clinical capabilities as well. The Trinion PET/CT scanner is all-digital and delivers an increase in sensitivity that leads to faster scan times at a lower dose of radiation with high-quality images. Special services for men in need of diagnostic testing for prostate cancer and women in need of breast imaging have also been added.

To offer less invasive surgical procedures, Rob wholeheartedly supported an effort to acquire a da Vinci surgical system which was generously donated to LMH. With the new robotic surgical system, surgeons can view the operative field in

3D and more precisely perform delicate techniques. Due to the enhanced accuracy, robotic-assisted surgery offers less blood loss, decreased damage to skin, muscles, and tissue, reduced risk of infection, and smaller, less visible scars. Other benefits include less pain, faster recovery times, and shorter stays in the Hospital.

Focusing exclusively on improving the health of the community, Rob has been an advocate for LMHS programs that promote healthy lifestyles to assist in disease prevention. He was instrumental in the creation of the Active•Fit and Active•Senior programs. The Active•Fit program was designed for children, ages 6 to 12, to introduce the benefits of exercise, healthy eating, and proper rest. It also motivates youth to create personal goals and develop a lifelong commitment to personal fitness. The program offers numerous activities at no cost to the participants throughout the year. Participants who complete their goals are placed in a drawing for an opportunity to win a number of fitness-oriented prizes such as bicycles and athletic gear. The Active•Senior program promotes healthy lifestyles for those aged 60 and older by encouraging adults to stay physically fit, maintain a healthy diet, challenge themselves intellectually, stay connected with friends and family, and maintain a commitment to personal health and wellness. The free activities offered for the program include a dance, an education-based game show, and a gardening/cooking event, among others.

To protect young athletes, Rob has been a proponent of the Heart to Play program, free pre-participation screenings for



Licking County middle and high school students involved in sports, marching band, or C-TEC's Criminal Justice, Fire, and Physical Therapy programs. The annual screenings include electrocardiograms (EKGs) and echocardiograms to detect heart defects that place students at risk. In addition, students may receive an Immediate Post-concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing (ImPACT) baseline concussion test, which is administered every other year to athletes in grades 7 through 12 who attend a school that does not perform testing.

Assisting residents to maintain a healthy lifestyle includes education pertaining to prevention and healthy choices. To better serve the community, Rob set a goal for LMHS to build a designated education 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 the fall of 2026. (continued on page 4)



Rob is also passionate about supporting other non-profit organizations and addressing social determinants of health, such as transportation, food insecurity, and housing. In 2025, with support from LMHS, the Licking County Transit accommodated over 31,000 passengers on the Main Street route in Newark, an increase of nearly 30 percent from 2024. In addition to the Main Street route, four other routes now offer service to 21st Street in Newark, Granville, Heath, and Buckeye Lake. The Food Pantry Network Market on McMillen Drive in Newark, 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.

Throughout his leadership at LMHS, Rob has focused on the organizational mission to improve the health of the community. Encouraging healthy lifestyles and ensuring residents have access to high-quality, state-of-the-art healthcare services are his top priorities. He has earned numerous awards for his dedication to Licking County including the John W. Alford Memorial Award in 2009 for his community and civic involvement, and his interest in cancer research. In 2012, he was named a Hometown Hero by the American Red Cross of Licking County to recognize his positive impact on the community. In 2014, he was a top 10 national finalist for the Modern Healthcare Community Leadership Award. He received the Bravo Award for Community Service

from the Newark Rotary Club and was named on Becker's Nonprofit Hospital & Health System CEOs to Know list in 2015, 2016, and 2017. Also in 2016, Rob was named Executive of the Year through the Columbus CEO Healthcare Achievement Awards, and was added to the Licking Valley Hall of Pride, a special recognition for outstanding graduates of Licking Valley High School who have contributed to the civic, cultural, religious, and economic vitality of the community at the local, state, or national level. In 2017, Rob was named as a Columbus Business First C-Suite Honoree, and in 2024, he received the Wittenberg Alumni Servant Leader Award and Columbus Business First's Innovators in Healthcare and Life Sciences Award – Community Outreach. His work to expand services and facilities and offer free programs to the community have greatly increased the quality of care available, while keeping costs low for area residents.



LMHS Board Honors Rob Montagnese

The Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) Board recently honored Rob Montagnese for his 20 years as President & CEO. LMHS Board Chair Brian Mortellaro presented Rob with a special proclamation to publicly state their gratitude toward Rob in recognition of his accomplishments and in appreciation of his ongoing services to LMHS and the community. Rob became President & CEO on December 14, 2006, and during that time, he has served loyally and with distinction in support of the LMHS mission to improve the health of the community, in addition to dedicating his talents to make a difference within the organization and throughout the community.

During the past two decades, Rob has exemplified the LMHS mission through outstanding leadership, the establishment of numerous healthcare locations and health practices, the incorporation of new medical technologies and procedures, and positioning LMHS to benefit the community through the implementation of needed public services, in addition to providing dedicated leadership to educational and non-profit organizations.



LMHS Earns Prestigious Awards

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) continues to set a benchmark for excellence, earning prestigious national and local recognitions that highlight its commitment to superior care. By consistently demonstrating industry best practices, LMHS ensures positive patient outcomes and high levels of client satisfaction across its diverse service lines. These accolades reflect a culture dedicated to clinical precision, patient safety, and providing a supportive environment for employees and the community they serve.

High Performing Home Health – U.S. News & World Report

Licking Memorial Home Health Services is among the 1,319 agencies that earned the Best Home Health distinction for exceeding expectations in care quality

and patient experience. Organizations that were rated as high performing in the U.S. News Best Home Health evaluation were found to exceed national averages

for treatment start times, better mobility, and daily independence for patients.



Top Hospital for OB/GYN Surgery – Castle Connolly's 2026 Top Hospitals

Castle Connolly's 2026 Top Hospitals list recognizes over 1,400 hospitals for excellence in performing specific medical procedures. Licking Memorial Hospital represents the top 25 percent of hospitals nationwide for C-section and OB/GYN surgeries. The analysis is based on the patient journey while undergoing care, including the pre- and post-procedure encounters. Hospitals are then evaluated based on procedure volume, patient outcomes, quality of care, and physician expertise, including

the number of Castle Connolly Top Doctors and physician nominations for top performing hospitals. The list identifies the hospitals that consistently deliver excellent outcomes for specific surgeries with significant improvement for the lives of patients.

"LMH is pleased to be recognized on the national level. The rankings empower patients to make informed healthcare decisions, backed by data-driven insights and proven clinical excellence," said

Licking Memorial Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese. "The U.S. News & World Report and Castle Connolly lists serve as valuable resources, helping patients confidently navigate critical moments with the assurance that LMH delivers top quality care."



Top Workplaces 2026 – USA Today, Top Workplaces 2026 – Columbus CEO, Top Workplaces Frontline Workers – Bucketlist

LMHS earned the prestigious 2026 USA TODAY Top Workplaces award, which honors organizations for creating exceptional, people-first cultures and their commitment to fostering a workplace environment that values employee listening and engagement. The Columbus CEO Top Workplaces award honors organizations with 350 or more employees that have created exceptional, people-first cultures. Only 21 organizations in the area are being recognized this year for their commitment to fostering a workplace environment that values employee listening and engagement.

"Earning the Top Workplaces awards is a testament to our organization's

commitment to a people-first culture and our mission to improve the health of the community," Rob stated. "The awards are driven by real employee feedback and exemplifies our employees' trust in the organization and leadership. We value our staff members, and our culture resonates in today's competitive market."

In addition, LMHS earned the Top Workplaces for Frontline Workers, which marks LMHS as an employer of choice for people seeking employment in the healthcare industry. The winners are determined by authentic employee feedback captured through a confidential survey conducted by Energage, LLC,



LMHS Hosts Board Appreciation Dinner



In April, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosted an annual appreciation dinner in the Main Street Café to recognize and honor the service of the LMHS and Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Board Members. Attendees enjoyed a dinner catered by LMH Culinary Services. President & CEO Rob Montagnese introduced the incoming Board Members, Sally Heckman, Stephanie Mollica, Katherine Snyder, Ph.D., John Uible, and Todd Ware. Jennifer Roberts and Sharad Thakkar, Ph.D., who previously served on the LMH Board, will now serve on the LMHS Board. Outgoing Board Members, Jim Cooper, Esq., Mark Mitchell, M.D., Mike Massaro, and Nancy Neely were presented with personal gifts from Rob in appreciation of their leadership and years of service.

New Board Members Announced

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) is pleased to announce the recent addition of community leaders, Sally Heckman, Stephanie Mollica, Katherine Snyder, Ph.D., John Uible, and Todd Ware to the Board of Directors. In addition, the LMH Board of Directors elected the following officers for 2026-2027: Jack Treinish, Jr., Chair; Cheri Hottinger, Vice Chair; Marcia Downes, Secretary; and Jim Ward, Treasurer.



Sally Heckman joined First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Newark in 2012 and has held several positions including Vice President Human

Resources, Executive Vice President, and Chief Operating Officer. She currently serves as the President & CEO and as a member of the Board of Directors. In 2009, Sally earned a Master of Business Administration degree from The Ohio State University. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts in French from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana.

Sally volunteers her time to several boards including the Newark Rotary Club and the Culver Summers Schools and Camps. She is the Secretary of the Board of Trustees for The Thomas J. Evans Foundation and The Gilbert Reese Family Foundation as well as the Vice Chair of the Central Ohio Technical College Board of Trustees and the Boys & Girls Club of Newark Advisory Board.

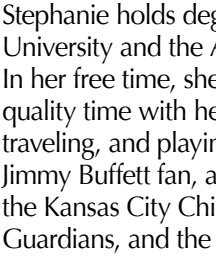
A lifelong resident of Licking County, Sally and her husband, Lee, live in Granville with their three children, Will, Everett, and Mae.



Stephanie Mollica served State Farm Insurance and Financial Services in various leadership and executive roles across multiple states, including Ohio, Tennessee,

Illinois, and Kentucky, and most recently, she was the Vice President of Agency for the South-Central zone. In this role, she oversaw the sales operation in the western and southern part of the country, while residing in Kansas City. After retiring, she returned to her hometown, Granville, to spend more time with her family.

Throughout her career, Stephanie has been actively involved in community service. She has served on numerous boards, including the Derrick Johnson Defend the Dream Foundation, Kansas Council for Economic Education, and the Kansas Insurance and Financial Services Education Foundation. She was also involved as a representative with Patrick Mahomes' Foundation, 15 and The Mahomies Foundation. Currently, she serves as the President of the Philanthropic Educational Organization and as a Board Member at Ohio University School of Business, Schey Centre, Weathervane Playhouse, and the Mental Health and Recovery Board of Licking and Knox Counties. Additionally, she provides committee work for The Works Museum.



Stephanie holds degrees from Ohio University and the American College. In her free time, she enjoys spending quality time with her family and friends, traveling, and playing golf. She is a huge Jimmy Buffett fan, and loves Notre Dame, the Kansas City Chiefs, the Cleveland Guardians, and the Cleveland Browns.



Katherine Snyder, Ph.D., is the Associate Vice President of Student Life at Denison University. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

degree from Ohio Dominican University, a Master of Arts in College Student Personnel degree from Bowling Green State University, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She is a Certified Threat Manager (CTM), credentialed by the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. Dr. Snyder is a member of Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA), Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP), and is a current faculty member for Higher Education Case Managers Association (HECMA). Dr. Snyder, her husband, Justin Brown, and their daughter, Eloise, reside in Pickerington.



Since retiring from his position as Trust Officer at Park National Bank in 2022, John Uible has been a dedicated volunteer with Licking Memorial

Health Systems (LMHS). Originally from Wilmington, Ohio, John has lived in Newark for more than 47 years. He is a graduate of the Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics degree from Denison University in Granville.

In addition to his volunteer work at LMHS, John also offers his time to the Licking County Public Library and A Call to College at Newark High School, a program that helps students pursue higher education. He is also a former member of the Newark City Council and currently serves on the Boards of the Newark Development Partners, the LeFevre Foundation, and the Licking County Foundation. Outside of his volunteer efforts, John enjoys walks, traveling to new places, and cherishing time with his wife, Julie, and their two children, Andrew and Kate.



