

# Community Connection

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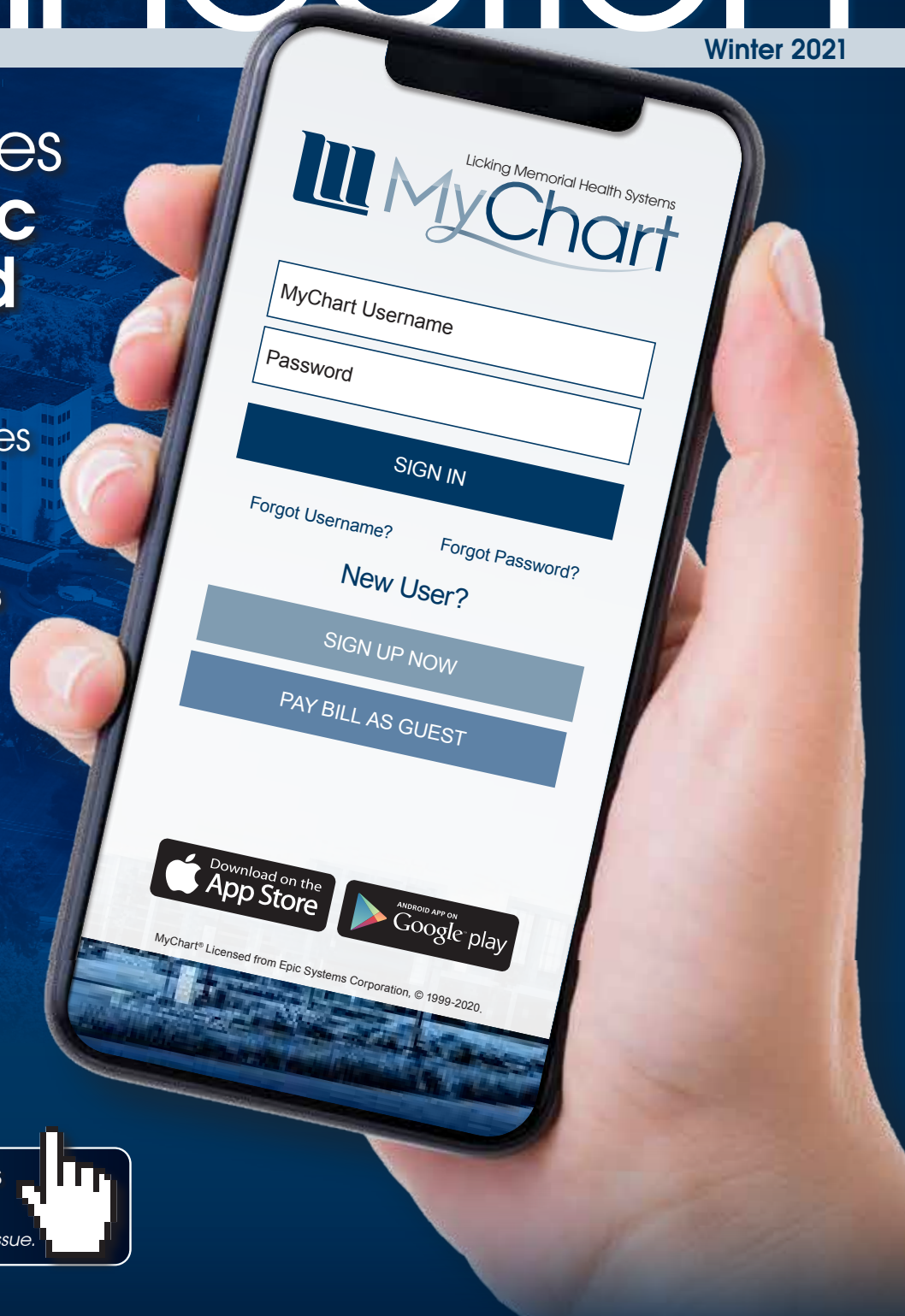
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**Check out** our Quality Report Cards online at [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org).

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# LMHS Launches New Electronic Health Record

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) recently implemented a new electronic health record (EHR) designed by Epic Systems Corporation. LMHS worked diligently with Epic throughout the past year to ensure the timely launch of the new system. "LMHS is pleased to offer this new state-of-the-art system that will enhance productivity to serve the community more effectively," said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. "Everyone involved in the Epic project worked tirelessly to ensure that the product launched on time, and we are proud of this great accomplishment."

During the last quarter of 2020, LMHS entered the testing and training phase of the Epic implementation. Employees from the Information Systems (IS) Department and various clinical and operational departments worked with representatives from Epic to perform the workflow and application testing that ensured the details and personalization specific to LMHS were correct and working properly. "This phase was extremely challenging to complete because we had to perform everything remotely with Epic," explained Sallie Arnett, Vice President Information Systems. "Typically, we would have numerous representatives from Epic on site to help with the testing in person, but because of the pandemic, IS and Epic have been involved in day-long meetings via web conferencing to test workflow scenarios."

Once data migration from the old EHR systems to the Epic system was complete, interface testing began to make certain equipment and monitoring systems were communicating properly with the EHR software. Mapped record testing was performed to match existing values and codes from the old system and confirm the information was accurate and appeared in the appropriate locations. Parallel revenue cycle testing made sure that all billing charges and codes were listed properly in the new system.

Training employees to use the Epic system also was a critical component in preparing for the launch. Principal trainers from IS established a training center at Licking Memorial Hospital

(LMH) to teach material to credential other trainers and super user employees from the clinical and business staff who have a familiarity of various LMHS departments. End-user training began in January, and credentialed trainers assisted in instructing their peers on the new system through the end of February.

The go-live occurred on February 27, between 12:00 Midnight and 4:00 a.m. During the four-hour period, the old system was taken offline and all systems and equipment were switched over to Epic. For several weeks following the transition to the new system, Information Systems staff, super users, consultants and Epic representatives are providing round-the-clock support on site serving as in-person resources for newly-trained employees as they learn to navigate through the system. This at-the-elbow support will continue until providers and employees become comfortable and familiar with using the Epic system.

Epic stores all patient records for LMH and Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) within one system to allow for health information access and exchange throughout LMHS and

in a nationwide network. As a result, patients now receive consolidated billing statements that provide concise information regarding their medical charges for both LMH and LMHP. The consolidated statement provides a better representation of the current amount due by providing easy-to-follow billing and payment information. More information is available on the next page.

Patients are able to view and pay medical bills through MyChart™, LMHS' new patient portal. MyChart offers secure online access to a patient's complete health information in one convenient location. The application also allows patients to schedule appointments, request prescription refills, access test results, send messages to physicians, and more – even if they have received care at multiple healthcare organizations. "LMHS strives to provide the best modern medical advances to improve healthcare experiences and outcomes for patients," said Rob.

Individuals may enroll in MyChart by visiting [MyChart.LMHealth.org](http://MyChart.LMHealth.org) or downloading the free MyChart app on their smartphone or tablet from the Apple App Store or Google Play. Click "Sign up Now" and follow the on-screen instructions to create an account.



[MyChart.LMHealth.org](http://MyChart.LMHealth.org)



# Consolidated Bills Simplify Medical Charges

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) recently introduced a new consolidated billing statement that will provide patients with a better understanding of their medical charges. The change comes after the implementation of Epic, LMHS' new electronic health record (EHR) system. The consolidated statement gives patients concise information regarding charges incurred for both Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) and Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) and provides easy-to-follow billing and payment information.

Statements list charges for services from LMH inpatient and outpatient facilities, as well as LMHP physicians, with the exception of the LMHP pathologists. Patients may receive statements from other providers in LMHS facilities who are not employed by LMHS, such as consulting physicians or ambulance transportation providers.

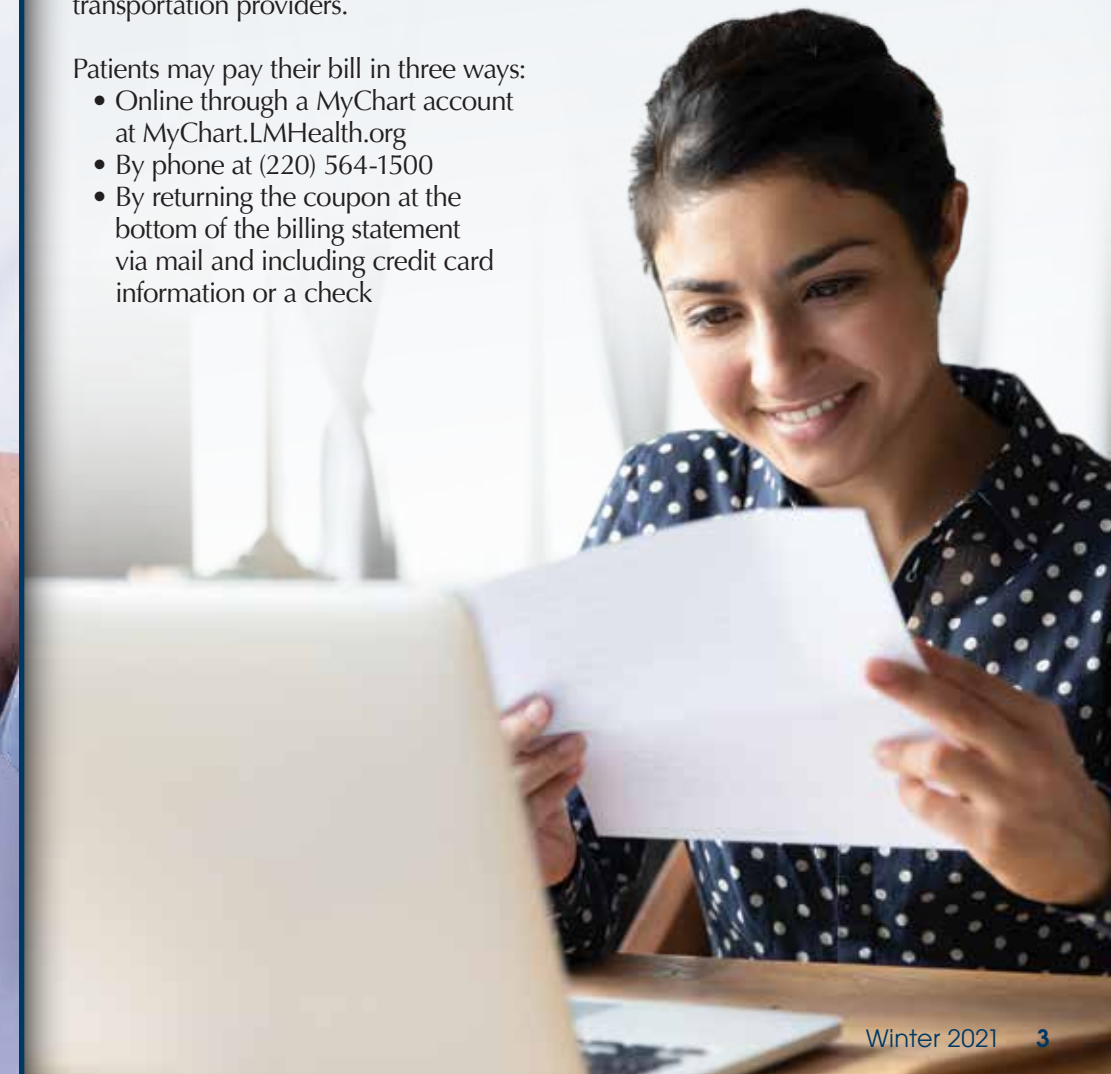
Patients may pay their bill in three ways:

- Online through a MyChart account at [MyChart.LMHealth.org](http://MyChart.LMHealth.org)
- By phone at (220) 564-1500
- By returning the coupon at the bottom of the billing statement via mail and including credit card information or a check

Payment through MyChart is available only for patients who receive services from LMHS physicians and facilities using the new EHR system. Individuals who have outstanding balances from visits to LMHS physicians or facilities prior to the implementation of the new EHR system will continue to receive billing statements from the previous system until those balances are paid in full or resolved.

LMHS offers monthly payment plans to patients who are unable to pay the amount due in full. Payment arrangements may be established by calling Licking Memorial Patient Financial Services at (220) 564-1500.

Patients who earn up to 250 percent of the federal poverty guidelines may be eligible for financial assistance. Applications are available through MyChart or by contacting Licking Memorial Patient Financial Services.



# Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery Offers Appointments in Pataskala

Licking Memorial Health Systems is pleased to announce that Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery now offers appointments once a week in Suite 202 of the Pataskala Health Campus, located at One Healthy Place in Pataskala. The office is open every Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. Vascular surgeons Mark T. DeFrancisco, D.O., and William H. Phillips, D.O., alternate Fridays at the Pataskala office in addition to their regular hours at Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery at 1371 West Main Street in Newark. Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery is part of Licking Memorial Health Professionals, a group of more than 100 physicians in 25 areas of specialty who are dedicated to improving the health of the community. Dr. DeFrancisco and Dr. Phillips joined the practice in February 2020.

Dr. DeFrancisco received his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine in Athens. He completed a general surgery residency and vascular surgery fellowship at Doctors Hospital in Columbus. He is board certified in vascular surgery.

Dr. Phillips received his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He completed a general surgery residency at Doctors Hospital in Columbus and a vascular surgery fellowship at South Point Hospital in Cleveland. He is board certified in vascular surgery.

Dr. DeFrancisco and Dr. Phillips each have 19 years of experience in vascular surgery. They completed their general surgery residency together and worked alongside each other as vascular surgeons later in their careers in Columbus. Both physicians are able to treat all aspects of vascular disease; however, Dr. DeFrancisco holds an interest in abdominal aortic aneurysms, while Dr. Phillips possesses an interest in the treatment of lower extremity peripheral arterial disease.

Vascular disease includes any condition that affects the circulatory system, primarily diseases of the arteries and veins. A vascular surgeon is a specialist trained to diagnose and treat these disorders, excluding the intracranial and coronary arteries. They also can perform wound care of the lower extremities, such as leg and foot sores. Services offered at Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery include:

- Abdominal aortic aneurysm repair
- Peripheral arterial disease
- Claudication
- Visceral aneurysm
- Carotid or subclavian stenosis
- Temporal arteritis
- Popliteal aneurysm
- Amputation (lower extremities)
- Deep vein thrombosis
- Venous insufficiency
- Dialysis access

As a specialty, vascular surgery utilizes minimally invasive techniques or open surgical intervention, depending on the

patient's medical condition. Surgeries are performed at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH); however, patients would visit either office for consultation and post-operative follow-up.

Vascular surgeons also care for patients who do not require surgery. Many vascular problems can be treated with medication, exercise and lifestyle modifications. Vascular surgeons ensure that patients with vascular health conditions know and understand all of their options. Working collaboratively with primary care physicians, specialists and the LMH Vascular Laboratory allows Dr. DeFrancisco and Dr. Phillips to identify patients with vascular disease. Early detection of chronic vascular conditions is key to providing preventative measures such as lifestyle modification, education and medical management through a long-term relationship with a vascular surgeon. Appointments can be made by calling (220) 564-1965.



**Please note:** Social distancing guidelines were observed for all photographs featured in this issue of *Community Connection*. Group photos were taken prior to the pandemic or compiled into a single image using Photoshop after the individuals were photographed separately.

# Behind the Scenes – Occupational Therapy

Many patients who visit Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) because of a serious illness, severe injury or chronic disease often need more than primary care. Rehabilitation therapy for a few days, weeks or even months may be necessary for a full recovery. The staff members of Licking Memorial Rehabilitation Services work in conjunction with physicians and other LMHS staff members to create a plan to offer the best possible results for recovery. The plan often involves a licensed Occupational Therapist or Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) to assist patients in achieving independence in all facets of their lives.

Patients are treated with occupational therapy (OT) for a variety of injuries and diseases, including:

- Hand injuries
- Fibromyalgia
- Work-related injuries
- Developmental disabilities
- Sport-related injuries
- Burns
- Amputations
- Lymphedema
- Stroke
- Heart attack
- Repetitive stress injuries
- Epicondylitis
- Tendonitis
- Arthritis
- Multiple sclerosis
- Carpal tunnel syndrome

OT is offered in a variety of settings, including inpatient, outpatient, home care and Shepherd Hill – the Behavioral Health Department of Licking Memorial Hospital. OT specialists follow guidelines and protocols established by the American Occupational Therapy Association with the focus on improving abilities to perform the activities of daily living. After an evaluation, the therapists determine the current level of function, and work to customize processes for both home and work environments.

OT utilizes many tools and technologies to improve very specific skills needed for independence, including driving skills.

For patients who may be struggling to regain confidence behind the wheel, an OT specialist can offer the use of the STISIM Drive® – a driving simulator that assists in strengthening basic driving skills including reaction time, managing pedals and steering. The video-game style program can be preset to focus on the patient's specific needs. As the patient masters a skill, the simulator can be adjusted to offer more of a challenge. The therapist can make the changes instantly as they monitor the patient's progress in real-time. The simulator is designed for those who already possess driving skills. It is an important tool in sharpening both motor and mental acuity needed to merge, avoid obstacles or drive in a low-light setting.

To assist patients with upper extremity function, Rehabilitation Services has a BTE™ Simulator II. The programmable machine replicates hundreds of real world job and daily living functions, including tasks at home, work or sports.

The isotonic resistance level can be increased gradually and the machine can be programmed to simulate tasks with fine precision. The simulator includes dozens of attachments that can be used to recreate scenarios such as turning a key in a lock, picking up heavy objects or twisting a lid to open a jar. It also offers a wide range of motions, including pivoting, raising over the head or lowering objects. A plan can be tailor-made to assist the patient in returning to normal routines and habits.

Any type of therapy begins with a referral from a physician. An evaluation is scheduled with a complete assessment including past medical history. The team of therapists use standardized assessments to obtain reliable, accurate measurements of range of motion, pain, strength, mobility, cognitive abilities and function level. The group then uses those same measures to track improvements. During the process, the staff members get to know the patient to discover what is important to the individual, what motivates that particular person, and how to obtain the best recovery results. When a patient achieves the goals set for them, the entire team considers the recovery a success.



# New Initiatives and Award Presented at Virtual Corporate Breakfast

During a virtual Corporate Breakfast in February, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) President & CEO Rob Montagnese reflected on the many challenges LMHS faced in 2020 and the changes made to continue improving the health of the community. Despite the obstacles, LMHS completed a number of initiatives that focused on providing improved patient care including work to implement the new electronic health record from Epic Systems.

Early in 2020, LMHS quickly prepared for the spread of the novel coronavirus by opening the first drive-through testing clinic in Licking County. Thousands of patients were tested throughout the year. When the vaccine became available, hundreds of LMHS employees received the first dose of the two-dose vaccine throughout Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

While many day-to-day operations changed, LMHS continued to offer top quality care for patients and complete initiatives to better serve the community. At the end of 2019, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) opened four safe rooms in the Emergency Department and staff developed processes and policies to maintain a safe and consistent utilization of the space in 2020. The rooms were designed to offer a comforting, safe atmosphere for patients experiencing mental health concerns such as suicidal thoughts.

A new Education Training Center was constructed and opened for use to offer more appropriate space for continuing education for LMHS employees. The center includes a conference training room with 45 computers, a laboratory area and two simulation labs. The simulation labs contain lifelike patient simulators that employees can practice intubation and resuscitation skills, among others.

LMHS proudly expanded involvement with Lifeline of Ohio's organ donation program in 2020. Several lives were saved as LMHS successfully recovered a

heart, two livers, four lungs and four kidneys for transplant. To show respect to the four donors and their families, LMH staff members implemented an Honor Walk in which employees gathered in hallways to applaud and thank the families for their sacrifice.

During the year, LMH began using new technologies, including CypherHealth software to assist clinical and patient experience leadership effectively and consistently capture real-time patient feedback. The evaluation considers factors such as overall staff communication, courtesy and respect, listening, cleanliness, facilities, and culinary support. Staff members in the Intensive Care Unit began using the ABCDEF Bundle – elements of care that individually and collectively reduce delirium, improve pain management and reduce long-term consequences for patients. LMH also earned accreditation from DNV, independent experts in risk management and quality assurance. The organization monitors LMH's adherence to patient safety criteria and evaluates processes that impact patient care across various departments and facilities.

Other projects for 2020 included the use of the MRI Fusion Prostate Biopsy, new video surveillance and McRoberts Infant Security System for Maternal Child, vaping, opioid and self-harm education for schools, and a successful first full year for the LMH Ride Program.

Rob also shared a variety of fun facts including:

- 242,276 hours devoted to cleaning
- 1,593,481 pounds of laundry processed
- 260 pounds of recycled paper
- 93,102 courier miles traveled – equivalent of nearly 50 round trips from Newark to Disney World
- 352 uses of the electric car charging stations, which saved 307 gallons of gas

Looking ahead in 2021, LMH will continue to operate the COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic for the community. Nearly 2,000 Licking County residents received the first dose of the vaccine at the Clinic through the beginning of February. The Clinic is following guidelines established by the state to administer the vaccine in phases according to priorities based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

LMHS will begin use of the new unified electronic medical record from Epic Systems that provides one platform to store all patient records and results in an improved continuum of care. The new software allows for health information access and exchange throughout LMHS and in a nationwide network. In addition, a Café Renovation Project is set to begin soon. The project will include an expansion of the serving and dining areas, renovations to the kitchen, replacement of dining area furniture and the addition of two restrooms. The LMH Café serves patients, staff and guests with a number of healthy meal choices and hosts special events for LMHS employees and local groups.

Rob presented The Robert H. McCaughy Honorary Ambassador Award to community leader and LMH Development Council member John Gard. John has been a member of the Development Council since 1993 and currently serves as the Education & Membership Chair. He has demonstrated outstanding leadership and, during the revitalization of the Development Council, established "Straight Talk" – a grassroots approach to communicate LMH activities to the community and offer an opportunity for the public to meet the President & CEO for a question and answer session. Through his actions, John has exhibited a high level of commitment to LMHS and displayed exceptional service and loyalty to the organization.

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



# LMH Provides COVID-19 Vaccines Throughout the Community

As COVID-19 vaccines became available in mid-January, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) received authorization as an open point of dispensing (POD) to provide vaccination to the community. The State of Ohio began distributing the vaccines in phases with those at the greatest risk at the top of the list. LMH established a vaccination clinic at Doctors' Park Building 5, near the Hospital.

In addition, LMH employees scheduled appointments to vaccinate at-risk members of the local population at the Harbor Community Center in Buckeye Lake and the For Your Health Center at Washington Square Plaza, a 104-unit complex in Downtown Newark which requires guidelines for residency, including age and income. Licking Memorial Community Case Management staff, with a member of Nursing Administration, assisted

with the necessary paperwork and administered the vaccine to 31 Washington Square residents on January 19.

"It is imperative that we protect our most vulnerable community members and remove the barriers to receiving quality care," Licking Memorial Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese said. "We were able to ease the burden of arranging transportation by bringing our staff to the residents to administer the COVID-19 vaccine."

During the vaccination clinic, Rob visited with the patients and staff to discuss best practices for future endeavors. The stay-at-home orders issued in March 2020 forced the closure of the For Your Health Center, but LMH is working on plans for reopening the facility.



# Red Dress Event Encourages Women to Reduce Stress for Heart Health

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) presented The Heart Truth: A Virtual Red Dress Event on February 4 for nearly 130 viewers. The annual Red Dress Event encourages women to make heart-healthy lifestyle changes in cooperation with the American Heart Association's (AHA) Go Red for Women Day, which was celebrated nationally on February 5. The red dress has become a national symbol to increase awareness that heart disease is the number one cause of death for women. "Heart disease affects those of all ages, even those who are healthy. The availability of cardiology services in our community is vital to treat various debilitating heart diseases and save lives," said Rob Montagnese, LMHS President & CEO.

The featured speaker, Laurie Schaeffer, D.O., of Licking Memorial Dermatology – Pataskala, discussed reducing stress in difficult times. "In order to reduce stress, we need to optimize our mental and physical health. We need to have a strong mind to have a strong body, and vice versa," said Dr. Schaeffer. "Due to the pandemic, many of us have been experiencing chronic stress. Reducing stress is crucial

to maintain heart health and reduce complications from heart disease."

Throughout the presentation, Dr. Schaeffer discussed the importance of proper sleep, exercise, diet and mindfulness. She emphasized that



maintaining these four categories reduces stress and increases overall health. Dr. Schaeffer also noted the importance of scheduling preventive healthcare checkups with a primary care physician. She provided many resources for viewers that can help to optimize their health and overcome certain barriers, such as time or motivation. One recommended online resource,

MyPlate.gov, helps to create a healthy eating routine and meal plan based on various personal factors. Additionally, Dr. Schaeffer presented useful skin care information, such as performing monthly skin checkups to find new or suspicious blemishes or moles, and also discussed the importance of receiving help from a mental health professional, if needed.

Only 56 percent of women in the United States recognize that heart disease is their number one cause of death. LMHS continues to increase awareness about heart disease among the community with events such as Red Dress. "We are pleased that so many guests were able to view our Red Dress presentation online this year, and we hope to see you all again next year in a public setting," Rob said.

Each registered viewer received a free 15-minute massage from Bellezza Salon and Day Spa and also were entered into a door prize drawing for various gift cards to local businesses. Registrants also were asked to send a photo of themselves in a red outfit to be posted on Facebook. The participant with the most Facebook "likes" received a \$100 Kroger gift card.

# Colon Cancer Awareness Month

Nationally, March is recognized as Colon Cancer Awareness Month. Colorectal cancer (cancer of the colon or rectum) is the third most common cancer in the United States. Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) continues to spread awareness to the community about colorectal cancer by providing information and resources regarding cancer screenings and colon health.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related death in both men and women. More than 50,000 Americans die each year from the disease. However, when discovered early, colorectal cancer is highly treatable and one of the most curable cancers. The survival rate has been increasing due, in part, to greater awareness and screening.

Most colorectal cancer starts as polyps – pre-cancerous growths – in the inner lining of the colon or rectum that can develop into cancer over time. Finding polyps and cancer in the earlier stages provides the best opportunity for successful treatment. Often, patients are unaware that they have colorectal cancer because noticeable symptoms, such as a persistent change in bowel movements, abdominal pain, fatigue, or unintended weight loss, do not occur until the later stages of cancer. Preventative screening can help to decrease the number of people diagnosed with the disease.

The American Cancer Society guidelines recommend that men and women in good health receive regular screenings beginning at the age of 50 through the age of 75. Individuals with a family or personal history of colorectal cancer or polyps, a personal history of inflammatory bowel disease, such as Crohn's Disease, or a family history of a hereditary colorectal cancer syndrome, such as Lynch Syndrome, are at high risk and need to begin screening earlier. The risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age. More than 90 percent of cases occur in people who are 50 years old or older. Other risk factors include being overweight or obese, lack of physical activity, diet high in red and processed meats, tobacco use, and heavy alcohol consumption.