Todd Ware was promoted to Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of The Energy Cooperative in 2001 and has served as the President & CEO

since 2012. Throughout his career, he has served on several boards, including United Way of Licking County, Cardinal Operating Committee, National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, and The Ohio State University at Newark Advisory Board. He is currently the Treasurer of Buckeye Power, Inc. Board, and a member of the Otterbein at Granville, Altheirs Oil, and the Federal Agriculture Mortgage Corporation (FarmerMac) Boards. Todd received his Bachelor of Science in Accounting degree from The Ohio State University.

Todd grew up in Licking County and currently resides in Hopewell with his wife, Christy. Their family includes

daughters, Danielle and Katie; Danielle's husband, Chris; and grandson, Cayden.

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) has a separate Board of Directors to oversee all aspects of three corporations – Licking Memorial Hospital, Licking Memorial Health Professionals, and Licking Memorial Health Foundation. It is comprised of eight community leaders, who set policies and guide LMHS through day-to-day operations. Jennifer Roberts and Sharad Thakkar, Ph.D., recently joined the LMHS Board of Directors. Brian Mortellaro, Chair; and David Doney, Vice Chair, will continue their terms for 2026-2027, and Jacqueline Parrill, Ed.D., was recently elected as Secretary/Treasurer.



Jennifer Roberts currently serves as Executive Director for the Newark Campus Development Fund, the Thomas J. Evans Foundation, and the Gilbert Reese

Family Foundation. She moved to Licking County in 2002. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Art History degree from Denison University. She lives in Granville with her husband, Todd. The couple has three children, Austin, Ian, and Duncan.

Jennifer is a member of the Newark Rotary Club and serves on the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority, Licking County Chamber of Commerce, and the Food Pantry Network of Licking County Boards. A founding board member for the Canal Market District, she currently serves as Treasurer. Additionally, she was part of the Founding Steering Committee for the Boys & Girls Club of Newark and continues to serve on the Advisory Board as the Resource Development Committee Chair. From 2024 to 2026, Jennifer served on the LMH Board of Directors.



Sharad Thakkar, Ph.D., is President and Co-owner of Polymer Technology and Services, Inc., a company in Heath that recycles scrap

plastics into resins with a wide variety of manufacturing applications. Dr. Thakkar received a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering degree from the University of Bombay and a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry degree from Sardar Patel University, both in India. He earned his Doctorate in Physical Chemistry degree from Kent State University in Kent, Ohio.

Dr. Thakkar has been actively involved in the Licking County community for the past 24 years. He currently serves on the Board of the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority. Dr. Thakkar served on the LMH Board of Directors from 2015 to 2024 and was Board Secretary from 2020 to 2023. He has also served on The Ohio State University Newark Campus Advisory Board and the Licking County Chamber of Commerce Board.

Members of both Boards are dedicated individuals who volunteer their time to guarantee the best healthcare and services are available for the community.

2026 LMHS Board of Directors

Brian Mortellaro, Chair
David Doney, Vice Chair
Jacqueline Parrill, Ed.D., Secretary/
Treasurer
Daniel Hunt
Joyce Malainy, Ed.D.
Christopher Meyer
Jennifer Roberts
Sharad Thakkar, Ph.D.
Robert A. Montagnese, Ex Officio
Jack Treinish, Jr., LMH Board Chair

2026 LMH Board of Directors

Jack Treinish, Jr., Chair
Cheri Hottinger, Vice Chair
Marcia Downes, Secretary
Jim Ward, Treasurer
Sally Heckman
Todd Londot
Stephanie Mollica
Chuck Moore
Dana Moore
Konrod Morris
Katherine Snyder, Ph.D., C.T.M.
John Uible
Philip Wagner, Ph.D.
Todd Ware

Event Partners:



“For Your Health” 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk Scheduled for July

The Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council, in partnership with The Dawes Arboretum, the Buckeye Valley Family YMCA, and Park National Bank, will present the 18th annual “For Your Health” 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk on Saturday, July 18. Participants may choose to run or walk the 5K course or complete the 1-mile Fun Walk course on the scenic grounds of The Dawes Arboretum.

Everyone who completes the course will receive a participation medal. RacePenguin will provide chip timing service to determine the awards for the top three male and female finishers overall, and the top three males and females in each age division. Registration is \$20 for timed participants and free for untimed participants. Registration is required for both courses and may be completed online at: racepenguin.com/events/foryourhealth/ or the morning of the race between 7:00 and 7:45 a.m.

Terrill D. Burnworth, D.O., his wife, Brittney, and their sons, Andrew and Maddox, are serving as the Honorary Chairs for this year's event. Dr. Burnworth joined LMH in January 2001 and currently serves as the Medical Director of the Emergency Department (ED), managing all aspects of the care provided by the practitioners in the ED and urgent care locations. Born in Steubenville, Ohio, Dr. Burnworth is a graduate of Weirton Madonna High School, West

Virginia University School of Pharmacy, and West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine. He is a member of the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians and the American Osteopathic Association. His special areas of interest are trauma and ultrasound. Dr. Burnworth is a supporter of the American Cancer Society. He received the LMHS MVP award in 2006 and was named the 2024 Physician of the Year. In his spare time, Dr. Burnworth enjoys scuba diving, biking, and exercise.

Brittney is the founder and owner of BB Aesthetic & Wellness, a leading medical spa and wellness practice in Columbus and Cincinnati. Before founding BB Aesthetic & Wellness, Brittney spent 15 years in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry, gaining a deep foundation in science, clinical research, and patient care pathways. Brittney is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner. She holds specialized education in women's health, men's health, and hormone optimization, and is a respected trainer, speaker, and industry educator. Brittney is also committed to philanthropy and community impact. She supports initiatives focused on wellness access, education, women's empowerment, and local community needs.

Community leaders who previously served as Honorary Chairs of the “For Your Health” 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk include:

- 2025** – Nancy and Jack Neely, O.D.
- 2024** – Drs. Anthony and Brianna Johnson
- 2023** – The Miller Family: Megan Miller, D.O.; her husband, Kevin; and their children, Cody and Lexi
- 2022** – The Mortellaro Family: Brian Mortellaro; his wife, Janine; and their children, Emma, Abby, and Sarah
- 2021** – Pamela and David Subler, M.D.
- 2019** – The Hagele Family: Thomas Hagele, M.D.; his wife, Courtney; and their children, Helena and James
- 2018** – The Heckman Family: Sally Heckman; her husband, Lee; and their children, Will, Everett, and Mae
- 2017** – The Reeves Family: Howard Reeves, D.O.; his wife, Sara; and their son, Brackyn
- 2016** – The Cummiskey Family: Tom Cummiskey; his wife, Kate; and their children, John, Emma, and Megan
- 2015** – Pattye Whisman, M.D.
- 2014** – Diane and Dan DeLawder
- 2013** – Dr. Garth and Mrs. Marci Bennington
- 2012** – Marcia and Jonathan Downes
- 2011** – Cara and Jim Riddell
- 2010** – The Fondriest Family: Joseph Fondriest, M.D.; his wife, Jean; and their children, Joe, Sara, Jacob, and Steven
- 2009** – Karen Smith-Silone, D.O., and James Silone, Jr., D.O.
- 2008** – Christy and Kevin Plaughter



Honorary Chairs
**Terrill Burnworth, D.O., and his family,
 Brittney, Andrew, and Maddox**

City of Newark Receives Lead Hazard Control Grant

The City of Newark has been awarded a \$3.5 million Lead Hazard Control Grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Lead Hazard Control Program. The program is a cooperative effort by the City of Newark Department of Development, Licking County Health Department, Leads Community Action Agency, and the City of Newark Division of Property Maintenance. The grant is designed to assist Newark homeowners and rental property owners with remediating lead hazards from homes where children under the age of six live or stay.

Lead hazards may be found in homes containing old paint. Lead pigments were used in paint until the Consumer Products Safety Commission banned use of such products in 1978. Lead paint was very durable and often used throughout homes; however, the most common areas to find lead paint include windows, window sills, trim work, doors, stairs, railings, banisters, porches, and siding. In addition, lead may be found in plumbing fixtures, pipes, or pipe soldering that can seep into drinking water as it flows through the pipes.

As lead paint deteriorates, it becomes dangerous. Chipping, peeling, and flaking paint, along with dust from lead paint can contaminate a house and cause serious health problems. According to information from the 2023 American Community Survey, Newark neighborhoods contain 6,265 houses built before 1940. HUD estimates that 87 percent of the homes built prior to 1940 contain lead-based paint.

Lead poses a serious health risk to children, especially those under the

age of six. Children may place fingers or toys that may be contaminated with lead dust into their mouth or breathe in the particles from the air. A pregnant woman who ingests lead may transfer the lead to her unborn baby. Lead interferes with cell function and can cause damage to the brain, central nervous system, and organs. The human body cannot tell the difference between lead and calcium.

Even children who appear to be healthy can have dangerous levels of lead in their blood. Children age six and under are most at risk for lead poisoning as the heavy metal accumulates in the body. Children may experience behavior and learning problems, slowed growth, hearing problems, brain damage, and poor muscle coordination. Extremely high levels of lead can lead to death. If lead poisoning is suspected, parents should contact a pediatrician immediately to have the child's blood tested. A small blood sample will be sent to a laboratory to determine the concentration of lead in the child's blood.

Through the City of Newark's Lead Hazard Control Program, families living in homes built before 1978 may apply to have their homes tested for lead hazards. An evaluation of the property, called a Lead Inspection Risk Assessment, will determine if lead hazards are present and where the hazard is located. A plan of action will then be created to control the hazards. The program may pay for work to control lead hazards in the home. For example, if lead hazards exist on

the windows, funds from the program could pay for a certified lead contractor to remove and install a new window. Only State of Ohio licensed lead contractors can complete lead hazard control work. Following the completion of the work, a clearance test will be performed to ensure that the issue has been resolved.

The Lead Hazard Control Program is available to both low to moderate income homeowners and rental property owners who rent to low-income families. Applicants for lead hazard control work are reviewed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Priority is given to applicants who have a child under age six with an elevated blood lead level living in the house or have had their house previously tested and found to contain lead-based paint. The property must not be named in any legal actions, taxes must be current, made current or on a payment schedule, and must not have any open City of Newark, Division of Property Maintenance violations. For more information, contact the City of Newark Department of Development at (740) 670-7530.



Denison Health Coach Program Inspires Students to be Healthcare Professionals

In 2020, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) began a Health Coach program for Denison University students interested in a healthcare career. Upon completion of the appropriate course work and lecture series at Denison, students learn about safety practices, ethics, patient rights, infection prevention, and other topics related to LMHS protocols. The students also practice various skills to prepare for tasks and duties to be performed during the program. The Health Coaches, who serve under the supervision of healthcare professionals from Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Community Case Management, provide care for patients in the Licking County community with chronic, non-acute issues as defined by the Community Case Management team.

Over the course of the semester, students are assigned one or more patients based on availability and complexity and serve as an extension of the registered nurse (R.N.) case managers. The Health Coaches care for patients through home visits and support patients in making healthy lifestyle choices, chronic condition management, regularly check blood pressure, monitor glucose levels, and assess living conditions in the patient's home as appropriate. The initial sessions are directly supervised by one of the Community Case Management health professionals. Once the student

becomes sufficiently comfortable with patient interaction and receives approval from the supervising Community Case Management health professional, they continue the visit schedule independently, while receiving weekly support and direct supervision from the Community Case Management team.

In weekly patient case reports, each student continues to work with the supervisors and Community Case Management team to develop strategies that will assist patients to develop effective self-management skills. Through this practicum, students learn to identify potential resources, assist with care coordination, understand chronic disease management challenges, refine patient interaction skills, and learn standard healthcare documentation and communication protocols. Along with teaching new skills, the Health Coach program's goal is to provide a quality experience for students.