In addition to screenings, studies have indicated that regular exercise and a high-fiber diet can greatly reduce the risk of colorectal cancer. Foods rich in fiber, such as berries, apples, bananas, oranges, peas, broccoli, corn, whole grains and legumes, promote regularity and prevent constipation. Eating plant-based foods also helps to maintain a healthy weight and aid in weight loss. Over-consumption of red meat, such as beef and pork, and processed meats may increase the risk of colorectal cancer. Red meats should be limited to 18 ounces per week, and processed meats – hot dogs, ham, bacon and

sausages – should be avoided, if possible. LMHS maintains a dedicated website, LMHSColonHealth.org, that provides detailed information and resources about colorectal cancer and features high-fiber recipes and fitness guidance.

Colorectal cancer symptoms also can be associated with many other health conditions. Early signs of cancer often do not include pain. Only a medical professional can determine the cause. Do not delay in seeing a physician. LMHS also encourages those who are at the age of 50 or older to participate in a colon screening for the benefit of their health. Contact your primary care physician today to schedule a colon screening.

Throughout the month of March, LMHS staff members will discuss colon cancer prevention and treatment at community events including LMHS' virtual Walk with a Doc event on Saturday, March 20. On Friday, March 5, LMHS employees also will dress in blue for Wear Blue for Colon Cancer Day. In addition, the LMH Café will feature high fiber specials for one week during the month. To learn more about colorectal cancer prevention, visit LMHSColonHealth.org.

## New Appointments



**Frank K. Boateng, M.D.**, of Providence Kidney & Hypertension Specialists, LLC, joined the LMH Medical Staff.



**Jeffrey R. Makley, APRN-CNP**, joined Licking Memorial Emergency Medicine.



**Andrea S. Sims, APRN-CNP**, joined Licking Memorial Pediatric Hospitalists.



**McKenzie K. Wheeler, PA-C**, joined Licking Memorial Family Practice – Hebron.

## National Colon Cancer Awareness Month

# DON'T DELAY!

Contact your physician for a colon cancer screening.

For more resources, visit [LMHSColonHealth.org](http://LMHSColonHealth.org) or call (220) 564-2950.

# Retired LMHS Vice President Honors LMHS Physician for National Doctors' Day

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

Ann Howard has been a patient of David Koontz, D.O., of Licking Memorial Internal Medicine for approximately 20 years. A lifelong resident of Newark, she also was a patient of Dr. Koontz's father, Warren Koontz, M.D. "His father cared for my mother and me for many years," she said. When his father retired, Dr. Koontz acquired the practice, and Ann decided to remain a patient because of the excellent care she received.

"Dr. Koontz is an excellent doctor. I appreciate the time he takes to make certain all of my concerns have been addressed," said Ann. "I am very pleased with the care I receive, and his office staff always is very helpful." Giving to LMHF

in recognition of Dr. Koontz allows Ann to show her gratitude for the attentive care she has received from him, his father and their staff.

Ann has dedicated much of her time to serving her community and Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH). Her commitment to improving the health of the community began in 1953 as a nurse in the Newark City Hospital's operating room. In 1966, she played an integral part in the opening of LMH at its present location. She was named Vice President Nursing Services in the 1970s and Vice President Administrative Services in 1983. Ann retired in 1995 and currently devotes her time to caring for the community as a member of the LMH Development Council and by giving to several Newark and Licking County charities, such as the Licking County Humane Society. Donating to LMHF to honor her physician is one more way she supports LMHS and the community.

Dr. Koontz has served Licking County as an Internist for almost 30 years through his private practice, and recently joined Licking Memorial Internal Medicine. He graduated from Newark High School in 1975 and completed his undergraduate studies at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, in 1979. He received his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from the Ohio University College of Osteopathic

Medicine, where he served as class president, in 1986. Dr. Koontz completed an internship at Doctors' Hospital and his internal medicine residency at Riverside Methodist Hospital, both in Columbus.

The LMH Active Medical Staff includes approximately 171 physicians and 48 consulting physicians who provide their expertise and care to the community. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) is a group of more than 100 physicians in 45 various practices. Physician offices are located throughout Licking County, including Granville, Hanover, Heath, Hebron, Johnstown, Newark and Pataskala.

All charitable contributions to LMHS and LMHF are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Currently, contributions to Licking Memorial Health Foundation will be directed toward the Licking Memorial Hospital Café Renovation Project, which will include an expansion of the serving and dining areas to upgrade the facility, improving traffic flow as well as functionality for staff, while accommodating the ever-growing needs of the Hospital and community. To make a donation honoring a physician, please contact the LMH Development Office at (220) 564-4102. You also may visit [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org) and click "Donate."



# National Doctors' Day – March 30

In recognition of Doctors' Day, express your appreciation for your favorite physician by making a donation to Licking Memorial Health Foundation in his or her honor. An acknowledgment of your gift will be sent to the physician on your behalf. Contributions will benefit the Licking Memorial Hospital Café Renovation Project, which will include an expansion of the serving and dining areas to upgrade the facility, improving traffic flow as well as functionality for staff, while accommodating the ever-growing needs of the Hospital and community.

Name

Address

City  State

Zip  Phone number  (  )

Email address

Enclosed is my gift of

In recognition of

Your Message

# Virtual Walk with a Doc

Grant Yoder, D.O. (left), of Licking Memorial Outpatient Psychiatry, discussed seasonal affective disorder at the first Licking Memorial Health Systems virtual Walk With A Doc in November. In January, Donald J. Fairbanks, M.D. (right), of Licking Memorial Family Practice – North Newark, led a discussion titled, "Healthcare Advice: Who Do We Trust?" The events were streamed live on Facebook, and participants were encouraged to walk in their neighborhood, at a park, on a

walking path or treadmill as they viewed the presentation. Both physicians also answered questions, submitted through Facebook, regarding each topic.

The monthly Walk with a Doc events are an opportunity for community members to learn from a member of the Licking Memorial Hospital Active Medical Staff during a casual walk. To comply with COVID-19 pandemic guidelines, upcoming walks will continue to be virtual.



Please make checks payable to **Licking Memorial Health Foundation**. Donations also may be made online at [LMHealth.ORG](http://LMHealth.ORG). For more information or to donate with a credit or debit card, please call (220) 564-4102. (Gifts are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.)

# LMH Receives National Recognition for Organ Donation Campaign

In November, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) was recognized for their participation in the National Hospital Organ Donation Campaign, sponsored by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Vice President Acute Care Services Heather Burkhart (far right) and Director of Acute Care Lisa Hayes (middle right) coordinated campaign activities from October 2019 to April 2020 to promote donor registration and tracked accomplishments on a

Hospital Campaign Scorecard. Points earned for each activity and each new donor registration determined the level of recognition received for the Hospital Campaign. LMH received 1,035 points, earning Platinum Recognition – the highest level attainable. Faith Hilterbrand (middle left) and Sarah Evans (middle) from Lifeline of Ohio presented the award, which Licking Memorial Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese (left) accepted on behalf of the Hospital.

Lifeline of Ohio promotes and coordinates the donation of organs and tissues in 38 Ohio counties, as well as two counties in West Virginia. It is among a select group of organ procurement organizations recognized nationwide

by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for working with hospitals and transplant centers that promote enrollment in state organ donor registries. Lifeline of Ohio is part of the national Workplace Partnership for Life (WPFL) program, which is sponsored by the HRSA. WPFL provides a unique opportunity for businesses and organizations to educate their employees and the community about the importance of organ, eye and tissue donation.

Despite challenges that hospitals faced in early 2020, the Hospital Campaign saw record participation numbers. 1,700 hospitals across the nation helped to add 59,000 donor registrations between October 2019 and May 2020. LMH registered 25 new donors during a five day enrollment campaign in February 2020.



# LMH Helps Those in Need to Celebrate 123rd Birthday

On January 18, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) celebrated 123 years of improving the health of the Licking County community. For the 17th year, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) celebrated this “birthday” milestone by collecting donations for those in need. Donations consisted of new blankets and outerwear, as well as monetary gifts. The collected goods were donated to The Center for New Beginnings and The Salvation Army of Licking County.

A friendly competition between interdepartmental teams occurred to determine which groups could donate the largest amount of cold weather items in pounds and the largest monetary donation to assist individuals and families in Licking County. The celebration included an online livestream of the awards presentation and pre-packaged cake available in the LMH Café. Total contributions of cold weather items equaled 165.5 pounds, with 95.5 pounds donated by the first-place team comprised

of Culinary Services, Environmental Services, Laundry and Transportation staff members. Monetary donations totaled \$9,623, and the team comprised of Anesthesiologists, Hospitalists, Infectious Disease, Laboratory, LMHP Administration and Pathology staff donated \$1,710 to receive first place.

“Despite the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, our employees generously helped provide vital cold-weather items to Licking County residents in need,” said Rob Montagnese, LMHS President & CEO. “Thank you to our employees for showing extraordinary compassion and care to our community through this celebration and their hard work each day.”

Four babies were born at the Hospital on January 18. In honor of the shared birthday with LMH, the mothers of each newborn received a \$123 Target gift card.



# LMH Café Renovation Project

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) recently announced the achievement of its fundraising goal for LMHS COVID Relief – Restoring Resources ... for Your Health. The effort was initiated to restore the resources needed to protect and care for patients, staff and visitors during the pandemic. The Licking County community generously provided financial gifts to support LMHS. Individuals and organizations offered a total contribution of more than \$575,000 to replenish funds used for the vital equipment and supplies necessary for the treatment of COVID-19 patients at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) and implementation of heightened safety procedures. LMHS also received an additional \$6 million in COVID relief funds from the U.S. government, for a total of \$13 million.

LMHS is pleased to introduce a new fundraising project to benefit the LMH Café, which soon will undergo extensive renovations. In 2021, contributions received for Licking Memorial Health

Foundation (LMHF) will be directed toward the LMH Café Renovation Project.

“The renovation of the Café will accommodate the ever-growing needs of the Hospital and our community,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. “This project is important not only to our employees who spend 36 to 50 hours a week at the Hospital, but also to families and visitors who utilize the Café as a respite during stressful times.”

The Café serves patients, staff and guests with delicious, healthy, comforting meals, and hosts special events for LMHS employees and local groups. Renovations will include relocating the Moundview Room to allow for the expansion of the Café dining area and an upgrade of furniture. A vestibule will be added at the patio entrance, and the employee entrance hallway will be moved to make room for the addition of two restrooms with two stalls each.

Renovations also will be made to the Café serving area to improve traffic flow as well as functionality for the staff. Upgrades will include a new modular station that will allow for a variety of offerings, an enhanced pasta and omelet station to provide better workflow for staff, and the addition of a burger and hot dog station. The existing salad bar will be removed, and a sandwich, soup, and salad station will enable patrons to have meals made to order. The Grab and Go case, as well as the Sally Salad Robot, will remain available. Two coffee and tea bars will be added, and fountain drinks and ice cream will be located on the south wall of the Café. An enhanced cashier stand will offer one line for queuing.

To make a contribution online, visit LMHealth.org and click on the Donate button at the top of the screen. Gifts are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Individuals also may contact the LMH Development Office at (220) 564-4102 for more information.



Please note: Social distancing guidelines were observed for all photographs featured in this issue of *Community Connection*. Group photos were taken prior to the pandemic or compiled into a single image using Photoshop after the individuals were photographed separately.

# Supporter Spotlight – Southgate Corporation

Southgate Corporation was founded by John “Jack” O’Neill in Newark in 1953. Jack came to the community as a young entrepreneur with an interest in starting a business. He realized there was a need for quality, affordable housing, particularly for returning World War II veterans who were beginning to raise families, and his first development was a series of National Homes located near the Southgate Shopping Center. In the 1970s, Southgate Corporation began developing industrial properties, and today, the corporation has developed more than 6 million square feet of industrial space, including the Newark Ohio Industrial Park in Hebron, Etna Corporate Park, and McMillen Business Center, a 200 acre mixed-use park in Newark.

Robert O’Neill, Jack’s youngest son, is the President and owner of Southgate Corporation today and continues the corporation’s philosophy of identifying and meeting needs within the community. Robert’s philanthropic spirit is influenced not only by his father, but also his mother, Betsy, a nurse who was committed to helping children and families in the community. Betsy was involved in establishing the Licking County Infant Development Program, the New Beginnings Women’s Shelter in Newark, Hospice of Central Ohio, and Kendal at Granville. Robert’s parents also were long-time supporters of Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) as members of the William Schaffner Society and supported various causes in the community. Robert upholds their legacy by continuing to support LMHS and other institutions in Licking County.

In 2010, the O’Neill family provided a generous Founder Level gift to Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) to establish the Betsy Eaton O’Neill Health Resource Center in memory of their beloved matriarch. Located off the LMH Main Lobby near the front entrance, the Health Resource Center offers an abundance of medical resources free of charge to the community, including computers with Internet access for medical research, reference manuals, anatomically correct models of internal organs, and health-related journals.

Through their contributions to LMHS, Robert and his family felt that they were also supporting the entire community. “Southgate Corporation creates opportunities that bring new jobs to the area, and in doing so, we help build a stronger community,” said Robert. “LMHS is the main healthcare provider for all of Licking County, and a strong community needs a strong healthcare system. By supporting LMHS, we help to provide available resources for patients and their

families to learn more about the medical conditions they face and to obtain the knowledge and information that will help them make informed decisions about their health care.”

For over a decade, Hospital patients and guests have benefited from the support and educational resources provided in the Health Resource Center. The Center is staffed by volunteers with clinical backgrounds who can help research and answer questions. Adjacent to the Health Resource Center is Main Street Coffee, which provides a variety of Starbucks™ coffees, specialty beverages, light breakfast and lunch fare, and a selection of sweet treats for visitors and LMH staff.

In 2014, the Southgate Corporation became a member of LMH’s Golden Corporate Honor Roll, a designation for business and corporate donors. “LMHS is sincerely grateful for this generous gift from Southgate Corporation,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. “We are fortunate to have altruistic community leaders such as the Southgate Corporation and the O’Neill family who recognize the importance of the LMHS mission to improve the health of the community.”

Donations made to Licking Memorial Health Foundation enable the Hospital to provide for capital needs, services, and programs that may otherwise go unfunded. Individuals, businesses, and foundations may choose to support LMHS at a variety of levels. The Golden Corporate Honor Roll distinguishes companies which have made a total commitment of \$10,000 or more to LMH. Participation in this program signifies the company’s alliance with LMHS to ensure the continuation of excellent health care. The Platinum Circle is reserved for LMH’s business and corporate donors who have pledged \$25,000 to \$49,000. These gifts from companies and organizations enable the Hospital to purchase new equipment and provide additional services to meet the healthcare needs of the citizens of Licking County. For more information, contact the LMH Development Office at (220) 564-4102.



# Physician Spotlight

**Grant L. Yoder, D.O.**, joined Licking Memorial Outpatient Psychiatric Services – Newark in July 2014. Dr. Yoder received his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree at the Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Athens, Ohio. He completed a general psychiatry internship and residency at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, Virginia. Dr. Yoder is board certified in psychiatry.



## Ask a Doc – Winter Blues with Grant L. Yoder, D.O.

**Question:** How do you treat winter blues?

**Answer:** It is not uncommon to experience feelings of sadness and lethargy during the colder, darker days of winter. Despite feeling more unhappy than usual, the winter blues typically do not affect the ability to enjoy day-to-day experiences. “Winter blues” is a general term for a fairly common, mild form of depression. Generally, the mood shift lasts a short time and will dissipate on its own. The winter blues are often linked to something specific, such as stressful holidays or reminders of absent loved ones.

Self-care is a valuable tool to overcome the feelings associated with the winter blues. Going outside to enjoy the sunlight or spending time in a brightly lit space can be helpful, especially early in the day. Be sure to participate in enjoyable activities such as taking a walk or watching a movie. Spending time with other people is helpful in dispelling feelings of loneliness. Discussing what may be causing the winter blues with a trusted friend or relative can assist in identifying the underlying cause of the feelings of sadness. It also is very important to eat nutritious foods and avoid overloading on sugary treats such as cookies and candies.

If the feelings of sadness start affecting aspects of daily life, such as work or personal relationships, it could be more than just the winter blues. Serious symptoms could indicate a case of seasonal affective disorder (SAD), a subtype of major depression. SAD is characterized by the recurrent seasonal pattern, with symptoms lasting about five months per year when there is less natural light during winter months. For

many people, symptoms usually begin in the fall and continue into the winter months.

Symptoms of SAD may include:

- Feeling depressed most of the day, nearly every day
- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Having low energy
- Losing interest in activities
- Sleeping problems
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Feeling sluggish or agitated
- Having difficulty concentrating
- Having frequent thoughts of death or suicide

Shorter days appear to be a main trigger for SAD due to reduced sunlight disrupting the body’s brain chemistry. Reduced sunlight can cause a drop in serotonin, which regulates mood, triggering depression. The brain produces serotonin and melatonin to maintain the body’s daily rhythm tied to the seasonal night-day cycle. During the day, the brain sends signals throughout the body to maintain wakefulness. At night, melatonin is produced to encourage the body to sleep. Shortened daylight hours in winter can alter this natural rhythm and lead to SAD in certain people. Deficits in vitamin D may exacerbate these problems because vitamin D is believed to promote serotonin activity. In addition to vitamin D consumed with diet, the body produces vitamin D when exposed to sunlight on the skin.

There are a number of ways to treat SAD. The most common treatment is light therapy which is meant to replace the missing daylight hours with an artificial substitute. For this treatment, the person sits in front of a very bright light box without staring directly at it for

about 30 to 45 minutes, usually first thing in the morning. The treatment should be continued every morning through spring. The light box should emit light at 10,000 lux, which is about 20 times brighter than ordinary indoor light, and filter out the potentially damaging UV light which makes this a safe treatment for most. However, people with certain eye diseases or taking medications that increase sensitivity to sunlight may need to use alternative treatments or use light therapy under medical supervision.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) – a form of psychotherapy that has the goal of modifying tumultuous emotions, behaviors and thoughts – also has been successful in the treatment of SAD. CBT focuses on present circumstances and emotions in real time and explores what the patient is telling themselves that might result in anxiety or an emotional disturbance. The patient is encouraged to address rational concerns practically and to challenge irrational beliefs, rumination or jumping to the worst possible conclusion. CBT also has been adapted for people with SAD (CBT-SAD) focusing on replacing negative thoughts related to the winter season with more positive thoughts. CBT-SAD also uses a process called behavioral activation, which helps individuals identify and schedule pleasant, engaging indoor or outdoor activities to combat the loss of interest they typically experience in the winter.

Licking Memorial Behavioral Health Services offers inpatient and outpatient services for depression, mood disorders, and anxiety and stress-related conditions. The team of psychiatrists and licensed professional counselors is located at 200 Messimer Drive in Newark. Call (220) 564-4873 for more information.





# Quality Reporting to the Community

## Patient Story and Benchmarks for Surgery Care

### Patient Story – Charles “Zane” Wachtel

Vascular surgeon Mark T. DeFrancisco, D.O., of Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery, visited Zane in the Hospital to discuss the findings and the need for another surgery. “I was so pleased to see Dr. DeFrancisco. He had performed the original procedure before he was part of Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), and I knew he had performed hundreds of such repairs,” Zane said. “Having someone with such talent and experience is a true benefit for the community.”

Dr. DeFrancisco explained to Zane that he would have to reline the existing two-piece stent to stop the leak. The minimally invasive procedure was performed the next morning, and Zane returned home 24 hours after the surgery.

Zane met with Dr. DeFrancisco one month following the procedure, then again after six months and now will resume yearly follow-ups to check the placed stent. “Everyone at LMH provided amazing care. They left me with no wants, needs or complaints. It is refreshing to see so many people who enjoy their jobs and are willing to take such good care of others,” Zane said. The quick recovery time made it possible for Zane to return to doing what he enjoys – serving the Licking County community in his numerous volunteer positions.

Zane was raised on a farm outside of Ashland, Ohio. He attended The Ohio State University (OSU) and earned his degree in architecture. Before his graduation, Orville Varrasso interviewed Zane at OSU and offered him a position with his firm in Newark. Zane accepted the position, and he and Carole, whom he had met in Ashland, moved to Newark. Years later, He

and Garry McAnally purchased the firm. Zane worked on many important projects in Newark including the Library downtown, the County Administration Building and the jail. “I really enjoyed my business. You experience every emotion except for boredom,” Zane said.

Carole and Zane celebrated 60 years of marriage in September 2020. The couple raised their two children, Katrina and Chuck, in Licking County and now are watching a third generation grow up in the area. Their granddaughter, Cierra, has three children – Landon, Aubrie and Maci – with her husband, Josh. While Zane enjoys spending time with his family, he is extremely active in the community. He is an ambassador for Lifeline of Ohio sharing the story of his son, Chuck, who was killed in a work accident in 2004. He serves on the Board of Directors at Goodwill, is a member of the Licking County Governmental Preservation Society, the City of Newark Design and Preservation Group, Rotary Club and Maennerchor – a German-American Singing Social Club. He also volunteers at Hospice of Central Ohio, the food pantry and his church, Second Presbyterian Church.

Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery is located at 1371 West Main Street in Newark and treats patients with conditions that affect the circulatory system, primarily diseases of the arteries and veins that affect circulation. Vascular Surgery is staffed by two qualified vascular surgeons, trained to diagnose and treat care for these disorders, excluding the intracranial and coronary arteries. They also perform wound care of the lower extremities. Contact the office at (220) 564-1965 to make an appointment.

Charles “Zane” Wachtel knew the two-piece stent in his abdominal aorta had an endoleak. The leak was detected several years ago during a yearly follow-up for a surgery performed in 2011 to repair an abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA). The aorta is the main artery that runs from the heart through the center of the chest and abdomen supplying blood to the body. If the wall of the aorta weakens, it can develop an aneurysm – an enlarged area that may rupture and cause life-threatening bleeding. Endovascular repair, a minimally invasive procedure, can be used to prevent the AAA from rupturing. During the procedure, a surgeon makes an incision to gain access to an artery in the upper part of the leg through which a thin, flexible tube can be threaded to reach the site of the aneurysm. A stent – a tube made of a thin metal mesh covered with a thin polyester fabric – then is sent to the site, opened inside the aorta and fastened in place to allow blood flow.

After the endovascular repair in 2011, Zane had regular check-ups and yearly computerized axial tomography (CAT) scans to examine the stent and ensure it was functioning properly. For several years, he had no adverse effects from the leak; however, Zane started experiencing severe back pain last summer. His wife, Carole, took him to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department (ED) where he underwent a number of tests to determine the cause of his pain. The leak had created a bulge in the abdominal aorta which caused the back pain.

# Surgery 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.

- Moderate sedation allows patients to tolerate procedures while maintaining adequate breathing and the ability to respond to stimulation. Most drugs used in moderate sedation can be reversed fully or partially, if necessary. However, careful patient assessment and monitoring reduce the need for reversal agents and improve patient outcomes. Therefore, minimal use of reversal agents is a good indicator of quality in moderate sedation.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Use of reversal agent for GI procedures	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Less than 0.90%

- The healthcare team at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) follows a multiple-step process to prevent wrong-patient, wrong-procedure or wrong-site surgery (e.g., surgery performed on the left foot instead of the right foot). This process includes left or right designation at the time the surgery is scheduled, verification of the site on the day of surgery with the patient and the patient’s current medical record, marking the site by the surgeon, and final verification in the operating room. In 2019, 8,215 surgeries were performed at LMH.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Wrong-site surgeries	0	0	0	0

- Patients who have open-incision surgery are at elevated risk to develop an infection at the surgical site. LMH utilizes strict infection-prevention strategies for each surgical patient and ensures that the Hospital’s Central Sterile staff members receive certification in proper reprocessing sterilization policies for surgical equipment.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Central Sterile staff with certification	100%	100%	100%	100%
Surgical site infections	0.00	0.30	0.08	Less than 0.11

- As a quality care indicator, hospitals track 30-day readmission rates for patients who had total hip or total knee replacement surgeries. LMH tracks the rate of patients who had an unplanned readmission back to LMH for any reason (even if the reason was unrelated to the surgery) within 30 days of their Hospital discharge.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	National <sup>(1)</sup>
30-day readmissions:				
Total hip replacement readmissions	5.00%	3.18%	1.40%	2.49%
Total knee replacement readmissions	2.24%	2.84%	4.63%	2.06%

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

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Surgeries that started on time	88%	89%	90%	Greater than 90%

- Postoperative patients who lie in bed for long periods are at increased risk of developing a blood clot in their lungs (pulmonary embolism) or legs (deep vein thrombosis). To prevent the formation of these dangerous conditions, LMH uses multiple methods to reduce the risk of blood clots, including the use of blood thinning medications and mechanical compression devices. In some cases, despite using these interventions, these blood clots may still occur.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Postoperative patients who developed a pulmonary embolism or deep vein thrombosis	0.60%	0.30%	1.75%	0.50%

Data Footnotes: (1) MIDAS CPMS comparative database

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



# Preventative Measures to Avoid Peripheral Vascular Disease

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) is a common problem affecting millions of people in the United States. This chronic disease can affect any blood vessel in the body and lead to progressive closure of the arteries. PAD frequently affects the lower extremities of the body. The arteries can be narrow or closed due to internal plaque build-up. Risk factors of PAD include high cholesterol, hypertension, smoking, age and family history. Other diseases, such as diabetes, heart and kidney disease, will increase the risk to develop PAD. A vascular surgeon is trained to treat diseases that affect the circulatory system, and patients may be referred to a vascular surgeon if their primary care physician has a suspicion of vascular disease that could require medical or surgical treatment.

The most common cause of PAD is atherosclerosis, a buildup of plaque on the inside of the arterial wall causing it to narrow and reduce blood flow, depriving tissues in the lower extremities of oxygen and nutrients. This deprivation may result in leg pain and difficulty walking.

“Vascular disease is a systemic disease – it affects the entire body rather than just one organ or body part,” says William Phillips, D.O., of Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery. “Patients often mistake symptoms of PAD for other health issues, such as arthritis or back problems, and may not realize the seriousness of their condition. Habitual use of tobacco, poor diet and physical inactivity can cause symptoms to worsen and increase the risk of complications related to PAD.”

PAD is treatable and frequently can be controlled with lifestyle modifications, such as smoking cessation, exercise and diet. Smoking is the most preventable cause of PAD. Chemicals in cigarettes cause injury to the cells that line blood vessels, which can lead to narrowing of the blood vessels. Many individuals who quit

smoking see improvements in their health immediately. Many people are not able to quit on their first attempt and require additional efforts to successfully quit. Licking Memorial Health Systems offers a free tobacco cessation program – Quit for Your Health. Individuals who wish to quit smoking should discuss the program with a physician or call (220) 564-QUIT (7848).

Engaging in physical activity can reduce the risk of PAD and provides additional health benefits, such as weight loss and a decrease in blood pressure and cholesterol. The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends individuals get 150 minutes per week of moderate to high-intensity exercise, such as walking, jogging, swimming or biking. For patients who have been diagnosed with PAD, a physician may recommend a supervised exercise regimen that includes simple walking and leg exercises to ease leg pain.