Upon completion of the program, students are asked to complete a survey and share feedback about their experiences. Beginning with the first class in 2020, the participants have written positive reviews and are continuing their education or now have a career in healthcare. A number of the students are currently enrolled in nursing and medical schools across the nation.

"I still talk about working with my patient as a health coach. The program allowed me to understand how chronic diseases affect the lives of my patients, especially when they do not have support from family or friends," said Tovey Nederveld, a 2020 Health Coach participant. Tovey is currently a fourth-year medical student at Rosalind Franklin University in Chicago, Illinois.

Nadeem Jones participated in the Health Coach program in 2022 and is now a medical student at Columbia University in New York City. "The Denison Health Coach Program is unique because it centers on the importance of building relationships with your patients. The medical program I am in now focuses specifically on the patient/physician relationship. Participating in the Health Coach program contributed to my interest in this aspect of healthcare."

Community Case Management assists patients with their healthcare by coordinating, monitoring, and planning services which may be necessary for their needs. These services include home visits, diabetes self-management classes, disease management, nutrition counseling, and more. This service is provided by LMH to both the patient and the family. Community Case Management aims to provide personalized support, resources, and tools to improve the health of the community.



Annual Golf Gala Supports Construction of The Center at LMHS

Sponsored by the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council, the 2026 LMH Golf Gala is scheduled for Monday, September 14. The annual Golf Gala is LMH's largest fundraiser.



Honorary Chair
Stephanie Mollica

Proceeds from the 2026 LMH Golf Gala will help fund the construction 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 the community.

Stephanie Mollica will serve as the Honorary Chair of the 2026 LMH Golf Gala. Stephanie served State Farm Insurance and Financial Services in various leadership and executive roles across multiple states, including Ohio, Tennessee, Illinois, and Kentucky. Most recently, she was the Vice President of Agency for the South Central zone. In this role, she oversaw the sales operation in the western and southern part of the country, while residing in Kansas City. After retiring, she returned to her hometown, Granville, to spend more time with her family.

Throughout her career, Stephanie has been actively involved in community service. She has served on numerous boards, including the Derrick Johnson Defend the Dream Foundation, Kansas Council for Economic Education, and the Kansas Insurance and Financial Services Education Foundation. She was also involved as a representative with Patrick Mahomes' Foundation, 15 and the Mahomies Foundation. Stephanie recently joined the LMH Board of Directors. She also serves as the President of the Philanthropic Educational Organization and as a Board Member at Ohio University School of Business, Schey Centre, Licking Memorial Hospital, Weathervane Playhouse, and the Mental Health and Recovery Board of Licking and Knox Counties. Additionally, she provides committee work for The Works Museum.

Stephanie holds degrees from Ohio University and the American College. In her free time, she enjoys spending

quality time with her family and friends, traveling, and playing golf. She is a huge Jimmy Buffett fan, and loves Notre Dame, the Kansas City Chiefs, the Cleveland Guardians, and the Cleveland Browns.

The LMH Development Council is proud to acknowledge and thank the current sponsors of the 2026 Golf Gala. To date, the list includes the Club Sponsor (\$7,500 and above) Denison University and Condor Sponsors (\$7,500 and above) Lou Reese and Park National Bank. Ace Sponsors (\$5,000) are MedBen; Southgate Corporation; and Stedman Floor Company. Eagle Sponsors (\$2,500) include Affordable Portables; All Weather Systems, Inc.; AssuredPartners; Claypool Electric, Inc.; Economy Linen and Towel Service, Inc.; The Energy Cooperative; First Federal Savings; The Granville Investment Group; Guttridge; The Hinderer Motor Company; Kessler Sign Company; Kokosing, Inc.; Mattingly Family Foundation; Mid-Ohio Development Corporation; Mill Tech, LLC; Modern Office Methods; Mortellaro McDonald's; MPW Industrial Services, Inc.; Northpoint Ohio Architecture; Owens Corning; Papa Boo's; PNC Bank; Quadax, Inc.; Robertson Construction Services, Inc.; Rotary Club of Newark; Scott Peterson of General Graphics; Shai-Hess Commercial Real Estate, LLC; Summit Home Care & Hospice; TrueCore Federal Credit Union; United Collection Bureau, Inc.; ValueCare Ambulance; and Sarah and John Wallace. The Cart Sponsor (\$1,500) is Matesich Distributing, and the Pro Sponsor (\$1,500) is Griffin's Floral Design & WineShop.

Additional sponsorship levels are available, including Birdie (\$1,000), Hole (\$500), and Pathway (\$250). If you are interested in being an event sponsor or donating a door prize, please call the LMH Development Office at (220) 564-4108.

A Tribute to Mothers

Licking Memorial Health Systems wishes a Happy Mother's Day to all moms, especially those who gave birth at Licking Memorial Hospital this past year.



April 2025

Lareese Evers and her daughter, Elayne, are all smiles.



May 2025

Krista Frenton's daughter, Lainey, shows off her beautiful, blue eyes.



June 2025

Hannah Bilderback's son, Evan, is smiling and ready to get moving.



July 2025

Nevaeh Martin's daughter, Eden, is adorable in her outfit and headband.



August 2025

Shyanne Manson and her daughter, Brielle, are happy to be together.



September 2025

Lydia Cortez-Betancourt, M.D., and her daughter, Isabella, are beautiful in matching dresses.



October 2025

Torie Miller holds her son, Jude, who is looking dapper in his overalls.



November 2025

Carly Duran holds tight to her sweet son, Liam.



December 2025

Sweet daughter, Emery, is happy with her mom, Haley Bremer.



January 2026

Oliver poses handsomely with his mom, Jayde Thompson.



February 2026

Jaricca Butcher's son, Ezra, is comfortable in his mother's arms.



March 2026

Lindsey Hayden happily holds her son, Hudson.

The mother-and-baby groups above were selected from the list of mothers who consented to release information about the births to the public.

There were 693 babies born at Licking Memorial Hospital in 2025.

Corporate Breakfasts Offer Education on Important Health-related Topics

The Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council hosted two Corporate Breakfasts in the spring. The March Corporate Breakfast was attended by nearly 70 community leaders in the Main Street Café at LMH. Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) President & CEO Rob Montagnese introduced the guest speakers, W. Andrew Highberger, M.D., of Addiction Medicine, and Elizabeth A. Yoder, D.O., of Outpatient Psychiatric Services. The physicians discussed cannabis-induced psychosis and recent trends in the availability of THC-infused products, as well as the marketing of these items to youth.

Dr. Highberger discussed the current trends in substance use, including the use of cannabis products such as drinks, gummies, and vapes. He also spoke about the addictive nature of kratom. Kratom is a supplement derived from a tropical tree native to Southeast Asia. The substance produces stimulant effects in low doses and sedative effects in high doses. Kratom poses significant health risks due to its lack of regulation and the effects it has on the brain's opioid receptors.

Dr. Yoder discussed the increased use of cannabis products and the psychological effect it has had on individuals. Instances of cannabis intoxication and cannabis-related disorders have risen as more states have legalized the use of marijuana for medical and recreational use.

Rob presented The Robert H. McGaughy Honorary Ambassador Award to Marcia Downes. The award honors those who demonstrate a high level of commitment to LMHS through their actions, exceptional service, and loyalty to the organization. Marcia currently serves as the Secretary of the LMH Board of Directors. She has also been a member of the LMH Development Council Community Relations Committee since 2007. In addition to her involvement

with LMH, Marcia is a member of the Newark Rotary and Board Member of the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority. In 2021, Marcia retired from The Works Ohio Center for History, Art, and Technology, where she served as Executive Director for 20 years.

Nearly 80 community leaders attended the Corporate Breakfast in April. Rob introduced the guest speaker, Hassan Rajjoub, M.D., FACC, of Cardiology. Dr. Rajjoub discussed how to prevent heart disease through lifestyle changes and improving heart disease through interventional procedures. Heart disease is most preventable through healthy lifestyle choices such as diet, regular exercise, tobacco cessation, weight management, and stress reduction. However, uncontrollable risk factors, such as family history and genetics, are not affected by lifestyle changes. Other preventive methods include blood pressure, cholesterol, blood-thinning medications, and CT calcium scoring.

Dr. Rajjoub explained that when plaque accumulates in the arteries, it can become calcified. This calcification can lead to blockages that require interventional procedures. Historic treatment options were quite aggressive

and required LMH patients to be sent to another facility where an open heart surgeon was readily available if a minimally invasive procedure failed. Dr. Rajjoub described a new technology called Shockwave Intravascular Lithotripsy (IVL) that is available for use at LMH. Shockwave disrupts coronary calcium through acoustic shock waves, modifying the calcium in a safe, effective manner to assist in restoring vessel compliance prior to stent deployment. Dr. Rajjoub threads a small wire containing the device that generates the shock wave along with the balloon, and guides it to the calcified area. The shock wave fractures the calcium and allows for effective stent deployment. IVL is a breakthrough technology enabling successful, safe treatment of the calcified lesions that were previously untreatable with angioplasty and stenting.

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 80 distinguished members of the community volunteer their time to serve on the Development Council.

Physician Spotlight – Garth A. Bennington, M.D.

Garth A. Bennington, M.D., joined Licking Memorial Family Practice in 2005. He graduated from Newark High School, and received a Bachelor of Science degree at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Dr. Bennington earned a Doctor of Medicine degree from The Ohio State University College

of Medicine and Public Health, and completed a family practice internship and residency at Grant Medical Center in Columbus. He is board certified in family medicine. In 2015, Dr. Bennington was named the Licking Memorial Health Systems Physician of the Year.



Ask a Doc – Swimming Related Illnesses with Garth A. Bennington, M.D.

Question: How can my family avoid swimming-related illnesses this summer?

Answer: Anyone may become ill from swimming-related illnesses; however, children, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems are most at risk. One of the most common causes of waterborne disease is Cryptosporidiosis or Crypto. Crypto is a gastrointestinal illness caused by the microscopic parasite Cryptosporidium. The parasite lives in the intestine of infected humans and animals. Cryptosporidium cannot be eliminated by using chlorination and other methods of water purification. Crypto has also been responsible for outbreaks in child care settings, foodborne illness outbreaks associated with contaminated foods or ill food handlers, and through contact with livestock or animals at petting zoos. Over 800,000 cases occur in the United States each year.

Most people acquire Crypto after accidentally swallowing water that contains Cryptosporidium such as public pools or swimming areas. The parasite reproduces in the digestive system and causes watery diarrhea and other stomach issues such as cramping, nausea, and vomiting. Symptoms of Crypto may begin two to ten days after becoming infected with the parasite. In persons with healthy immune systems, symptoms usually last about one to two weeks. Some people with Crypto will

have no symptoms at all. People with weakened immune systems may be very ill for a much longer period of time and have serious complications such as dehydration.

The best way to prevent becoming ill from Crypto is to practice good personal hygiene with soap and water, particularly after using the bathroom, changing diapers, handling household or farm animals, working in soil, and before handling food. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are not effective against Cryptosporidium species. When cleaning items and surfaces, no disinfectant is guaranteed to be completely effective against Crypto; however, hydrogen peroxide is more effective than standard bleach solutions. Do not drink untreated water or use contaminated water to wash fruits or vegetables. Do not drink or eat any unpasteurized milk, dairy products, juice, or cider. Take extra precautions when traveling and do not use or drink inadequately treated water or ice. To avoid spreading the disease, do not swim until two weeks after diarrhea has ceased. If immunocompromised, avoid contact with farm animals.

A number of other illness-causing germs may also be present in swimming pools, hot tubs, lakes, and rivers, including

Giardia, Shigella, and norovirus. It is important to avoid swallowing even small amounts of water containing these parasites and viruses. The symptoms are very similar to Crypto and include diarrhea, cramping, and nausea. To avoid spreading such diseases, those who are experiencing stomach issues should avoid participating in water-based activities until the symptoms cease.