A heart-healthy diet is beneficial to preventing vascular disease and other diseases, such as diabetes. The AHA recommends a diet that includes plenty of raw fruits and vegetables, whole grains and legumes as well as high fiber foods, such as oatmeal, kidney beans, Brussels sprouts, apples and pears, which can help lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, or “bad” cholesterol. Limiting salt intake and consuming lean meats, fish and low-fat dairy products can aid in the reduction of high blood pressure.

Prescription drugs also can be a preventative measure for PAD. A physician may prescribe an anticoagulant, or blood thinner, to prevent blood clots. Statins are prescribed to reduce cholesterol in the blood, which slows down narrowing of the arteries. Medication for high blood pressure also may be

prescribed when diet and exercise alone do not work. Patients with diabetes should monitor and maintain their blood glucose levels, as high levels can cause damage to blood vessels over time, which increases the risk of PAD.

Because PAD is a chronic, systemic disease that can affect blood vessels throughout the body, implementing a comprehensive medical plan with a primary care physician and vascular surgeon is recommended. If PAD progresses despite medical and lifestyle modifications, then surgical and minimally invasive or endovascular surgery techniques can be used to improve lower extremity blood flow.

PAD can be recognized early by a simple pulse examination. Non-invasive arterial testing, performed in the Licking Memorial Hospital Vascular Lab, can be utilized to determine the location and extent of arterial disease in the lower extremities if lower extremity pulses are not felt during routine physical examination.

Early identification is the first step to successful treatment, and regular physical exams play an important role in prevention. Patients who establish a relationship with their primary care physician are more satisfied with their care and are better able to manage their conditions. They also may be more likely to share information and concerns with their physician, which can lead to more accurate diagnoses.

# Health Tips – Stages of Perioperative Care

Pain relief, problem detection and improving function are several reasons why an individual may require surgery. The surgical process is comprised of multiple stages in which established tasks and procedures are followed strictly to deliver consistent, high-quality care from the time a surgery is ordered until the patient fully recovers. Perioperative care refers to the three stages involved in the surgical process, which include pre-operative, intraoperative and post-operative care.

The pre-operative stage is the preparation and management of the patient before surgery to make sure they are physically and psychologically ready for their procedure. This phase begins when the surgery is ordered and ends when the patient enters the operating room (OR). Medical history, including any previous surgeries and anesthesia background are assessed and a physical exam and

laboratory tests may be performed. Fasting also may be required prior to surgery. The patient will receive information from their physician about the surgical procedure and will have the opportunity to ask questions and voice any concerns they might have, which may help to alleviate anxiety.

The intraoperative stage encompasses the time a patient spends in the OR – from their arrival until they are transported to a recovery room. A circulating nurse manages the OR, prepares surgical instruments and supplies and monitors the patient during surgery to ensure their safety and well-being. The anesthesiologist administers the proper anesthesia and monitors the patient’s vital signs, such as oxygen level, heart rate and respiration, throughout the operation. A surgical technologist responds to requests of the surgeon by passing instruments and needed supplies and also assists with

transporting the patient to the recovery room once the surgery is complete.

The post-operative stage takes place immediately following surgery. During this time, care is focused mainly on monitoring and managing the patient’s physical health and aiding in the post-surgical recovery. This may include ensuring hydration, monitoring urination or bowel movements, assisting with mobility, providing appropriate nutrition, managing pain, and preventing infection. Instructions for aftercare and prescriptions for any medication that may be needed are provided to the patient at the time of discharge. A post-operative, follow-up appointment also may be scheduled with the surgeon to ensure incisions are healing properly and to address any concerns the patient may have about recovery.

# LMH Earns Top Rating for Patient Safety

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) recently received a ninth consecutive “A” grade in the Fall 2020 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade report. The distinction recognizes LMH as one of the safest hospital environments in the United States for patients to receive care. LMH was one of 895 hospitals nationwide and 41 throughout Ohio to receive an “A” grade.

The Leapfrog Group, an independent national nonprofit organization that rates hospitals’ safety performance, assigns more than 2,600 hospitals nationwide a letter grade of A, B, C, D or F. Ratings are based on performance in patient safety practices such as infection prevention and responsiveness of the staff. Grades are reported twice per year and provide the most complete picture of patient safety in the United States. Earning an “A” grade shows LMH has exhibited excellence in the national database of patient safety measures and ranks among the top

hospitals in the U.S. in preventing patient harm and medical errors.

“LMH is dedicated and vigilant in our efforts to protect our patients and provide safer health care to our community,” Licking Memorial Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese said. “Receiving the top rating again indicates the commitment of our leadership and staff to develop and implement policies and protocols that prioritize patient safety.”

Developed under the guidance of a National Expert Panel, The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses up to 27 measures of hospital-reported and publicly available safety data to rate nationwide hospitals’ overall safety performance. It is calculated by top patient safety experts, peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public.



## About The Leapfrog Group

Founded in 2000 by large employers and other purchasers, The Leapfrog Group is a national nonprofit organization driving a movement for giant leaps forward in the quality and safety of American health care. The flagship Leapfrog Hospital Survey collects and transparently reports hospital performance, empowering purchasers to find the highest-value care and giving consumers the lifesaving information they need to make informed decisions. The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade, Leapfrog’s other main initiative, assigns letter grades to hospitals based on their record of patient safety, helping consumers protect themselves and their families from errors, injuries, accidents, and infections. For more information about the Hospital Safety Score, please log on to [HospitalSafetyGrade.org](https://HospitalSafetyGrade.org).



# Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Patient Safety

## Patient Story – Jean Ritchey

A COVID-19 diagnosis can be frightening for patients due to the uncertainty of recovery and the ever-changing information available about the disease. Even going to a medical facility to be tested or seek treatment can be daunting as organizations attempt to limit the spread of the virus. Jean Ritchey knew it was possible she had contracted COVID when she drove to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department. She spent the weekend with her daughter, Deanna, a clinical trainer of registered nurses, who had tested positive for the virus. Jean did not have a fever and hoped her trouble breathing could be attributed to a sinus issue.

Jean reported to the nursing facility where she is employed for a weekly COVID-19 test. She had been experiencing mild symptoms for a few days and informed the facility about her contact with a COVID-positive person. She was asked to go home and quarantine. Jean had been experiencing mild symptoms for a few days, but was feeling much worse by Tuesday. In the early evening, she could not walk from the chair in her living room to her television. Later that night, her sister called and was worried because Jean sounded like she could barely breathe. "I felt so weak and miserable, and my sister encouraged me to call 911," Jean explained. "The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) crew came to my house and checked my blood pressure and oxygen levels. The process for transporting a patient suspected of COVID was complicated, and I did not want to be a bother. They did say my oxygen level was concerning, so I told them I would drive myself to LMH."

When Jean arrived at the LMH ED, she was checked for a fever and had none, but reported having an extreme

headache. Staff members made her comfortable and began running tests that soon revealed that she did indeed have COVID-19. The ED physician explained that she would be admitted to the COVID unit and would receive a plasma transfusion which would help her fight the disease. "The physician and nurses started working right away to get me settled in a room and comfortable. In addition to COVID, they discovered I had a urinary tract infection (UTI) and pneumonia," Jean said. She was very curious about all that was going on around her and began asking questions. "Edna Goodwin, R.N., took her time with me and answered as many of my questions as possible. She was so gentle when it came to inserting the needles for shots and the like," Jean shared. "I felt reassured, and the staff made me feel so comfortable that I was able to fall asleep and rest."

Jean was very concerned about receiving the plasma transfusion. She was unsure what the process entailed and how it would affect her. While in the ICU, Philip Savage, D.O., attended to Jean and explained convalescent plasma therapy. The process begins with blood donated by people who have recovered from a disease or illness such as COVID-19. The donated blood is processed to remove blood cells, leaving behind the liquid known as plasma and antibodies which can be given to people with COVID-19 to boost their ability to fight the virus. The therapy was authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a treatment for COVID-19. "I was so impressed with Dr. Savage. My daughter was on the phone and he allowed her to ask questions as he stood by my bedside and carefully explained my treatments to Deanna and me," Jean said.

In addition to convalescent plasma therapy, Jean received a number of

medications specifically found to assist in the recovery of COVID-19. Remdesivir is an antiviral medication that targets a range of viruses. It was originally developed over a decade ago to treat hepatitis C and a cold-like virus called respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). The medication works by interrupting production of the virus. Coronaviruses have genomes made up of ribonucleic acid (RNA). Remdesivir prevents the virus from multiplying by interfering with one of the key enzymes the virus needs to replicate RNA. After studies completed earlier in 2020, the results indicated that remdesivir accelerated recovery for hospitalized patients with COVID-19 and it became the first drug to receive emergency use authorization from the FDA as a treatment for the virus. Jean also was given dexamethasone, a corticosteroid used in a wide range of conditions for its anti-inflammatory and immunosuppressant effects. Physicians and researchers have found that COVID-19 can cause an overreaction of a patient's own immune system leading to some immune cells attacking healthy tissue as well as the virus. The immune cell attacks can cause permanent damage to the lungs. Dexamethasone suppresses the immune system making such attacks less likely.

Wednesday, after the transfusion and medications, Jean's oxygen levels quickly returned to normal and Dr. Savage told her she was ready to go home. "I could not believe it, but Dr. Savage said I had recuperated well, and he felt confident that I could safely continue my recovery in my own house," Jean said. "I did purchase a portable blood oxygen sensor so that I could make sure my level stayed in the 90s." Jean spent two weeks at home working to regain strength and complete her recovery from the virus, UTI and pneumonia. "Dr. Savage is a true asset to LMH. He is knowledgeable, kind and willing to

take time to talk with his patients. I am so grateful to him and the staff at LMH for all they did for me." Jean is 1 of 13 siblings, and many of whom still live close offered their support during her recovery. Her two grandchildren, Bryce and Celeste, also were a comfort to her.

LMHS continues to monitor the situation surrounding COVID-19 and is taking all necessary steps and precautions to keep patients, staff and visitors safe. Per guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, if you have had close contact with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 – within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, and if you are exhibiting symptoms of the virus, you should be tested. Testing is available at select primary care physician offices or one of three LMH Urgent Care locations – Granville, Pataskala or Downtown Newark; however, any co-pay associated with a physician or urgent care visit will apply. Only those with severe symptoms should visit the LMH Emergency Department.

# mRNA Vaccines Could Be Future for Immunization

Immunizations play an important role in saving millions of lives each year by preventing life-threatening diseases and illnesses. The onset of the coronavirus pandemic in early 2020 prompted an urgent need for a vaccine that could be manufactured quickly and distributed in mass quantities. The race to find a vaccine for SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, prompted new innovations in vaccine technology as scientists researched the possibility of messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines against infectious diseases.

Vaccines train the immune system to recognize and respond to the proteins produced by disease-causing organisms, such as a virus or bacteria. Conventional vaccines contain a weakened version of the live virus or a small amount of inactive virus that is injected into the body to provoke a response in the immune system. mRNA vaccines work differently by replicating the genetic code of a virus to trick the body into producing antibodies without requiring the virus itself to be injected.

Ribonucleic acid (RNA) is a single-stranded molecule found in the nuclei of cells, and mRNA is a type of RNA that carries genetic code which produces the cell's proteins. An mRNA vaccine contains instructions that direct cells in the body to make antigens that will induce an immune response to prevent or fight disease. Once antibodies are created, the body acquires a defense against infection.

There are several advantages of mRNA vaccines over conventional ones, including safety, efficacy and production. mRNA vaccines are made with non-infectious material and are non-replicable,

which means that the virus is not present in the vaccine and there is no potential risk of infection from the virus it mimics. Early clinical trials of mRNA vaccines have produced a reliable immune response with minimal side effects; however, more large-scale human trials are needed to support these initial findings. Unlike conventional vaccines, gene-based vaccines do not need to be grown in eggs or cells, a process that can be time-consuming and costly. Instead, they are produced in a laboratory from a DNA template using readily available materials that allows for rapid mass-production.

One challenge with mRNA vaccines is the requirement of ultra-cold temperatures for shipping and storage. Researchers are working on ways to make mRNA vaccines more stable, particularly for countries that have limited refrigeration facilities. Another disadvantage is the unknown length of protection that mRNA vaccines may provide against a disease – data that only can be acquired through more large-scale clinical trials.

In addition to research on mRNA vaccines against COVID-19, the technology also is being used to create vaccines that can generate antibodies to target other infectious diseases, such as HIV, Zika, Ebola and influenza. Cancer vaccines in which mRNA targets cancer-specific antigens also are being explored. Clinical trials for mRNA vaccines are being conducted for a number of cancers, including esophageal, lung, ovarian, melanoma and blood cancers.

There is great potential for mRNA vaccines to become a standard treatment in medical care, but more research and clinical trials must be performed to determine their long-term effectiveness. The mRNA COVID-19 vaccines produced by Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech received Emergency Use Authorization from the FDA at the end of 2020. To date, these vaccines have proven to be effective against COVID-19. The success of these vaccines could usher in a new approach to fighting infectious diseases.



# Patient Care – How do we compare?

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

**1.** The Institute of Medicine published a report in 2000 that highlighted the stunning effects of medication errors. The report set forth a national agenda for reducing errors and improving patient safety by designing a safer health system. Although the medication error rate at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) is significantly better than the national benchmark, we make continuous efforts to improve the process. LMH dispensed 1,213,614 doses of medication in 2019.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	National <sup>(1)</sup>
Medication errors per 1,000 doses	0.015%	0.015%	0.015%	<b>0.310%</b>

**2.** Protecting patients from hospital-acquired infections is a primary patient safety goal. LMH has an ongoing program to prevent and treat infections in patients. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, LMH tracks high-risk patients, including those with an increased risk of infection due to the presence of an invasive device, such as a ventilator, catheter or central venous line. The following data reflect how many infections occurred during 1,000 patient days compared to the national benchmarks.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	National <sup>(2)</sup>
Urinary tract infection rate for ICU patients with urinary catheters, per 1,000 days of usage	0.6	0.0	0.4	<b>0.6</b>
Urinary tract infection rate for patients outside of ICU with urinary catheters, per 1,000 days of usage	1.83	0.49	0.78*	<b>0.48</b>
Bloodstream infection rate for ICU patients with central venous catheters, per 1,000 days of usage	1.7	0.0	0.0	<b>1.1</b>
Bloodstream infection rate for patients outside of ICU with central venous catheters, per 1,000 days of usage	0.0	0.0	1.08*	<b>0.18</b>

\*Throughout a period of 1,000 days of device usage in 2019, two individuals were diagnosed with a urinary tract infection, and one individual was diagnosed with a bloodstream infection.

**3.** LMH conducts a comprehensive assessment to determine if a patient is at risk for a fall at admission and during the Hospital stay. Personal alarms and bed sensors help alert staff to a potential fall.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	Goal
Inpatient falls, per 1,000 patient days	2.6	2.9	3.8	<b>less than 3.0</b>

**4.** Acute care mortality refers to patients who pass away while admitted as inpatients in the hospital. While mortality within the hospital is not uncommon, it can be a valuable indicator in determining how effectively the hospital manages crisis situations as well as its ability to rescue the patient in an emergency. Other factors, such as nurse staffing levels, staff knowledge and experience, and early recognition of patient deterioration all can have an impact on inpatient mortality. Sepsis is a body's overwhelming and life-threatening response to an initial infection of microbes that can be bacterial, viral or fungal. It can be difficult to diagnose. LMHS has safety measures in place to detect early signs of sepsis. Lower rates are preferable.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	National <sup>(3)</sup>
Inpatient mortality	1.20%	1.34%	1.24%	<b>2.22%</b>
Sepsis mortality rate, per 1,000 patients	8.9%	10.3%	9.3%	<b>State<sup>(5)</sup> 14.9%</b>

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

	LMHS 2017	LMHS 2018	LMHS 2019	LMHS Goal	National <sup>(4)</sup>
LMHS employees receiving the seasonal influenza vaccine	94%	95%	95%	<b>greater than 80%</b>	<b>64.3%</b>

**6.** Warfarin (also known as Coumadin) is a blood thinner, which also is called an anticoagulant. It is used to help prevent and treat blood clots. The most common side effect of warfarin is bleeding in any tissue or organ. It is important for patients to have a prothrombin time (PT) and International Normalized Ratio (INR) blood test regularly to help the physician determine the blood clotting rate and whether the dosage of warfarin should change. The testing is very important and must be accomplished at recommended intervals in order to keep the PT/INR result in the best and safest range for the medical condition. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) has adopted this recommendation as a safety measure. Note: Patients who visit the Licking Memorial Medication Therapy Clinic are not included as LMHP patients.

	LMHP 2017	LMHP 2018	LMHP 2019	LMHP Goal
LMHP patients on warfarin having a current PT/INR within recommended guidelines	93%	94%	97%	<b>greater than 90%</b>

**7.** Metformin (trade name Glucophage) is a medication that is used in the treatment of diabetes mellitus and polycystic ovarian disease. It is an effective medication for treatment of both of these unrelated disease processes, but must be used cautiously in patients with compromised renal (kidney) function. It is recommended to monitor renal function prior to initiation of therapy and at least annually thereafter. LMHP has adopted this recommendation as a safety measure.

	LMHP 2017	LMHP 2018	LMHP 2019	LMHP Goal
LMHP patients on Metformin with a renal function test within last year	92%	93%	92%	<b>greater than 90%</b>

**Data Footnotes:** (1) *To Err Is Human – Building a Safer Health System*, National Academy Press, Washington D.C., 2000. (2) *CDC National Healthcare Safety Network pooled median (ICU only) from January 2006-December 2007*, issued November 2008. (3) *Comparative Data from the Midas Comparative Database*. (4) *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Interim Results: Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among Health-Care Personnel, MMWR April 2, 2010 / 59(12); 357-362*. (5) *OHA*

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## Health Tips – Patients with COVID-19 Encouraged to Seek Medical Care

It is important for individuals to seek medical care when needed, especially if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. A delay in medical care could result in health complications later, which can lead to costly treatments. Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) has implemented a number of safety policies and procedures to ensure that medical visits are safe for patients, visitors and staff.

Individuals who have a scheduled medical appointment and are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should notify their healthcare provider before visiting the facility. Healthcare staff will be able to instruct patients on steps to take, such as wearing a face mask and remaining in their vehicle until their scheduled appointment time, which will ensure a safe visit for everyone involved. In cases

of emergency, it is recommended to call 911 or go to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department (ED) immediately and to notify the operator that the person seeking medical care may have COVID-19.

Symptoms that may require examination and treatment at the LMH ED include:

- Acute chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Fainting
- Sudden weakness or drooping part of the body
- Difficulty speaking
- Changes in vision
- Acute headache
- Abdominal pain that is severe or does not resolve in a few hours
- Prolonged vomiting
- Suicidal thoughts

LMHS has several policies in place to make sure its healthcare facilities are safe environments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees undergo daily temperature checks and are required to wear appropriate personal protective equipment when performing their duties. Patients with COVID-19 are isolated, and Environmental Services staff maintain a frequent sanitization schedule of surfaces and equipment in all LMHS buildings.



# Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Cancer Care

## Patient Story – Sherry Selfe

everything went well,” Sherry said. “Dr. Gowda was amazing to me. She explained the process and was very kind and encouraging.” However, after six months of ABVD chemotherapy, the cancer remained. “Dr. Gowda felt I needed a stem cell transplant. She contacted The Ohio State University (OSU) Comprehensive Cancer Center and collaborated with their staff to schedule the procedure.”

Sherry was admitted to OSU on March 27, 2020, just after stay-at-home orders were issued. At that time, many hospitals changed visitation policies to stop the spread of COVID-19; therefore, she had to undergo the entire transplant process without a support person or visitors. “Dr. Gowda and many of the staff members from the Oncology Department called regularly to check on me and get updates on my progress. Even though it was difficult being isolated, I felt the support of the people who had been so integral in my care,” Sherry said. “Dr. Gowda worked hand-in-hand with the healthcare professionals at OSU, and I was able to return to Licking Memorial Hospital for follow-up care and laboratory tests.”

During a maintenance chemotherapy treatment in August, Sherry became extremely ill. She was admitted to the LMH Intensive Care Unit (ICU) where they discovered she was having a toxic reaction to the medication. “The Oncology Department staff are an absolutely remarkable team. They were always by my side, checking on me and visiting me in the ICU. I know they saved my life.”

Sherry is working part-time now and continuing her recovery. “I have hair again and am feeling better,” she said. She had to wait until December to receive a scan to determine the results of the stem cell transplant and maintenance chemotherapy. At that time, Sherry was

told the cancer was not progressing, but she was not in remission. Dr. Gowda and the Oncology team continue monitoring Sherry’s health.

Sherry’s friends, Megan Weaver and Amy Gartner, understood that medical bills could quickly become overwhelming to Sherry as she continued to receive care for cancer. Adding to the financial concerns of the family, three of Sherry and Robert’s children are attending college in different states. Megan and Amy rallied the Licking Valley community to host a virtual cake auction due to the pandemic as a fundraiser to pay for insurance premiums and other expenses. The women also obtained assistance for Sherry through Volley for the Cure – a volleyball-based fundraising organization that focuses on local families fighting cancer. “My friends and the Licking Valley community have been incredibly supportive. I was overwhelmed and grateful for the outpouring of support and generosity,” Sherry said.

LMH, through a relationship with the Columbus NCI Community Oncology Program (NCORP), offers a comprehensive cancer treatment program and long-term follow-up care for adults with cancer which is unique for a community hospital. The Hematology/Oncology Department has been continuously accredited by the American College of Surgeons’ Commission on Cancer (CoC) since 2000. In 2018, the CoC granted a three-year approval with commendations to the program, indicating that LMH demonstrates compliance with all mandatory standards for organizational and operational elements. The Department also is a proud recipient of the Commission on Cancer’s Outstanding Achievement Award.

Sherry Selfe moved to Licking County in 2001 to be closer to her aging parents who live in Buckeye Lake. She had been living in Massachusetts with her husband, Robert, and four children, Theresa, Andrew, Kathryn and Elizabeth Erin. As the family settled in, they formed strong bonds within the Newark community.

After emergency surgery to remove a kidney stone, Sherry visited her primary care physician, Charles L. Geiger, D.O., of Licking Memorial Family Practice. During the visit, she told Dr. Geiger she would like to schedule her follow-up thyroid ultrasound. During the ultrasound, the technician noted several enlarged lymph nodes in the right side of Sherry’s neck. After a needle biopsy was performed, Sherry was diagnosed with Hodgkin’s lymphoma in May 2019.

Hodgkin’s lymphoma is a cancer of the lymphatic system, which is part of the immune system that helps fight infections. The lymphatic system also assists in controlling the flow of fluids in the body and is made up mainly of cells called lymphocytes, a type of white blood cell. Hodgkin’s lymphoma causes cells in the lymphatic system to grow abnormally and can start almost anywhere in the body. The abnormal cells are most often discovered in lymph nodes in the upper part of the body. The most common sites include the chest, neck or under the arms. Hodgkin’s lymphoma typically spreads through the lymph vessels between lymph nodes.

Sherry’s cancer had been detected in the early stages of the disease, and she was hopeful that treatment would be successful. She began visiting Aruna C. Gowda, M.D., at the Licking Memorial Hematology/Oncology clinic. “At first, the treatments seemed easy and

## Oral Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy is a treatment that is designed to destroy or slow the growth of cancer cells in the body. Traditionally, patients receive chemotherapy intravenously, which requires many hours spent at a hospital or clinic. Advances in cancer treatments over the past decade have made oral chemotherapy more widely used and a convenient choice among cancer patients. Currently, there are a number of oral cancer therapy drugs that treat a variety of cancers, including breast, ovarian, colorectal and lung cancer.

Oral chemotherapy is a cancer-fighting drug that is taken by mouth in tablet, capsule or liquid form. Prescribed by a physician, this form of cancer treatment works similarly to intravenous (IV) chemotherapy, is less invasive, and can be taken at home requiring fewer in-office visits. Although convenience and flexibility are advantages to receiving oral chemotherapy, patients must understand that it is a serious treatment and will be taking their medication with little or no supervision from an oncology expert. It is critical that patients receive the appropriate education regarding taking and handling the drug and understand its benefits and risks, including side effects and cost.

Patients who are prescribed an oral chemotherapy treatment are given clear instructions from their physician on the correct dosage, how often to take the medication, and whether it can be taken with food, vitamins, supplements or other medications. Because oral chemotherapy doses are designed to ensure the same amount of chemo remains in the body to destroy cancer cells, it is essential that patients take the exact dosage as directed for as long as prescribed. If used incorrectly, chemotherapy pills can have harmful outcomes. It is important that patients adhere to their treatment plan and take their chemotherapy drugs accordingly. Failing to take the medication on time or forgetting to take their drugs may result in a treatment that is less effective, worsening side effects, or a dangerously high dosage in their body from taking pills too closely together.

Because chemotherapy pills are considered hazardous, patients must understand how to properly handle their medication. The high potency of some pills require the use of gloves for handling. Patients also need to adhere to specific storage instructions. Chemotherapy pills must be stored in the original prescription container and not mixed with other medications. The medication must be kept out of reach of children and pets and stored in location away from heat, moisture and sunlight. Oral chemotherapy pills should not be flushed down the toilet or thrown into the garbage. Any pills left over after treatment should be returned to the pharmacy where originally received to be safely disposed.

Side effects from oral chemotherapy vary depending on the type of drug being taken. General side effects may include fatigue, skin changes, nausea or vomiting, flu-like symptoms, and changes to the mouth, hair and nails. Patients who experience negative side effects from taking oral chemotherapy should call their oncology team to discuss any medications that may be taken to alleviate symptoms. Patients also should inform their primary care physician, dentist and other

healthcare providers that they are taking oral chemotherapy.

Cancer patients who are considering taking oral chemotherapy should check with their insurance provider to determine if the medication is covered under their plan. Some insurance companies regard oral chemotherapy as a pharmacy benefit instead of a medical benefit, which may increase out-of-pocket expenses for the patient.

Oral cancer therapy treatments may not be appropriate for every patient. The effectiveness of the drug depends on many factors, including the type of cancer, whether the cancer has spread, age, overall health, and how well a person’s body responds to the treatment. Patients should discuss with their oncologist to determine if oral chemotherapy is suitable for them.



# 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 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Percentage of cancers correctly identified by the mammogram	89.5%	93.4%	98.5%	<b>78%<sup>(1)</sup></b>
Percentage of patients without cancer correctly identified by the mammogram	98.6%	98.5%	98.7%	<b>90%<sup>(2)</sup></b>

**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 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Cancer detection rate with positive interpretations (per 1,000 screening mammograms)	5.3	5	6	<b>2 to 10<sup>(3)</sup></b>

**3.** Wait time is defined as the number of days between the completion of the first procedure and the second scheduled procedure. The amount of time between testing and procedure is significant to enabling physicians to more quickly identify and diagnose breast cancer and begin patient treatment.