For those with a healthy immune system, Crypto and other waterborne illnesses typically resolve in two to three weeks. It is important to drink plenty of fluids and stay hydrated. A healthcare provider may recommend over-the-counter antidiarrheal medications to alleviate symptoms. In some cases, a prescription medication may be required. These medications assist in preventing dehydration and mineral loss. In severe cases, intravenous fluids may be needed to prevent or treat dehydration. Contact a healthcare provider if bouts of watery diarrhea occur several times per day, if symptoms return or worsen, or severe dehydration symptoms such as confusion, light-headedness or dizziness, and difficulty urinating occurs. Those with a weakened immune system who experience any infectious disease symptoms should see a healthcare professional immediately.



Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Cancer Care

Patient Story – Richard “Rich” Vance

Having served over 42 years in fire and emergency services, Richard “Rich” Vance understands the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle including regular visits with a primary care physician. It was during one of his annual physicals over six years ago that the first signs of cancer were detected. Garth A. Bennington, M.D., Rich’s primary care physician, had concerns about an abnormality on a chest X-ray. He recommended that Rich have further testing to determine the exact nature of the abnormality. The following year, the spot remained, and Dr. Bennington referred Rich to Licking Memorial Hematology/Oncology.

“Dr. Bennington has been very kind to me and understanding throughout the years that I have visited him. He has always explained things to me with patience and compassion,” Rich shared. “I was grateful for his concern and care, and I trusted that he had my best interests at heart.”

After more scans and a biopsy, Aruna C. Gowda, M.D., confirmed to Rich that he had lymphoma, a type of cancer that affects the lymphatic system. The lymphatic system is part of the body’s immune system and is made up of organs, glands, vessels, and clusters of cells called lymph nodes. Lymphoma can affect lymph nodes, blood, bone marrow, spleen, and other tissues throughout the body, such as in the gastrointestinal system, central nervous system, bones, or skin. Dr. Gowda assured Rich that lymphoma is treatable and that the cancer was in the early stages. At the time, she explained the best course of action was to watch and wait. If the cancer does not cause symptoms, there is no need for treatment right away. Instead, Rich would have regular checkups to monitor

the condition and determine if the cancer would grow and spread.

In the fall of 2024, Rich began experiencing swelling in his neck. He visited Dr. Bennington with the belief that he was suffering from an infection and needed an antibiotic to cure the issue. Dr. Bennington quickly determined that the swelling was not an infection and referred Rich to Dr. Gowda once again.

“After years of praying for the best, my family and I were now facing the reality of my cancer diagnosis. Now that the lymphoma had presented itself, Dr. Gowda explained the next steps,” Rich said. “She recommended an aggressive treatment plan and assured me that she and her staff would be sensitive to my needs and respond appropriately if the treatment became overwhelming.”

“I cannot say enough good things about Dr. Gowda and the staff at the Oncology Clinic. They are truly rock stars,” Rich enthused. “They are honest and open and treat everyone like members of their own family. Dr. Gowda asked me if I wanted a referral to one of the hospitals in Columbus, and I told her absolutely not. I felt comfortable and welcomed by everyone at Licking Memorial Hospital, from the senior leadership to the Volunteers and everyone I had contact with, that I would not even consider going anywhere else for care.”

Rich is especially grateful for the privacy offered in the Oncology Clinic where he received his chemotherapy treatments. Each patient is given their own space to relax while the medications are administered. The process can take hours. Family members are encouraged to sit with the patient and every effort is made to ensure the comfort of both patient and guests. During that time, staff members

and Volunteers make regular visits to address needs such as warm blankets or snacks.

“My first treatment, I wanted to be strong and do my best to try to tolerate the medication,” Rich shared. “However, I started feeling warm and itchy. I tried not to make a fuss, but the staff kept asking me how I was feeling, and even Dr. Gowda stopped in the room to check on me. When they realized I was having a reaction to the treatment, they began readjusting the dosage right away. I felt so much better. They are such an amazing team.”

Every 21 days for 18 weeks, Rich visited the Clinic for his treatments. He enjoyed bringing small treats to the staff. He wanted to show them the kindness and care that they continually provided him. At the end of his treatment, Rich was able to ring the bell at the Oncology Clinic. Ringing the bell has become a tradition for cancer patients throughout the country to celebrate and signify the end of the work to battle their cancer. The staff members celebrated with him and his family by offering treats, cheers, and applause.

With the lymphoma in remission, Rich is looking forward to full retirement from his job at the State Fire Marshall’s office. He and his wife, Carolyn, celebrated 42 years of marriage, and they look forward to spending more time with their daughter, Alexis, son-in-law, Steve, and granddaughter, Makenna. Having experienced his own cancer journey, Rich says he has a new perspective on life. While the diagnosis, treatments, and other processes are frightening, Rich was grateful to be surrounded by the love and support of his family, and the compassionate people who are dedicated to treating patients with dignity and kindness.

Cancer Survivorship

Receiving a cancer diagnosis can be an overwhelming experience, often accompanied by feelings of fear, anxiety, and sadness. Patients are naturally worried about the logistics of their care, such as treatment protocols, physical side effects, and the emotional toll that the disease will have on them and their loved ones. Although an individual’s cancer journey begins with a diagnosis, it does not end with the final treatment; cancer survivorship is the entire experience of living with, through, and beyond a cancer diagnosis.

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) is committed to assisting patients from the beginning of diagnosis and continuing throughout their life, focusing on physical, emotional, social, and financial well-being for patients and their families, as well as helping to manage treatment effects and promoting long-term health with specialized care and support that bridges the gap between active treatment and a thriving life in survivorship.

The Oncology Navigation Team at LMH consists of highly trained individuals serving as advocates and educators who guide patients through their cancer journey. This includes an oncology dietitian, case manager, oral treatment

navigator, genetics navigator, and oncology navigator. A lung cancer navigator and a breast cancer navigator are also available for patients diagnosed with these specific cancers. The Navigation Team assists patients with understanding their treatment options and works closely with physicians, therapists, financial assistance advisors, and all other members of the care team to ensure that patients receive the best care for their cancer diagnosis.

Breast cancer patients who have completed treatment with curative intent are eligible to participate in LMH’s Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program (FVRx). The program is a healthy eating initiative that supports patients and their families in their efforts to maintain a balanced diet by offering a prescription for free fruits and vegetables, as well as support from a registered dietitian. Patients may pick up a free fruit and vegetable basket once per week in the Main Street Café at LMH using their FVRx participant identification card. In addition, participants may use their ID card to shop at the Canal Market District Farmer’s Market in Downtown Newark from May through October.

LMH also holds a monthly Cancer Support Group and Caregivers Support Group. These meetings occur on the fourth Tuesday of each month and are

free and open to all individuals with cancer, their caregivers, and those who have lost loved ones, regardless of where treatment is administered. Facilitated by the LMH Oncology staff, the group offers encouragement, education, and an opportunity for participant discussion. A healthy food option, selected by the Oncology Dietitian, is served at the meeting. Individuals can register by calling (220) 564-1890.

Participants of the Cancer Support Group are also invited to visit the “Seeds of Hope Garden,” an area where cancer patients, survivors, and caretakers can visit for respite. The “Seeds of Hope Garden” is located within the one-acre vegetable and flower mini-farm on Dickerson Street, which is maintained by the Culinary Services Department. Visiting the garden offers the group members an opportunity for activity through gardening and access to fresh produce. Visitors are encouraged to take home anything that they harvest.

In celebration of cancer survivors and their families, LMH hosts a Cancer Survivors Picnic each summer. Participants unite to demonstrate that life after a cancer diagnosis remains meaningful and productive. During the event, attendees receive welcome gifts, play games, and are offered health information and community resources available to cancer survivors. A healthy meal is catered by LMH Culinary Services, and participants have an opportunity to reunite with their care team. The event coincides with National Cancer Survivors Day, an annual celebration of life held in hundreds of communities throughout the United States.

Individuals who are diagnosed with cancer are not alone in their fight. From diagnosis to treatment to survivorship and beyond, LMH offers comprehensive and compassionate care that addresses the physical, emotional, social, and financial needs of patients and their families.



Cancer 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. Statistics are collected for all screening mammograms to assess the accuracy of the testing. Some parameters that are determined include the probability that any individual case of breast cancer will be identified by the mammogram and the probability of the mammogram correctly identifying patients who do not have cancer.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Percentage of cancers correctly identified by the mammogram	94%	97%	91%	87% ⁽¹⁾
Percentage of patients without cancer correctly identified by the mammogram	92%	90%	92%	92% ⁽¹⁾

2. Screening mammograms are conducted to detect breast cancer before the patient has any noticeable symptoms. Breast cancer is most easily and effectively treated when it is diagnosed in its early stages. Although the results from most screening mammograms are negative, meaning no cancer was detected, for patients who are found to have breast cancer, the screening mammogram may have been life-saving technology. Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) tracks the number of screening mammograms that have positive interpretations, meaning that the tests detected cancer that may have remained unnoticed until it was more advanced.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Cancer detection rate with positive interpretations (per 1,000 screening mammograms)	7	6	5	5.8 ⁽¹⁾

3. Chemotherapy drugs are toxic and could be dangerous if not prepared correctly. Therefore, LMH follows a rigorous five-step safety procedure to prevent chemotherapy errors.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Number of chemotherapy medication errors negatively impacting patients	0	0	0	0

4. When a person is either diagnosed with or treated for cancer, the person is entered into the Cancer Registry. It then is the responsibility of the accredited organization to follow up with the person for the rest of his/her life on an annual basis to encourage appropriate care. Cancer Registry staff also may contact the primary care physician to ensure the health of the patient.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Cancer Registry patients with annual follow-up	94%	95%	95%	greater than 80%

5. Clinical research ensures that patient care approaches the highest possible level of quality. There is no minimum requirement for how many patients are placed in cancer-related clinical trials in a community hospital cancer program; however, to provide maximum service, LMH offers access to national clinical trials to patients as a member of the Columbus Community Clinical Oncology Program.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Newly diagnosed and/or treated patients in clinical trials	9%	22%	14%	greater than 2%

6. In an effort to prevent and promote early detection and treatment of cancer, the physician offices of Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) measure and track results of cancer screening tests for breast cancer, cervical cancer, and colorectal cancer for all active patients. Active patient population is defined as patients seen within the last three years.

	LMHP 2022	LMHP 2023	LMHP 2024	LMHP Goal
LMHP active patient population who received screening tests for:				
Breast cancer (female patients, age 50 to 75)	75%	77%	76%	National ⁽²⁾ 69%
Colorectal cancer (all patients, age 45-75)	57%	61%	63%	National ⁽²⁾ 63%

7. Hereditary cancers, such as breast cancer, are caused in part by gene mutations passed from parents to children, and generally begin to develop in a person at a younger age. Through genetic testing, researchers can determine if someone carries a specific mutation that puts them and their family members at an increased risk and need for early screenings. LMH offers genetic testing to newly diagnosed patients with breast cancer who meet certain qualifications in order to equip them with the knowledge to make the best choices for themselves and their families.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Breast cancer diagnoses that met criteria and received genetic testing	85%	92%	100%	90%

Data Footnotes:
(1) Lee, C. I., Abraham, L., Miglioretti, D. L., Onega, T., Kerlikowske, K., Lee, J. M., Sprague, B. L., Tosteson, A. N. A., Rauscher, G.H., Bowles, E. J. A., diFlorio-Alexander, R. M., Henderson, L. M., & Breast Cancer Surveillance Consortium (2023). National Performance Benchmarks for Screening Digital Breast Tomosynthesis: Update from the Breast Cancer Surveillance Consortium. Radiology, 307(4), e222499. <https://doi.org/10.1148/radiol.222499>
(2) Percentages are compiled by averaging Commercial, Medicare, and Medicaid data.



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

Finding Emotional Support during Treatment

Patients who have been diagnosed with cancer experience a wide range of emotions including fear, sadness, anxiety, anger, and loneliness. While these feelings are normal, it is important for patients to seek appropriate emotional support to help cope, reduce stress, and improve mental well-being. The following tips can help individuals find the assistance they need:

Communication – talking openly with the healthcare team by sharing feelings and concerns allows them to provide educational resources, counseling referrals, and other support services that are tailored to the patient’s needs.

Lean on family and friends – loved ones can help relieve the stress of everyday life by aiding with daily tasks, preparing meals, providing transportation, or attending medical appointments as a support person and advocate.