Wait times:	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	National <sup>(5)</sup>
Screening to diagnostic mammogram	5.5 days	5.2 days	4.8 days	<b>6.24 days</b>
Diagnostic mammogram to needle/core biopsy	6.6 days	6.7 days	5.1 days	<b>6 days</b>
Biopsy to initial breast cancer surgery	19.7 days	26.6 days	20.3 days	<b>22 days</b>

**4.** 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 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Number of chemotherapy medication errors negatively impacting patients	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

**5.** 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 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Cancer Registry patients with annual follow-up	92%	91%	94%	<b>greater than 80%</b>

**6.** 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 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Newly diagnosed and/or treated patients in clinical trials	7%	7%	8%	<b>greater than 2%</b>

**7.** 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 2017	LMHP 2018	LMHP 2019	LMHP Goal
LMHP active patient population that received screening tests for:				
Cervical cancer (female patients, age 21 to 65)	74%	73%	73%	<b>75%</b>
Breast cancer (female patients, age 50 to 75)	81%	80%	78%	<b>National<sup>(4)</sup> 69%</b>
Colorectal cancer (all patients, age 50-75)	67%	69%	67%	<b>National<sup>(4)</sup> 66%</b>

#### Data Footnotes:

(1) Kolb TM, Lichy J, Newhouse JH. Comparison of the performance of screening mammography, physical examination, and breast ultrasound and evaluation of factors that influence them: an analysis of 27,825 patient evaluations. *Radiology*. 225(1):165-75, 2002. Oestreicher N, Lehman CD, Seger DJ, Buist DS, White E. The incremental contribution of clinical breast examination to invasive cancer detection in a mammography screening program. *AJR Am J Roentgenol*. 184(2):428-32, 2005.

(2) Bassett LW, Hendrick RE, Bassford TI, et al, Quality determinants of mammography: Clinical practice guidelines, No. 13. Agency for Health Care Policy and Research Publication No. 95-0632. Rockville, MD: Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, Public Health Services, US Department of Human Services, 1994.

(3) D'Orsi CJ, Bassett LW, Berg WA, et al, BI-RADS: Mammography, 5th Edition in: D'Orsi CJ, Mendelson EB, Ikeda DM, et al: *Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System: ACR BI-RADS – Breast Imaging Atlas*, Reston, VA, American College of Radiology, 2013.

(4) Percentages are compiled by averaging Commercial, Medicare and Medicaid data as reported in "The State of Health Care Quality Report," 2017 Screening Rates.

(5) National Quality Measures for Breast Centers (NQMBC) www.nqmbc.org database.

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## Health Tips – Nutrition for Cancer Survivors

Nutrition is an important part of cancer treatment and recovery. During treatment, many cancer patients lose weight because of side effects from radiation or chemotherapy, and some medications can prevent the body's ability to absorb nutrients. A nutritious diet, physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight can help survivors regain their health after treatment and improve their quality of life. These factors also may prevent cancer from recurring. Experts recommend that cancer survivors follow these guidelines for a healthy diet:

- Eat at least two and a half cups of colorful fruits and vegetables every day. Fruits and vegetables contain antioxidants, such as beta-carotene, lycopene, and vitamins A, C and E, which prevent cell damage. Plant-based foods also contain phytochemicals – compounds that may prevent the action of cancer-causing substances and aid cells in blocking the development of cancer.
- Eat three or more servings of high-fiber foods, such as whole grains, nuts and legumes. These foods contain nutrients that may help prevent cancer, and they also help to reduce the risk of heart disease.
- Choose nonfat or low-fat dairy products, including low-fat milk, cheese and yogurt.
- Select protein that is low in saturated fat, such as poultry, fish and eggs.
- Try low-fat cooking methods, such as air frying, baking, broiling and steaming, instead of frying or charbroiling.
- Limit alcohol consumption to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men.
- Exercise for at least 150 minutes per week. Physical activity at moderate intensity will help individuals maintain a healthy weight and increases energy.

Patients may wish to consult with a dietitian to determine the best diet and exercise plan that suits their needs. Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) offers inpatient and outpatient nutrition counseling for cancer patients and may be referred to an LMH dietitian by a member of their oncology team.



# Quality Reporting to the Community

## Patient Story and Benchmarks for Heart Care

### Patient Story – Anthony “Tony” Shonebarger

As an assistant baseball coach at Newark High School, Anthony “Tony” Shonebarger was satisfied with his physical condition as he neared his 50th birthday. Born and raised in Licking County, Tony had participated in sports in high school and college. He currently serves as an underwriting supervisor at State Farm Insurance and remains very active. After becoming a father, he shared his love of baseball with his three children by coaching little league for his sons, Alex and Bryce, and softball for his daughter, Brooklyn (Brooke). He enjoys every opportunity to encourage his children as they exercise and participate in various sports.

In June 2020, Tony began feeling pain in his chest while out jogging with his youngest son, Bryce. “It felt like someone had put a stake through my heart, and then put an anvil on top of my chest,” he said. Tony, who is certified in first aid, was aware of the symptoms of a heart attack. “I knew it was possible that I was experiencing a cardiac event, but I kept making excuses. I had spent the weekend at a softball tournament, and it had been hot. I thought maybe I was dehydrated.” Tony called his daughter, Brooke, to come and take him and Bryce home. The pain continued at home, and Tony decided he needed medical attention when he noticed his arm was numb.

Tony did not feel well enough to drive himself to Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH), so he asked Alex to drive him to the LMH Emergency Department (ED) as fast as he could. When the two arrived at LMH, staff members quickly responded to Tony’s symptoms by ordering an electrocardiogram (EKG) and having it interpreted by an ED physician within minutes. “The nurse on duty took immediate action and suggested I call my

wife, Julie, and let her know what was happening,” Tony said. “The entire staff was amazing. They offer excellent patient care in all that they do, and you can tell they enjoy their jobs.” Ten minutes after his arrival, he was diagnosed with a ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) – a heart attack caused by the complete blockage of a heart artery.

When a person experiences a STEMI heart attack, an unstable plaque built up on the wall in a heart artery suddenly ruptures. In response, the blood builds up a clot in an attempt to heal the rupture. However, the clot formation can result in a total blockage of the artery leading to the loss of blood supply to the heart beyond the blockage. The heart muscle stops working within minutes and could stop functioning all together unless the artery can be reopened. For this reason, every minute from the onset of a heart attack is absolutely critical. LMH has a STEMI team that always is ready for such alerts and works quickly to open blocked arteries by using angioplasty or stent placement.

When the STEMI alert was sounded, the STEMI team, including Licking Memorial Cardiologist Hassan Rajjoub, M.D., prepared Tony for the cardiac cath and began the process to unblock the clogged artery. Dr. Rajjoub placed four stents in his heart and Tony was taken to recovery. Julie and Brooke were brought into his room where they found him talking to the staff. “I really do not remember what happened after I went in for the procedure. Julie told me I seemed fine,” Tony shared. However, Tony’s body continued to produce clots and his heart stopped several more times. “My wife told me, while the scenario was frightening, the LMH staff responded with true professionalism. She said

they moved in military-like precision. Everyone had a task to perform, and they quickly reacted to resuscitate and stabilize me.” Tony then was taken to a Columbus hospital for a more intense heart surgery.

Tony was released from the Columbus hospital during the first week of July and began participating in the LMH Cardiac Rehabilitation Program in August. The program focuses on complete cardiac patient care, including the development of an individualized health and fitness plan to restore and enhance both physical and psychological wellness. The LMH Cardiac Rehabilitation Program is certified by the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation and has met quality standards required by the Association to ensure the highest level of patient care. Tony visited the Cardiac Rehabilitation Clinic three times a week where he was provided with the tools needed to safely establish and maintain a healthy lifestyle. He attended educational sessions and exercise classes, where a mobile device was used to monitor his heart rate and oxygen levels. “The monitor was comforting, and I felt more secure about exercising because I knew the Clinic staff would not let me overexert myself.” Thanks to the assistance of the staff and with Dr. Rajjoub’s clearance, Tony was able to jog on a treadmill by the end of his 12-week program.

With a sense of humor and faith, Tony is accepting and sharing the lessons learned from his situation. “One of the exercise physiologists said that you cannot out-exercise a bad diet. That was my downfall. I knew I was eating unhealthy, but I thought I was active enough to get away with it. This has been a blessing in disguise, because I would still be eating the same way,” Tony reflected. Tony

also knew he had high cholesterol and now suggests to others that they know their numbers, listen to the physician’s advice and act on it. Another lesson that Tony learned is not to wait for treatment. “My friends and family are in disbelief that after my jog I actually took a shower before going to the ED. I am lucky to have survived delaying the needed surgery as long as I did.” Tony praises the attitude of the LMH staff, from the ED to the Cardiac Rehabilitation Clinic. “I was treated like a member of their own family. The staff at the Clinic are motivational, energizing and so positive. I cannot thank them all enough.” He is looking forward to jogging again with Bryce who is considering participation in cross country.

LMH takes great pride in providing excellent cardiovascular services to the community, specializing in providing timely lifesaving techniques and the latest technology for patients with the risk of cardiovascular disease. Anyone experiencing symptoms of a heart attack should call 911 immediately. The outstanding relationship with the local emergency medical services (EMS) means patients can expect rapid, exceptional care prior to reaching the Hospital. LMH’s equipment and software allow medics to deliver an EKG to the ED before the patient arrives.

# EKOS Therapy for Patients with Pulmonary Embolisms

A pulmonary embolism (PE) is a serious condition that requires prompt treatment. PEs are the third most common cause of cardiovascular deaths worldwide with nearly 300,000 deaths per year in the United States alone. For over a year, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) has been successfully improving the outcome of patients diagnosed with PE by using the EkoSonic Endovascular System (EKOS) therapy as a treatment option.

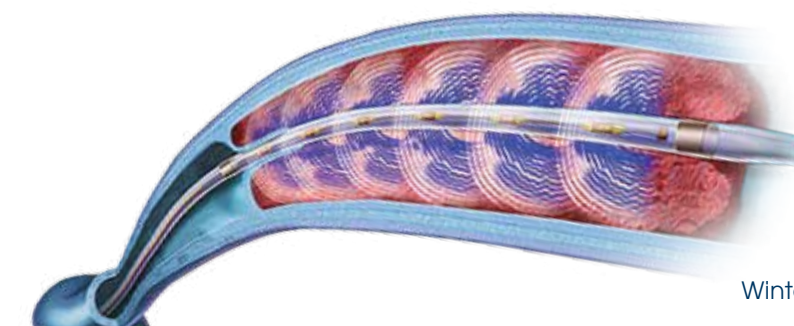
The EKOS therapy is a minimally invasive procedure that consists of an infusion catheter, an ultrasound core wire and a control unit. This technology uses high-frequency, low-power ultrasound energy in combination with a thrombolytic agent to dissolve the blood clot. The ultrasound causes the fibrin strands within the clot to loosen, which allows the clot-busting drug to break down and dissolve the clot quickly and efficiently. The benefit of using the EKOS system is that it allows for smaller doses of the thrombolytic drug, which reduces the risk of bleeding. Shorter treatment time, reduction of strain on the right side of the heart, improved symptoms and decreased recovery time also are advantages to using the system.

A pulmonary embolism (PE) occurs when a blood clot travels to the lungs from a deep vein in the lower extremities known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Left untreated, a PE can cause heart or lung damage and possibly death. Symptoms of a PE include sudden shortness of breath, sharp chest pain, sudden cough, lightheadedness or fainting and rapid heartbeat. Individuals experiencing these symptoms should immediately seek treatment at the LMH Emergency Department (ED).

When a patient presents in the ED with acute pulmonary embolism, their vital signs, lab work and imaging are evaluated. A patient is considered having a submassive PE if their blood pressure and heart rate are stable, but there is evidence of right-sided heart strain. The patient is assessed to determine if they are a candidate for the EKOS therapy, and their history is reviewed to ensure that there are no known contraindications to the clot-busting drug therapy. A pulmonologist is consulted and discusses the case with an interventional cardiologist who will perform the procedure.

The patient is transported to the catheterization lab where they are sedated but remain awake throughout the procedure. The cardiologist guides a catheter through the blood vessels into the pulmonary artery to the location of the clot, where the ultrasound waves are turned on and the thrombolytic agent is infused. The procedure typically takes approximately one hour to complete. The patient is then taken to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for monitoring as the clot-busting drug continues to infuse through the catheters for six more hours. The catheters are then removed and the patient is started on anticoagulation medication.

Most patients who receive the EKOS therapy for a PE experience significant improvement in their symptoms overnight and their recovery is faster than patients who are treated with traditional anticoagulation treatment. A follow-up visit is recommended two weeks after patients have undergone the EKOS therapy to assess their condition for any recurrent symptoms and to determine the necessary anticoagulation medication type and dosage.



# Heart Care – How do we compare?

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

- The first step in heart attack treatment is to confirm that the patient is truly experiencing the symptoms of a heart attack. An electrocardiogram (EKG) measures the electrical activity of the heart and is one diagnostic tool used to determine if a heart attack is occurring.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	National Average <sup>(1)</sup>
Median time from arrival to completion of EKG	4 minutes	5 minutes	3 minutes	8 minutes

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

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	National Goal <sup>(2)</sup>
Mean time from arrival until balloon angioplasty performed	54 minutes	58 minutes	55 minutes	90 minutes
Time to balloon within 90 minutes	97%	100%	99%	95%

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

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	National Goal <sup>(2)</sup>
Medical contact to reperfusion	76 minutes	79 minutes	75 minutes	Less than 90 minutes

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

	LMHP 2017	LMHP 2018	LMHP 2019	LMHP Goal <sup>(3)</sup>
LMHP CAD patients with aspirin and/or antithrombotic prescribed	94%	94%	95%	Greater than 85%

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

	LMHP 2017	LMHP 2018	LMHP 2019	LMHP Goal <sup>(3)</sup>
LMHP CAD patients with LDL less than or equal to 100 mg/dl	63%	67%	73%	Greater than 50%

- When performing certain heart procedures, such as a catheterization, a cardiologist may choose to access the heart through the radial artery, located in the wrist, or the femoral artery, located in the upper thigh. A growing body of evidence supports adoption of transradial artery access to improve acute coronary syndrome-related outcomes, to improve healthcare quality and to reduce cost. Accessing the radial artery requires advanced skill; however, radial access offers quicker recovery time by eliminating the need for the patient to remain flat on their back in bed for several hours after the procedure. Also, the risk of bleeding is decreased. Although radial access is routinely utilized, it may not be an option for some patients due to a risk of spasms or the size of the artery. LMHS' cardiologists possess the advanced skills needed for the procedure and have been offering the safer alternative to patients.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Heart catheterization procedures	609	599	593	
Percentage of radial access	79%	83%	89%	83%

Data Footnotes: (1) [Hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](https://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov) national benchmarks. (2) American Heart Association website (3) Benchmark indicates LMHP Goal.

# Health Tips – Heart Health Begins in the Kitchen

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Behaviors that increase the risk factors for heart disease include a poor diet, lack of physical activity, and smoking. Eating foods that are high in saturated fats, trans fat and cholesterol is linked to heart disease and related conditions, such as atherosclerosis. Choosing a heart-healthy diet is one of the ways individuals can greatly reduce their risk of heart disease and its complications.

Vegetables, fruits and whole grains are an important part of a heart-healthy diet. These foods contain high amounts of fiber, vitamins and minerals, which are essential for maintaining good heart health. Leafy green vegetables, such as spinach, kale and collard greens, as well as cherries, blueberries, strawberries and raspberries, contain antioxidants and fiber which help protect blood vessels and lower cholesterol. Whole grains,

including whole wheat, brown rice, oats, rye, barley, buckwheat and quinoa, also are high in fiber and help to play a role in regulating blood pressure.

Low-fat proteins, including chicken, fish and low-fat dairy products are good choices for a heart-healthy diet. Salmon, tuna and shellfish contain omega-3 fatty acids, which research has shown can reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. The American Heart Association recommends eating two servings of fish per week.

Foods that are high in saturated fats, such as red or fatty meats, cheese, butter and whole dairy products, should be avoided. Saturated fats can raise blood pressure and cholesterol while also contributing to coronary artery disease. Replacing saturated fats with foods that contain monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, such as nuts, seeds

and avocados, can help to reduce bad (HDL) cholesterol and promote heart health.

Limiting salt intake is another way to reduce the risk of heart disease. A diet that is high in sodium can raise blood pressure, which is a contributing factor to heart disease. Fresh herbs, such as rosemary, thyme, basil, oregano and sage, are flavorful alternatives to salt.

Making simple dietary changes can provide long-term benefits for heart health. Planning ahead with a weekly menu can help individuals incorporate heart-healthy foods into their diet and also provide variety. Eating heart-healthy can be easy and enjoyable, and it is important for individuals to discuss dietary changes with their physician to ensure that proper nutrition is maintained.

## Development Council Spotlight – Konrod Morris

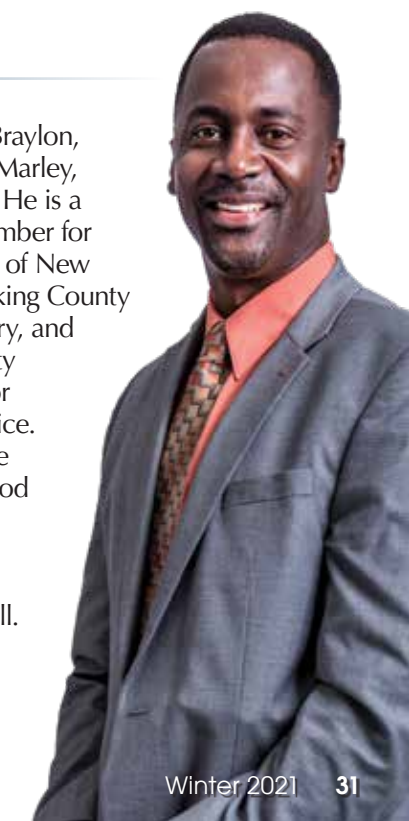
**Konrod Morris** recently began his service as a member of the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council Community Relations Committee. He joined in August 2020, following a recommendation from colleagues in the Newark Rotary Club. A few of Konrod's family members were patients at LMH, and three of his four children were born at the Hospital. Because of these experiences and his participation on the Development Council, he sees the high level of emphasis that LMH places on the community's overall health. "A healthier community leads to increased productivity and overall happiness, and LMH effectively communicates this message to the community through the

various resources and events available to Licking County residents," Konrod said.

Konrod sees the importance of having a strong Development Council and community hospital, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Although COVID-19 poses new challenges for us, we want to ensure that we are communicating frequently with the community and improving the convenience of care for residents. The Development Council wants to help community members be healthier and improve their lives."

Konrod currently works at First Federal Savings as a loan officer. He lives in Heath with his wife, Jennifer, and their

children, Braylon, Dominic, Marley, and Mila. He is a Board Member for the House of New Hope, Licking County Food Pantry, and Community Alliance for Racial Justice. In his spare time, Konrod coaches baseball, basketball, and softball.







## Period 1 Prize Winners

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

### Nintendo Switch and Fitness Software

Avery Musick, Watkins Intermediate  
Domonic Ghiloni, Licking Valley Elementary  
Giuliana Snoke, Pataskala Elementary

### Bicycle and Helmet

Kennedy Dyer, Pataskala Elementary  
Roshika Siwakoti, Pataskala Elementary  
Austyn Wright, Watkins Intermediate

### Athletic Shoes

Jackson Madden, Watkins Intermediate  
Andrew Robinson, Watkins Intermediate

### iPod Touch and Fitness Software

Aliyah-Lynn Lowe, Pataskala Elementary  
Dalton Gray, Pataskala Elementary  
Julianna Vannelli, Watkins Intermediate  
Olivia Wells-Casper, Hebron Elementary

### \$100 Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Card

Jaiden Davis, Watkins Intermediate  
Giovani Klontz, Garfield Elementary  
Cooper Baker, Pataskala Elementary  
Ashlynn Burkhart, Pataskala Elementary  
Samik Katel, Pataskala Elementary  
Prasan Dhital, Watkins Intermediate  
Paul Kamenan, Pataskala Elementary  
Rouselle Dedja, Pataskala Elementary  
Katie Browning, Pataskala Elementary  
Dominic Mulford, Licking Valley Intermediate

### \$50 Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Card

Elizabeth Bissett, Pataskala Elementary  
Tristan Hileman, Watkins Intermediate  
Bella Allen, Pataskala Elementary  
Seth Foutch, Pataskala Elementary  
Caden Rine, Pataskala Elementary  
Hannah Chapman, Watkins Intermediate  
Roman Siwakoti, Pataskala Elementary  
Raelyn Hartman, Pataskala Elementary  
Gabe Stought, Pataskala Elementary  
Dominic Spaulding, Pataskala Elementary



Since its creation in 2012, the Active•Fit program has registered more than 8,500 participants who select health-related goals and track their progress at ActiveFit.org. Each period of the Active•Fit program features exciting events and opportunities for children to get active and learn about their health. Period 2 for 2020-2021 began January 1 and continues through April 30. For more information, or to register for the Active•Fit Youth Wellness Program at any time throughout the year, please visit ActiveFit.org.

## TWIGS 6 Granville Thrift Shop Reopens

The TWIGS 6 Granville Thrift Shop, located at 1865 Tamarack Road in Newark, will reopen on April 13. In adherence to COVID-19 guidelines, the Thrift Shop has been closed since last March. The Shop will be open, with new hours, on Tuesdays, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Wednesdays and Fridays, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. In an effort to comply with continuing COVID-19 guidelines, masks will be required for entry and a limited number of patrons will be permitted in the Shop at a time. Additional adjustments also have been made throughout the facility to ensure the safety of community members.

The Thrift Shop offers a variety of items, including clothing, household goods, toys and books, at discounted prices. All items currently for sale have been generously donated by previous consignors. Donations will continue to be accepted during business hours; however, consignment services will no longer be offered. To make a donation prior to April 13, individuals may contact Lynne at (740) 404-9322. Those wishing to donate are reminded that clothing should be clean and free of smoke and fragrances. Large estate donations also are accepted by appointment only.

Open since 1950, the Thrift Shop is operated by members of TWIGS 6 to benefit LMH. Proceeds from the Thrift Shop have been used to update birthing suites, purchase mammography equipment and various other projects at LMH. TWIGS 6 members are excited to welcome back shoppers to take advantage of great deals, while supporting a worthy cause. Cash and personal checks with proper identification are accepted.

## Volunteer Spotlight – Mary Craig

**Mary Craig** wanted to become a part of Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) for some time and decided to become a volunteer in 2018. She volunteers in the Hematology/Oncology and Surgery Departments by helping patients to their rooms. “I have always wanted to help others because I know what it is like to need help,” said Mary. “I became an LMH volunteer to give back to those who need aid and provide them the feeling that someone is there for them.”

One of Mary’s favorite memories as a volunteer reflects her reason for becoming a volunteer. “I saw a woman come into the Oncology Department for a few weeks, and one day she was feeling very weak. She was holding onto the wall while walking and was visibly

shaking,” Mary said. “I helped her to sit down and made sure she was safe, and I remember how much she thanked me. I could tell that she appreciated my help, and it made me feel good. I was glad to have helped her during a difficult time, and I think that shows the important role that the volunteers have at LMH. We are very lucky to have the opportunity to help others and improve their day.”

Mary lived in Thornville in Perry County for 36 years before moving to Heath. She is a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles in Newark, American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. She enjoys reading, completing puzzles on her tablet, and spending time with her family, including her husband, Bill; brother, Terry; sister-in-law, Linda;

and her nieces and nephews. Because volunteer services are on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mary misses volunteering and hopes to see her co-volunteers soon.



## Retiree Spotlight – Janine Shipley

**Janine Shipley** moved to Newark and began her career at Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) in 1981 when she joined the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Pharmacy Department as a clinical pharmacist. Janine left LMHS in 1985, but returned in 2005 and worked in the LMH Pharmacy Department and Medication Therapy Clinic until her retirement in June 2020.

One of Janine’s most notable career achievements was developing a pharmacist position in the LMH Emergency Department (ED). In 2008, she began providing medication reconciliation in the ED. This is a process where admitted patients are interviewed and their current medications are identified. It was determined that pharmacists are the ideal health professionals to obtain medication histories. The program now has expanded from one pharmacist in the ED to 24-hour coverage provided by pharmacists and certified pharmacy technicians. In 2018, Janine helped develop a consult agreement with ED physicians, in which ED pharmacists would prescribe antibiotics utilizing an approved protocol.

“When I first began working in the ED, many thought pharmacists would dispense medications, but our goal was to be consultant pharmacists and provide medication information to physicians, nurses and patients,” Janine explained. Janine also is proud that she and other ED pharmacists were able to lessen the workload of physicians and nurses by overseeing the process of identifying medications for patients and reviewing lab culture results. “By assuming these responsibilities, we were able to use our expertise to assist patients with their medications and allow physicians and nurses to focus more on taking care of the patients’ medical needs,” said Janine. “I really enjoyed being able to have personal, one-on-one contact with my patients to explain their medication therapy and ensure they understood how and when to take their medications.”

Janine has fond memories of the years she spent working at LMHS and is grateful for the opportunities that allowed her to develop her skills as a pharmacist. She misses seeing the patients and all of her friends at the Hospital, but she has kept herself busy in retirement. Janine enjoys quilting, embroidery, reading, horseback riding, and taking online

Spanish and ukulele classes. She lives on her family farm in Newark. Janine feels lucky to have her children, Stacey and Brad Atherton, and Adam and Ashley Shipley, living next door and helps care for her four grandchildren, Charlie, Kody, Jake and Emma. She also enjoys taking walks with her Labrador retriever, Hope. Janine serves on church council, teaches Sunday school and is a pianist at Highwater Congregational United Church of Christ located north of Fredonia.





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# Boot Camp for New Dads

To prepare expecting fathers for the arrival of their first baby, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) offers **Boot Camp for New Dads**, a unique experience that is led by men who completed the program themselves. "Veteran" dads demonstrate basic child care – such as burping, changing, swaddling,

feeding, and comforting a crying baby – and share with "rookie" fathers what they found to be the most important or challenging aspects of fatherhood from their own experiences.

Each Boot Camp class lasts from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon and is facilitated by two certified Master Coaches. The first hour features discussion on a variety of topics including becoming a dad, forming a new family, and caring for new moms. In the second hour, rookies divide

into smaller groups to spend a block of time with different veterans. The class concludes with an hour-long session that allows the veteran dads to offer the rookies advice about any questions or concerns that have not been addressed to that point.

LMH offers Boot Camp for New Dads one Saturday a month at no cost to participants through the First Impressions educational program. For the complete schedule of dates, visit [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org) or call **(220) 564-3388**.



**BOOT CAMP**  
FOR NEW DADS

Please take a few minutes to read this issue of **Community Connection**. You'll once again see why Licking Memorial Health Systems is measurably different ... for your health! **Visit us at [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org).**

A publication of the LMHS Public Relations Department. Please contact the Public Relations Department at (220) 564-1561 to receive future mailings.

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