Self-care – practicing self-care and stress reduction techniques, such as mindfulness, meditation, and yoga can help manage emotions. Journaling thoughts and finding gratitude are also helpful ways to cope with stress and anxiety.

Support groups – attending support groups allows patients to connect with other individuals who share similar experiences and can reduce feelings of isolation.

Professional help – for individuals who experience persistent sadness, anxiety, or depression lasting longer than two weeks, consulting a mental health professional or counselor can often be helpful. They can provide talk therapy, cognitive behavioral techniques, and medication if necessary.

Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Maternity Care

Patient Story – Hanna Paul

After a summer wedding in 2024, Hanna Paul discovered she was pregnant that December. She, her husband, Joe, and their sons, Braxton and Carter, were excited to add another member to their family. In order to ensure the baby was healthy, Hanna began visiting Licking Memorial Women's Health for prenatal care. Just 18 weeks into her pregnancy, the staff at Women's Health discovered that Hanna's baby was smaller than expected. She was diagnosed with intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR), a serious condition in which the fetus fails to grow at a normal rate during pregnancy. There are a number of causes for the condition, but Hanna was told she was likely experiencing an issue with the development of the placenta due to restricted blood flow. It was recommended that she attend two appointments a week to monitor the baby's health.

Pregnancy surveillance of a fetus with IUGR is performed by ultrasounds assessing fetal growth, amniotic fluid, and blood flow in the fetus and umbilical cord. In the third trimester, generally after 30 weeks of pregnancy, additional surveillance of the fetus is often performed once or twice per week. The optimal timing of delivery is highly variable and depends on the underlying cause of IUGR and the status of the baby in the womb. After 27 weeks, Hanna was visiting the Women's Health offices three times a week.

"I got to know the employees at Women's Health very well since I was visiting all the time," Hanna said. "It was an unfortunate situation, but the nurses and staff members caring for me and my baby made me feel comfortable and safe. It was actually a pleasure to talk with them and know that they were invested in watching my baby develop and excited to see her progress."

At 37 weeks, an appointment was made to induce labor. Unfortunately, labor did not progress as hoped, and the physician was concerned about the baby. Cecelia was delivered by cesarean section. She weighed three pounds, seven ounces. Due to her size and weight, she was taken to the Special Care Nursery where specially trained registered nurses are available to provide care, and pediatric provider coverage is available 24 hours, seven days a week.

"We are so blessed to have received the care we did. Things could have gone much differently," shared Hanna. "Everyone was so patient and helpful. I feel like we created a special bond and built relationships with the staff. I was so grateful to be allowed to stay with Cecelia in the nursery. They made sure that she and I had everything we needed. It was a very special time to see her grow and thrive. After two weeks, we took Cecelia home and she is my little rock star. She is growing and hitting her milestones as if she never needed special care."

During her pregnancy, Hanna participated in the CenteringPregnancy program hosted by Perinatal Nurse Navigators from Licking Memorial Hospital Maternity Services. CenteringPregnancy is prenatal care that includes a traditional health checkup with additional time and

attention in a group setting. Participants meet with other women with similar due dates for eight sessions and have the opportunity to share learning and experiences with others. The Perinatal Nurse Navigators are specially trained to assist mothers throughout pregnancy with health information and to find needed resources.

"I loved having other moms to talk with about my experiences," Hanna explained. "Pregnancy is hard, and sometimes you feel as though no one understands the changes happening in your body. Talking with others who are experiencing the same changes is wonderful. Sharing makes things easier, and knowing that my personal experience is not strange or unusual was very helpful. One of the other mothers from my group actually gave birth on the same day as I did, so now Cecelia has a birth buddy. We hope to maintain the connection we made during the program and are excited to watch our children grow."

Hanna is also grateful for her parents and friends who provided support during the pregnancy. Her mother assists in caring for Cecelia now. Joe and the boys are very excited to have a little girl to care for as well. They are all thankful for the care provided by the staff at Women's Health and Maternal Child.



LMH Offers CenteringPregnancy Program for Expecting Mothers

Pregnancy can evoke a wide range of emotions and concerns. Excitement and joy are common feelings, but there can also be anxiety about the many life changes that are about to occur. It is natural to be concerned about the baby's health, adjustment to parenthood, and other demands of raising a child. Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) offers the CenteringPregnancy Program to provide assistance from pregnancy through postpartum for expectant mothers.

CenteringPregnancy is prenatal care that includes a traditional health checkup with additional time and attention in a group setting. Participants meet with their provider and other women with similar due dates for eight sessions during their pregnancy. The program offers expecting mothers an enhanced care experience by spending more time with their healthcare provider and the opportunity to share learning and experiences with other pregnant women. Studies show that mothers who participate in the CenteringPregnancy Program experience reduced rates of preterm birth and low birth weight babies, lower rates of gestational diabetes, increased breastfeeding rates, and reduced instances of postpartum depression.

Women are offered the opportunity to participate in the CenteringPregnancy program during their initial prenatal appointment with an LMH Perinatal Nurse Navigator (PNN). A PNN is a specialized, registered nurse who guides, educates, and supports expectant families from pregnancy through postpartum. They function as a central point of contact to coordinate care, remove barriers to access, and connect families with resources such as social services, specialists, and breastfeeding support. This relationship helps patients achieve healthy outcomes in pregnancy and in the infant's first year of life.

The program groups six to eight women with similar due dates to participate in nurse-led meetings beginning around their 14th week of pregnancy. The group meets once a month for the first

four meetings, then twice a month for the last four meetings to complete the program around their 36th week of pregnancy.

Each session bundles the prenatal appointment, prenatal education, and social support into a two-hour visit. In the first hour, each woman meets individually with a midwife who checks blood pressure, records their weight, and assesses the baby's growth. Individual concerns are also discussed. While waiting for their individual appointments, the group socializes, discusses concerns, and provides support to one another.

The second hour consists of prenatal education that focuses on all aspects of wellness during pregnancy. Topics for discussion include understanding pregnancy, nutrition, breastfeeding, stress management, exercise, birth, newborn care, child safety, and new mothering issues. Guest speakers, such as LMH dietitians and lactation consultants, attend meetings to discuss their area of expertise and answer questions. The group also receives a tour of the Labor & Delivery Department to observe the facilities and learn more about the

maternity services that LMH offers to patients.

In addition to the CenteringPregnancy Program, LMH offers a home visit to all mothers who live within 30 minutes of the Hospital, every breastfeeding mother, or a mother who is referred by a physician or nurse and may need a little assistance or reassurance after delivery. During the visit, a Perinatal Home Visiting Nurse will complete a blood pressure check, depression screening, and offer breastfeeding support. The nurse will also complete a newborn assessment, weight check, and answer general newborn questions.

LMH is committed to providing expectant mothers and their families with the education, resources, and social support necessary for a healthy pregnancy. By combining expert medical care with a supportive community, the CenteringPregnancy Program creates a unique opportunity for mothers to have an active role in their healthcare while ensuring the best health outcome for their newborn.



Maternity 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. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, small-for-gestational-age infants are those who are born weighing less than the 10th percentile for their given gestational age. At term, this weight is 2,500 grams (5 pounds, 8 ounces). Many factors contribute to low birth weight, including lack of prenatal care, a mother’s poor nutritional status before and during pregnancy, and drug, tobacco, or alcohol use during pregnancy. Low birth-weight infants are at increased risk for health problems. Adequate prenatal care and healthy practices can significantly reduce the incidence of low birth-weight deliveries. **In 2025, there were 693 babies delivered at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH), a small percentage of which met low birth-weight criteria.**

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	National ⁽¹⁾
Low birth-weight infants	6.9%	4.9%	6.2%	8.58%

2. Smoking or vaping during pregnancy is an important modifiable risk factor associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes. Because pregnancy smoking rates in Licking County are higher than the national rate, Licking Memorial Women’s Health has increased efforts to assess patients’ active smoking during pregnancy at each office visit, counsel patients to quit smoking, and refer each pregnant smoker to LMH’s free “Quit for You, Quit for Your Baby” tobacco cessation program. **During 2025, 25 percent of patients reported smoking at some point during pregnancy. The below measure reflects the statistical improvement at the time of delivery.**

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	LMH Goal
Patients who reported smoking or vaping at any time during pregnancy	16%	21%	25%	Less than 25%
Patients who reported smoking or vaping on admission for delivery	12%	14%	16%	Less than 20%
Number of referrals to “Quit for You, Quit for Your Baby” program	339	305	247	N/A
Percent of pregnant women who completed the initial consultation	80%	80%	83%	More than 80%
Percent of pregnant women who received counseling after their initial consultation	27%	28%	20%	25%

3. Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended as the optimal nutrition for infants for the first six months of life, with continued breastfeeding after the introduction of solid foods for the first year or longer, if desired. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), ACOG, World Health Organization and other healthcare organizations support this recommendation recognizing the significant lifelong health benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and child. The AAP recommends that breastfeeding should be initiated within one hour of the infant’s birth and recommends against routine supplementation of newborn infants with formula or glucose water unless medically indicated. LMH provides prenatal education as well as support and assistance during the postpartum period to help mothers achieve their goals for successful breastfeeding.

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	LMH Goal
Breastfeeding rate upon discharge	66.4%	63.4%	67.5%	greater than 55%
Breastfed infants receiving exclusive breast milk prior to discharge	LMH 2023 72%	LMH 2024 64%	LMH 2025 74%	National ⁽²⁾ 56%

4. A Cesarean section delivery (C-section) may be necessary in the event of delivery complications and is a decision based on careful consideration by the physician. Due to the additional risks of such a procedure, C-sections should be performed only when medically necessary. Lower percentages are preferable.

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	National ⁽²⁾
First-time C-sections	12%	14%	12%	16%

5. Elective deliveries are newborn deliveries that are scheduled in advance, rather than allowing labor to occur naturally, specifically for mothers prior to 39 weeks of gestation. Studies have shown that elective deliveries performed prior to 39 weeks have higher rates of newborn complications, higher C-section rates, and longer hospitalization for mothers. Lower elective delivery rates are better, as this reduces potential risks to the baby and the mother.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	National ⁽³⁾
Elective deliveries performed before 39 weeks	0%	0%	0%	3%

6. Group B streptococci (GBS), which emerged in the U.S. in the 1970s, is an infection that is associated with illness and death among newborns. Most neonatal GBS infections can be prevented through screenings and, if needed, by giving an antibiotic to the mother before delivery.

	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH Goal
Mothers with GBS receiving antibiotic within 4 hours prior to delivery	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of newborns testing positive with GBS	0	0	0	0

Data Footnotes:
(1) Births: Final Data for 2023. National Vital Statistics Reports, 74(1). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr74/nvsr74-1.pdf>
(2) MIDAS+ CPMS Comparative Database
(3) HospitalCompare.hhs.gov Comparative Database

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Hepatitis B Vaccine for Newborns

In December 2025, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) adopted recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) to move to individual-based decision-making that allows parents to decide when and if to vaccinate their infants against hepatitis B if the mother tests negative for the virus. Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) continues to follow guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which recommends that the hepatitis B vaccine be administered to newborns at birth, within 24 hours of delivery.

Recognizing that new federal recommendations for the hepatitis B vaccine may lead to questions about whether parents should vaccinate their infant at birth, LMH aims to provide

families with clear, transparent information so that parents feel confident in making informed healthcare decisions for their newborn.

Hepatitis B is a viral infection that causes inflammation in the liver and is the leading cause of liver cancer worldwide. An individual can contract the virus by being exposed to infected bodily fluids, such as blood, semen, or vaginal fluids. Mothers can unknowingly pass the hepatitis B virus to their babies at birth. The virus can also be transmitted through close contact, such as minor cuts or microscopic amounts of blood on a shared surface, to an infant by an infected caregiver or family member. Newborns and infants are particularly susceptible to hepatitis B and more likely to develop chronic infection that can lead to liver disease and liver failure.

The AAP recommends testing and vaccination of hepatitis B for all family members and caregivers of the infant. The hepatitis B vaccine is proven to be extremely safe and is delivered as a 3 to 4 dose series. Most children receive the first dose at birth, and the series is completed by 18 months of age. When given at birth, the hepatitis B vaccine is up to 90 percent effective in preventing infection in infants.

Although the new CDC guidelines offer flexibility, LMH supports the AAP’s recommendation for administering the hepatitis B vaccine to newborns within the first 24 hours of birth. Parents are encouraged to consult with their obstetrician and pediatrician to make informed decisions for their newborn’s health.



A lifelong resident of Licking County, Melinda Scott grew up on a farm. She raised her two daughters and two step-children in and around Newark. For 40 years, Melinda smoked cigarettes. As a result, she was diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) approximately eight years ago. COPD is an ongoing lung condition caused by damage to the lungs that results in swelling and irritation, also called inflammation, inside the airways that obstructs airflow into and out of the lungs. Symptoms include trouble breathing, a daily cough that brings up mucus, and a tight, whistling sound in the lungs called wheezing. COPD is most often caused by long-term exposure to irritating smoke, fumes, dust, chemicals, and most commonly cigarette smoke.

Although COPD is a condition that can worsen over time, COPD is treatable. With proper management, most people

Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Respiratory Care

Patient Story – Melinda Scott

with COPD can control symptoms and improve quality of life. Proper management also lowers the risk of other conditions linked to COPD, such as heart disease and lung cancer. Melinda did quit smoking and was trying her best to control her symptoms. However, she felt the disease was progressively getting worse and needed supplemental oxygen or to use an inhaler when walking even short distances.

“I was struggling to walk from the parking lot into work every day,” Melinda shared. “I could not walk up and down the stairs without oxygen. I was so frustrated. I wanted to manage the condition better, so I visited Mohammad K. Islam, M.D., at Licking Memorial Pulmonology to discuss a treatment plan. Dr. Islam was very knowledgeable and in addition to medication therapy, he suggested Pulmonary Rehabilitation.”

Licking Memorial Hospital’s Respiratory Therapy Department provides Pulmonary Rehabilitation. Patients are monitored as they exercise and education about COPD and other lung diseases is offered twice a week. Melinda participated in the program for eight weeks.

“They test your lung function when you start the program by calculating how many steps you take on the treadmill before you need to use the inhaler or oxygen,” Melinda explained. “I did not make it far before I was gasping for air. However, the team is fantastic and very encouraging, and began working with me to strengthen my lungs. I learned to use the exercise bands, walked on a treadmill, and used the stationary bicycles. They also assisted in creating a plan to continue exercising and making healthy life choices going forward. After completing the eight weeks, I was able to use the treadmill without oxygen and walk up and down the stairs without stopping.”

Melinda now feels more confident about walking at work and keeping up with her five grandchildren. Her husband, Dale, daughters, Mindy Cunningham, Casey Adams, and Stephanie Scott, and son, Sheldon Scott, have provided support and care throughout her health journey. She continues visiting Dr. Islam for her medication therapy and is grateful for his staff as well.

Sleep Apnea

In addition to a healthy diet and exercise, sleep is a critical component of a person’s health and well-being. Sleep provides time for the body to repair cells, tissue, and blood vessels, strengthens the immune system, improves mood, and increases energy and brain function. However, chronic conditions such as sleep apnea can disrupt essential rest, leading to long-term health complications if left untreated. Fortunately, sleep apnea can be managed through lifestyle changes, medication, and the use of specialized breathing devices.

Sleep apnea occurs when a person’s breathing is interrupted repeatedly for 10 or more seconds during sleep. On average, these episodes occur 5 to 30 times per hour every night. Sleep apnea is associated with a number of serious health complications, including coronary heart disease, heart failure, irregular heartbeat, and stroke.

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. The condition causes low oxygen levels that leave the brain vulnerable to stroke. 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.

Common symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea include loud snoring, gasping for air during sleep, waking up with a dry mouth, morning headaches, trouble staying asleep, excessive daytime sleepiness, difficulty focusing while awake, and irritability. Other people, such as a partner or spouse, may report that the individual stops breathing during periods of sleep.

Anyone can develop obstructive sleep apnea; however, obesity increases the risk of the condition. Other risk factors include family history, large tonsils or adenoids, age, smoking, alcohol use, and medical conditions such as high blood pressure, heart failure, and type 2 diabetes. Men are two to three times more likely to have sleep apnea than women. A woman’s risk is increased if they are overweight or they have gone through menopause.

Diagnosing obstructive sleep apnea begins with visiting a physician who will inquire about a person’s sleep history and symptoms. Individuals may be referred to a sleep specialist. They can conduct a series of tests and checkups to detect sleep apnea. Such tests may include a sleep study where the person is attached to equipment that monitors breathing patterns while asleep.

Obstructive sleep apnea can be treated with positive airway pressure (PAP) therapies, which can prevent breathing stoppage. A continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) device is a wearable

machine that delivers air pressure through a mask while asleep. The air pressure in a CPAP is slightly greater than the surrounding air, which helps to keep upper airway passages open, preventing apnea and snoring.

Oral appliances may also be used to prevent sleep apnea for individuals who find the CPAP to be uncomfortable and burdensome. Oral appliances are dental devices that bring the jaw or tongue forward, creating more space for airflow in the back of the throat. A custom-fit oral appliance offers the best results for obstructive sleep apnea and requires a referral to a dentist. “Boil and bite” models, which make an impression of the user’s teeth, can be purchased without a prescription.

Individuals who are experiencing symptoms of sleep apnea or who have a sleep partner who has noticed abnormal breathing patterns should consult with a physician. Sleep apnea is a common but manageable condition. Lifestyle changes and consistent use of treatment devices can help improve a person’s sleep routine, resulting in more restful sleep.



New Appointments



Johanna L. Cook, M.D.,
joined Licking Memorial
Women’s Health – Laborist



Ellen M. Hancox, M.D.,
joined Licking Memorial
Women’s Health – Laborist



Shaina L. Schochat, M.D.,
joined Licking Memorial
Primary Care – North Newark



Respiratory 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. Tobacco use has been linked to many serious and life-threatening conditions, such as cancer, heart disease, cardiopulmonary disease, and diabetes. An estimated 21 percent of Licking County adults smoke.⁽¹⁾ LMHS offers free Quit For Your Health tobacco cessation education, counseling, and nicotine-replacement products. A similar program, Quit for You, Quit for Your Baby, adds incentives to help pregnant women stop using tobacco products. In 2025, 1,384 visits were made to one of LMHS’ tobacco cessation programs.

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	LMH Goal ⁽¹⁾
Six-month success rate for patients who completed Quit for Your Health ⁽²⁾	90%	92%	100%	70%

2. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a serious, progressive lung condition that includes two life-threatening diagnoses, chronic bronchitis and emphysema. According to the American Lung Association, COPD is the third leading cause of death in the U.S. There is no cure for COPD, and patients will progress to more serious respiratory compromise over time; however, with careful management, patients can enjoy longer and healthier lives. An admission to the hospital for a COPD patient typically means that their chronic respiratory issues have exacerbated to an immediate, acute condition requiring hospitalization. To monitor the quality of a COPD patient’s care, the Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services tracks the death rate nationally for patients who die from COPD within 30 days of hospital admission.

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	National ⁽²⁾
Mortality rate of COPD patients within 30 days of hospital admission	8.3%	9.8%	8.5%	8.8%

3. Some pneumonia patients who are hospitalized require treatment with a ventilator to assist their breathing. Although the ventilator can be life-saving, it carries the risk of serious complications, such as infections, stomach ulcers, blood clots, and extended dependency on the ventilator. To help prevent complications, LMH staff members follow a best-practices protocol for patients on ventilators. Known as the “ventilator bundle,” these five steps are carefully documented to ensure each patient receives the best possible care.

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	LMH Goal
Head of bed elevated to 30 degrees	100%	100%	100%	greater than 90%
Oral care	100%	100%	100%	greater than 90%
Daily test to reduce sedation	100%	100%	100%	greater than 90%
Stomach ulcer prevention	100%	100%	100%	greater than 90%
Blood clot prevention	100%	100%	100%	greater than 90%

4. Readmission rates within 30 days of Hospital discharge is a commonly-reported measure of patient outcomes, and assists in determining possible deficiencies in the transition from hospital-to-home, the effectiveness of patient education, and management of the patient’s aftercare when they return home. COPD and pneumonia are among the leading causes of hospitalization and are associated with high rates of potentially preventable readmissions. Monitoring and analyzing readmission rates provides valuable insight into clinical performance and opportunities for improvement.

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	National ⁽²⁾
COPD 30-day readmission rate (Patients 65 and older)	18.2%	18.2%	18.5%	18.5%
Pneumonia readmission rate (Patients 65 and older)	17.8%	15.3%	12.9%	16.4%

5. Protecting patients from hospital-acquired infections is a primary patient safety goal. LMH has many ongoing programs and safety mechanisms in place to help prevent patient infections. In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, LMH monitors patients who are at high risk for infections, including those using invasive devices, such as ventilators (breathing machines). The following data reflect the rate of respiratory infections associated with ventilator use, per every 1,000 patient days.

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	LMH Goal
Pneumonia infection rate of Intensive Care Unit patients on ventilators per 1,000 ventilator days	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

6. Postoperative patients are at risk of developing serious, potentially preventable complications such as respiratory failure, or a blood clot in their lungs (pulmonary embolism) or legs (deep vein thrombosis – DVT). The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) tracks data from healthcare facilities and reports the rate that reflect eligible discharges in which a patient experienced respiratory failure, pulmonary embolism, or a DVT.

	LMH 2023	LMH 2024	LMH 2025	National ⁽²⁾
Postoperative respiratory failure	8.76	10.65	10.14	9.42
Postoperative pulmonary embolism/DVT	4.36	3.82	2.83	3.52

7. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) office patients who are at high risk for these pneumonia and influenza are screened and vaccinated as appropriate. LMHP physicians strongly encourage patients over the age of 65 years to receive a one-time dose of pneumonia vaccine and an annual influenza vaccine during each “flu season,” which runs from October to March.

	LMHP 2023	LMHP 2024	LMHP 2025	National ⁽³⁾
Physician office patients over 65 years receiving the pneumonia vaccine	75%	75%	76%	73%
Physician office patients over 65 years receiving the influenza vaccine	57%	53%	53%	69.7%

Data Footnotes:

- (1) Tobacco-free status is self-reported by patients in a six-month follow-up after completing the Quit for Your Health program.
- (2) HospitalCompare.hhs.gov national benchmarks
- (3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/> [2019 BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data].



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LMHS Announces Leadership Promotion

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) is pleased to announce the leadership promotion of Becky Thomas, M.S.E., to Assistant Vice President Human Resources. Becky joined LMHS in 2017 as the Human Resources Information System Specialist, was promoted to Compensation and Benefits Manager in 2018, and to Director of Human Resources in 2020.

During her career, Becky has optimized HR services by spearheading the transition to a new Human Capital Management System, ensuring the organization’s compensation and benefit plans remain competitive, and streamlining the Leave of Absence program. Additionally, she implemented

a robust Employee Assistance Program, which significantly boosted utilization rates and preventive services engagement within the company.

Becky received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree from Ohio Northern University and a Master of Science in Education and Applied Professions degree at the University of Dayton. She is certified as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) at the HR Certification Institute and the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM-CP). In 2024, Becky was recognized as LMHS Manager of the Year. She currently serves on the Midland Theatre board of directors.



Behind the Scenes – Patient Experience

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) is committed to providing a positive, patient-centered experience for every individual who receives care at LMHS facilities including Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH). By striving to meet and exceed expectations of care, LMHS fosters a culture rooted in compassion, connection, and service excellence. Central to meeting this goal is the LMH Patient Experience Department, which works across all levels of the organization to ensure patients, families, and visitors feel heard, respected, and valued.

Research shows that meaningful human connection can reduce anxiety, increase empathy, and support the healing process. Simple actions such as making eye contact, smiling, and actively listening, can have a profound impact on clinical outcomes. Finding common ground with patients, whether through conversations about the weather, sports, and shared interests or offering small comforts such as coffee or reading materials, creates a personal connection that transforms routine interactions into memorable, healing experiences. The Patient Experience team works to cultivate care that is shaped by sympathetic interactions, clear communication, and a supportive environment.

With a clear philosophy to treat every patient like family, Patient Experience embraces the principles of Compassionate Connected Care, which emphasizes acknowledging patient suffering; being mindful of body language and presence; delivering coordinated, team-based care; recognizing that caring transcends diagnosis; and supporting patient autonomy to reduce stress and improve outcomes. Because every staff member plays a role in shaping a patient's satisfaction at LMH, Patient Experience training is provided to new employees, providers, and volunteers so that the principles of compassionate care are embedded from the start. All employees are encouraged to be approachable,

responsive, and attentive to patients, families, and visitors.

Additionally, the Patient Experience team can serve as a vital link between patients and clinical staff. Patients may feel more comfortable speaking with non-clinical team members. Patient Experience staff help surface concerns, clarify questions, and make sure that communication flows effectively. With backgrounds in hospitality, Patient Experience staff bring warmth, empathy, and approachability to every interaction, while also supporting staff as a sounding board to efficiently solve problems. Ongoing collaboration with clinical teams, Environmental Services, Culinary Services, and other departments also promotes alignment with best practices as well as continuous improvement.

To continuously improve, the Patient Experience staff actively gathers feedback through a variety of channels, including surveys, comment cards, phone calls, emails, online submissions, and patient rounding. This feedback is tracked and analyzed through dashboards that highlight trends and opportunities for improvement. Metrics such as these provide valuable insight into where improvements are needed and where efforts should be focused to create meaningful change.

Purposeful patient rounding is a vital tool for collecting information and assuring patient needs are met. Through rounding, the Patient Experience team engages directly with patients to assess their needs in real time. They ask about communication, cleanliness, food quality, call light response times, and overall satisfaction. During these rounds, staff also check important details such as room temperature, equipment functionality, and whether patients have received essential materials such as admission folders and menus. When issues are identified, alerts are immediately sent to the appropriate departments for a prompt resolution. This proactive approach not only improves patient satisfaction but also

supports better clinical outcomes and stronger communication across teams.

Patient feedback has also led to numerous improvements at LMH, enhancing both processes and patient comfort. These include:

- A redesigned, patient-friendly After Visit Summary that highlights critical information such as follow-up appointments
- A streamlined, direct admission process between physician offices and LMH that reduces confusion and significantly cuts wait times
- Improved medication education and admission materials
- A coordinated approach to delivering warm meals to insulin-receiving patients
- Enhancements in environmental services, infection prevention, and maintaining a quiet, healing environment

LMH Patient Experience also offers a wide range of amenities to improve comfort, including phone chargers, reading glasses, puzzles, fidget items, and hearing aid batteries. An amenities cart is available to LMH staff to ensure that these items are readily accessible even when the Patient Experience team is unavailable.

LMH Patient Experience also celebrates exceptional care provided by staff through several recognition programs, including the Patient Experience Recognition Program, “Caught on the Spot,” and “Dining with the Stars.” Patients are also invited to recognize outstanding staff during rounding. These compliments are shared through “Gratitude” emails sent to both the employee and their manager, reinforcing a culture of appreciation and excellence. In April, National Patient Experience Week provides an opportunity to celebrate staff contributions, highlight achievements, and renew the LMHS’ commitment to exceptional care that leaves patients feeling valued.

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.

Benefactor Lou Reese	In honor of Nadia Gill, M.D. By: Pamela Crawford	In honor of Elizabeth A. Yoder, D.O. By: Pamela Crawford Talya Greathouse, M.D.	Tom & Anne Messerall Cynthia H. Mitchell Sharon Montagnese (D) Mr. & Mrs. Thomas I. Montis Dana Moore Barbara A. Ransopher Charles F. Rapp Susan Reid Leta Ross Martha E. Rucker Dr. Douglas N. Schram & Rebecca Schram Dr. H. Rogers & Gretchen Shay The Shipley Family Michael & Daryl Shrider Howard Siegrist Thomas & Joyce Slater Steven & Diane Snow Spectrum Reach Judy R. Stansbury Sherry Steinman Benjamin & Jonelle Streby John & Jan Tomlinson Ellie Unger F. Jennifer Utrevis Orville Varasso Marilyn Weber Jim & Pattie Weisent Jim & Jo Ann Wiblin Julie Wiegman Randall & Regina Williams In memory of Raymond E. Young – Barbara Young
Capital Improvement Fund Goodwill Industries TWIGS 6 TWIGS 13	In honor of Kevin T. Graham, M.D. By: Doug & Debbie Kullman	In honor of Grant L. Yoder, D.O. By: Pamela Crawford	
Caduceus Society Anonymous Ellen Hancox, M.D. Dr. Eugene Hong	In honor of Talya R. Greathouse, M.D. By: Robert & Patricia McGaughy LMH Senior Management	General Alice Ann Abel & Lori Ann Graef in memory of Glenn Abel William & Constance Acklin Betty Aldridge Mr. & Mrs. Nello Allori Anonymous Anonymous Anonymous Ken & Carol Apacki J.R. & Judith Beall Lee & Lindsey Bird John & Sue Blaha Sam & Marcy Bowser Chance & Carol Brockway John & Dorothy Brown T. Diann Caudill Diane L. & Joseph Wm. Charles, Jr. City Barbecue Jeri Cooperrider Mr. & Mrs. Lee Crader Pamela Cunningham Joe & Bobbie Dickerson Steve & Linda (D) Dimon Deb Dingus & David Chapman Glenn & Ellen Divan David & Jodi Doney Jerry & Sally Dunbar Roger & Judy Dunifon The Elder Family Carol S. Engle Rick & Harriet Evans Bradley & Taylor Feightner Seth Flowers Mr. & Mrs. R. Reed Fraley Christine Fulton Rich & Pam Gray Johanna Hall John & Diana Harris Bonnie & Bob Harrison Susan Heckman Henderson~Van Atta~Stickle Funeral & Cremation Service Brittany Henry Matthew R. Hill Jay & Cheri Hottinger Mark & Natalie Johns Donald & Judy Jones Rachel M. Jones Cindy Kikeli Louanne Knack Thomas & Mary Laskowski Patricia Law Tom & Nancy LeBlanc Licking 387 Memorial Education Charity Licking County League Steve & Susan Litwiller Chuck & Kathy Marty Joyce & David Mason Mark & Debbie Mauter May Mbah, M.D. Rod & Jane McKee	
Community Cornerstone Club Arthur N. Ulrich Co. The Chiacchira Family Lindsay Freytag Patty Huddle Chuck & Kathy Marty Bob & Kelly Parker Benjamin & Jonelle Streby Reverend Eva Marie & Mr. Jeff Wolfe	In honor of Thomas J. Hagele, M.D. By: Robert & Lauren Montagnese Veronica & Mark Patton Cynthia & Thaddeus Webster		
Cradle Roll In honor of Waylon Jackson Williams By: Licking Memorial Health Systems	In honor of Brian T. Klima, M.D. By: Robert & Lauren Montagnese		
Doctors' Day In honor of Richard A. Baltisberger, M.D. By: Robert & Lauren Montagnese Gregory A. Wallis	In honor of David Koontz, D.O. By: Ben & Anissa Broyles Lisa Hayes		
	In honor of Melissa A. Lenko, D.O. By: Cynthia Webster		
	In honor of Bradley R. Lewis, M.D. By: Veronica & Mark Patton Gregory A. Wallis		
	In honor of Megan E. Miller, D.O. By: Robert & Lauren Montagnese		
	In honor of Kevin M. Ouweleen, M.D. By: Marcia & Jonathan Downes Laura Edelblute Robert & Patricia McGaughy Robert & Lauren Montagnese		
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	In honor of Hassan Rajjoub, M.D. By: Robert & Lauren Montagnese		
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	In honor of Brent Savage, M.D. By: Stuart & Marcia Parsons		
	In honor of Laurie J. Schaeffer, D.O. By: Doug & Debbie Kullman Robert & Patricia McGaughy Cynthia & Thaddeus Webster		
	In honor of Andrew C. Seipel, M.D. By: Benjamin Gee Robert & Lauren Montagnese		
	In honor of James E. Silone, D.O. By: Veronica & Mark Patton		
	In honor of Karen L. Smith-Silone, D.O. By: Laura Edelblute Veronica Patton		
	In honor of Fikadu G. Tekleyes, M.D. By: Doug & Debbie Kullman		
	In honor of Andrew J. Terlecky, D.O. By: Dave & Tickie Shull		
	In honor of Bethany A. Wyles, D.O. By: Laura Edelblute Gregory A. Wallis		

Development Spotlight – Michele Layman

Since joining the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council in 2004, Michele Layman has been a dedicated advocate for community-focused healthcare in Licking County. Her tenure with LMH began while she was serving as Chief Executive Officer of Hospice of Central Ohio. Her focus was to explore how Hospice of Central Ohio could better collaborate with the Hospital. What began as a strategic partnership effort quickly grew into a decades-long commitment to strengthening local healthcare.

“I am pleased that LMH has remained so fiercely independent, which ensures

that decisions are made by local residents who understand the community’s specific needs,” she said. “After years on the Development Council, I now believe that by supporting LMH, I am not only investing in my own personal health but also in the health and vitality of the community.”

Currently, Michele serves on the Development Council’s Community Relations Committee. Among other initiatives, the Committee is responsible for supporting the Council’s goal of maintaining a positive community image for LMHS. As a member of the Committee, Michele has assisted in facilitating the Lifetime Achievement Award, which recognizes individuals for contributions that reflect LMHS’ mission to improve the health of the community. She also chaired the Development Council’s 2022 Community Cornerstone Campaign that helps raise funds for new medical equipment and expands services at LMH. Most recently, she served on the Fundraising Committee for The Center at LMHS.

“I really enjoy being a part of the Development Council,” she said. “I love the opportunity to learn and I have made great connections and friends. It has been a good opportunity to stay current with changes in healthcare and to network with community leaders.”

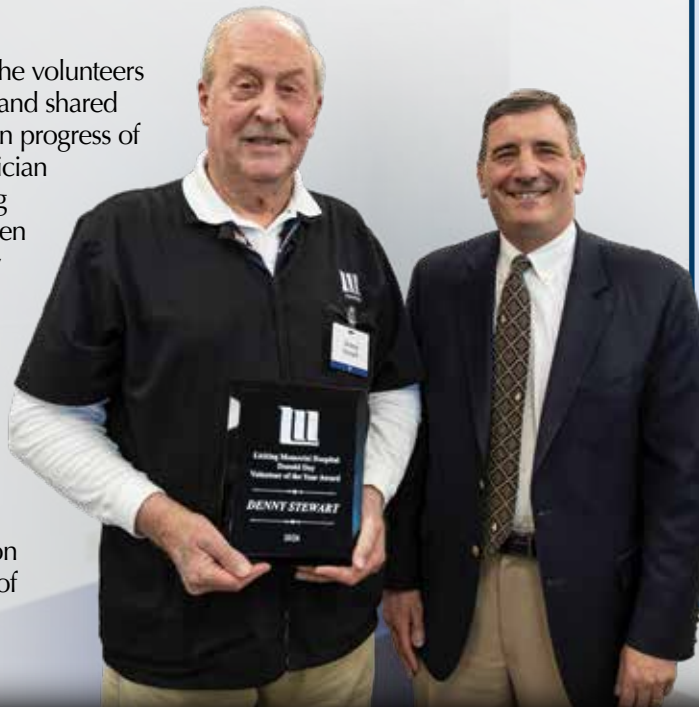
Michele graduated from Ohio University with a degree in nursing. She spent much of her clinical career in oncology and hospice, developing a deep passion for end-of-life care. Over time, she has transitioned into working with children and adults with developmental disabilities. Her professional experience allows her to better understand healthcare complexities and communicate those effectively to others as a member of the Development Council.

Michele resides in Newark with her husband of eighteen years, Steve. Together, they have four children, Meghan Farley and her husband, Brian; Dan Layman and his wife, Becca; Connor McMahon, and his wife Morgan; and Maggie McCabe and her husband, Ryan. They also have three grandchildren, Dakota, Sawyer, and Emilia. Michele and Steve also volunteer their time and resources to other community events and organizations, including the Granville Turkey Trot 5K Walk/Run and St. Vincent Haven, a men’s shelter in Newark. Michele is a member of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Granville. She previously served on the Salvation Army Advisory Board and as President of the Newark Rotary Club. Michele loves spending time with her family, exercising, reading, listening to audiobooks, cooking, and gardening with Steve.

LMH Honors Volunteers

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) recently hosted the annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner to show appreciation for the exceptional contributions made by the members of the Volunteer Department. In 2025, volunteers and TWIGS members donated more than 30,733 hours of their time in service to the Hospital and off-campus locations. The evening included dinner and bingo with Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) President & CEO Rob Montagnese calling the numbers. The lucky winners received gift cards from various restaurants and grocery stores.

At the event, Rob praised the volunteers for their outstanding work and shared updates on the construction progress of The Center at LMHS, physician recruitment, and upcoming events. Karen Dellner, Karen Hedrick, and Robin Stuke were honored for 10 years of service, and Susan Riis and Pam Walczak were recognized for 5 years of service. Janet Anderson, Rene Halblaub, Karen Hedrick, and Denny Stewart received awards for their contribution of more than 5,000 hours of service.



Rob concluded the evening with the announcement of the 2026 Donald Day Volunteer of the Year Award recipient. Denny Stewart received the award for his display of a positive and professional attitude while regularly demonstrating a level of care that goes beyond expectations. Denny volunteers as a wayfinder in the LMH Lobby, assists at the Reception Desk, and escorts patients to their vehicles after procedures at 2000 Tamarack. He has offered over 5,000 hours of service to LMH since becoming a volunteer in 2015.

Many rewarding volunteering opportunities are available at LMHS for teens and adults. To learn more, please call (220) 564-4084 or visit LMHealth.org.

Past recipients of the Donald Day Volunteer of the Year Award include:

- 2025 – Gary Morton
- 2024 – Thelma McCurdy
- 2023 – Dave Douglas and Julie Wiegman
- 2022 – Patricia Law
- 2021 – Michael Barker and Lori Brown
- 2020 – Carol Yost
- 2019 – Diana Hufford
- 2018 – Gary Hamilton and Karen Hedrick
- 2017 – Phil Cassone and Pat Farley
- 2016 – Sue Weiland
- 2015 – Joan Omlor
- 2014 – Carolyn and Eddie Cline
- 2013 – Harry Harper
- 2012 – Richard Stewart
- 2011 – Vickie Fogarty and Arlene Newman
- 2010 – Rene Halblaub
- 2009 – Elizabeth Ann Wood
- 2008 – Janet Anderson and Beverly Crockford
- 2007 – Betty Meyer
- 2006 – Noble Snow
- 2005 – Marye Crispin
- 2004 – Donald Day
- 2003 – Robert Norman

TWIGS Members Honored at Recognition Dinner

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) celebrated the 76th anniversary of the local TWIGS (Togetherness, Willingness, Imagination, Giving, and Sharing) organization with a special recognition dinner at the LMH Main Street Café in April. Currently, there are three active TWIGS chapters that coordinate fundraising projects year-round and donate the proceeds to LMH. In addition to special events and sales, TWIGS members also operate the TWIGS 8 Gift Shop and the TWIGS 6 Thrift Shop on Tamarack Road. Since 1950, TWIGS has contributed more than \$6.2 million for

equipment needs and capital purchases at LMH. Licking Memorial Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese addressed the group and thanked the members for their support of the organization. He also shared updates on the construction progress of The Center at LMHS, physician recruitment, and upcoming events. Attendees participated in bingo for an opportunity to win gift cards to area restaurants and stores, and Rob served as the bingo caller.

TWIGS members celebrating a service anniversary in five-year increments were honored. Sue Weiland was

honored for her 20 years of service to the organization. Joyce Corder was recognized for 15 years of service, and Jan French and Faith Wood were commended for 10 years of service. Nancy Criswell, Donna Grigsby-Gray, Jeanne Revercomb, Lynne Rotruck, and Peg Tefft received acknowledgement for five years of service.

The current Chairs of the individual TWIGS Committees are Cathy Beatty – TWIGS 6, Betty Siarnicki – TWIGS 8, and Janet Wells – TWIGS 24. The members of the TWIGS Executive Board are Betty Siarnicki, Chair; Diane Snow, Vice Chair; Darlene Baker, Treasurer; and Kim Mathis, Recording/Corresponding Secretary.

For information about becoming a TWIGS member, please call (220) 564-4084.



Healthcare Careers Explored at Healthcare Expo

In March, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), Central Ohio Technical College (COTC), and Career & Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-TEC) sponsored the fourth annual Healthcare Expo. The Expo, held at the COTC campus in Newark, was designed to assist attendees in determining a pathway to a career in healthcare. Information on educational courses and job opportunities in the healthcare industry including Nursing, Radiology, Respiratory Therapy, Information Systems, Safety & Security, Culinary Services, Environmental Services, and more were provided.

The event was divided into two sessions. During the morning session, local high school students were invited to explore the information fair and tour the COTC campus. LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese also spoke to the students about potential career opportunities. The evening session featured the information fair and was open to the public. During both sessions, participants were able to view simulations of real-life medical scenarios and demonstrations of the latest medical equipment and technologies.

LMHS Human Resources representatives were available to discuss benefits and answer questions regarding employment. Additionally, representatives from COTC and C-TEC provided information about degree and certificate programs available to those interested in healthcare careers.



Walk with a Doc

In March, Licking Memorial Health Systems hosted a Walk with a Doc event at Heath High School. Esteban Grovas-Cordovi, M.D., of Licking Memorial Gastroenterology, led a discussion and answered general questions about colon cancer. During the April event at Rotary Park in Newark, Mark DeFrancisco, D.O., of Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery, discussed peripheral vascular disease with claudication, or exercise-induced muscle pain, cramping, and fatigue.

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.



Volunteer Spotlight – Joan Bankes

Joan Bankes, a native of Alliance, Ohio, moved to Licking County in 1977 to pursue her teaching career in business education with Licking Valley High School. She began volunteering at Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) in 2023. Each Monday from 12:00 Noon to 4:00 p.m., she assists as a wayfinder, welcoming community members as they enter the Hospital's front lobby and provides mail delivery support. She also assists with check-in at the Food Pantry Network (FPN) Market, as needed, in addition to her normal volunteer shift.

Joan's passion for volunteering with LMHS is rooted in her childhood, having grown up with a father who was a doctor and a mother who was a nurse. She finds great fulfillment in giving back to the community, sharing, "If you can improve

someone's day in any way, that makes you feel good."

One of Joan's favorite aspects of volunteering is connecting with visitors. She especially enjoys getting to know the many older individuals who visit the Hospital, and finds comfort in being able to offer support and companionship by simply providing friendly conversation to someone who may be feeling alone.

Joan is a member of the 20th Century Club; a nonprofit community organization focused on service and philanthropy. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, gardening, and socializing with her family and friends. She and her husband, Mike, a teacher in the Lakewood school district, have been married for 43 years. Together they share two

sons, Danny and Matthew, and are proud grandparents to Graham and Waylen.



Retiree Spotlight

Donna Yates, a lifelong resident of Licking County, retired from Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) in 2025 after 26 years of dedicated service. She began her career in Environmental Services before transitioning to Pharmacy, a position offered to her by former Pharmacy Director, Jeff Smith.

During her years in Pharmacy, Donna worked night shift preparing IV bags, managing the Pyxis machine, and assisting with medication dispensing.

Looking back on her time with LMHS, Donna fondly recalls the people who she worked with, both directly and indirectly. She also appreciated LMHS' commitment to employee growth, including certification opportunities offered through partnerships with Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-TEC). Donna said those programs provided opportunities that she may not have had otherwise.

Over the course of her 26-year career, Donna witnessed many changes, including the transition from medication carts to the Pyxis machine. She especially valued the cleanliness of LMHS facilities and the compassion and dedication of its employees.

Her work also left a lasting personal impact. Helping transport organ donors from the operating room during night shift, Donna

was inspired to become an organ donor herself.

Although Donna misses parts of her career, she is enjoying retirement with restful nights and traveling with family and friends. Florida is a favorite destination, where she enjoys camping, playing cards, and relaxing. During camping season in Ohio, Donna is often found at her permanent camper set-up in Coshocton enjoying the peace and quiet. She enjoys these activities along with her daughter, Latina White, son, Robert Zigan, sister, Tina Hummel, and niece, Diana Broseus. Outside of camping and traveling, Donna regularly attends church with her daughter, assisting with their homeless outreach program.



LMHS Hosts Active•Fit and Active•Senior Events

Active•Fit Junior Chef

In February, 70 children participated in the Active•Fit Junior Chef event at the Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-TEC) hosted by Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS). C-TEC culinary and early childhood education students assisted the Junior Chefs in preparing a variety of dishes throughout the morning and combined each into a healthy lunch that was enjoyed at the conclusion of the event. Recipes included rainbow vegetable quesadillas, tropical smoothies, chicken fried rice, garlic roasted carrot fries, and oatmeal chocolate chip cookies. Participants were also provided with a cookbook that featured various recipes, including those created at the event, that they could make at home.



Active•Senior Bingo

Due to the popularity of the event, LMHS hosted two Active•Senior Bingo events at C-TEC, one in February and one in April. LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese called the bingo numbers for the participants. Lucky bingo winners received prizes such as \$100 and \$250 gift cards to area businesses including Giant Eagle, Kroger, Lowe's, Target, Bob Evans, Walmart, and more.



Active•Senior Gourmet Gardener

LMHS hosted the Active•Senior Gourmet Gardener event in April at C-TEC. Culinary Services Gardener Kristina Mohler and Chef Brian Merritt both provided demonstrations to the group and answered questions. Participants also enjoyed a meal prepared by Culinary Services.



Health & Fitness Fest

In March, approximately 240 Licking County youth and parents/guardians attended the Health & Fitness Fest, sponsored by the Licking County Family YMCA, Denison University, and Licking Memorial Health Systems. Children of all ages were able to visit health screening booths and various fun activity stations located throughout the YMCA, such as basketball free throws, gymnastics, inflatables, and more. Denison students provided face painting and created balloon animals for the participants. Youth who visited a majority of the stations were placed in a drawing for the opportunity to win sports-related prizes and gift cards.



Caregivers Expo

Provides Resources for Primary Caregivers

In April, the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council hosted the sixth annual Caregivers Expo at LMH. Approximately 225 people attended the event, which offered guests information from area vendors with available resources that assist families who are caring for aging loved ones, and grandparents who are the primary caregivers of their grandchildren. The Expo featured 49 vendors, including care facilities, financial institutions, and organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters and the YMCA, as well as information

regarding summer camps, healthy living, and resources for mental health and family assistance.

Attendees shared positive feedback about the variety of resources available. As part of Licking Memorial Health Systems' mission to improve the health of the community, the Expo was designed to offer a place where individuals could find the information needed to care for loved ones in a single location. The event was free to the public, and light refreshments and giveaway items were provided.





Licking Memorial Health Systems

1320 West Main Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

Non-Profit Org.

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Columbus, Ohio
Permit No. 8757

Community Events

"For Your Health" 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk

Saturday, July 18, 8:00 a.m.

Registration opens at 7:00 a.m.

The Dawes Arboretum

7770 Jacksontown Road, Newark

The "For Your Health" 5K Run/Walk begins at 8:00 a.m., and the 1-mile Fun Walk starts shortly thereafter. A registration fee is required for all runners and walkers with timing chips. There is no fee for the 1-mile Fun Walk or for participants who are not timed; however, registration is required. Please register for all events online at racepenguin.com/events/foryourhealth/ or the morning of the race between 7:00 and 7:45 a.m.

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) 564-4333.

Diabetes Self-management Education and Support

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.



Scan QR Code or visit
LMHealth.org/Calendar
for more classes and
events.

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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