

Community Connection

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Summer/Fall 2024

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Electrophysiologist Joins LMHS

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) recently added a new specialty physician practice to expand access to cardiovascular services within the community. Licking Memorial Cardiac Electrophysiology (EP) is part of Licking Memorial Health Professionals, a group of more than 100 healthcare physicians in 25 areas of specialty who are dedicated to improving the health of the community. Electrophysiologist John J. Keller, M.D., joined the practice in August.

“We are thrilled to have Dr. Keller join Licking Memorial Health Systems and welcome him to the Cardiac Services team as our very first electrophysiologist,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. “His vast expertise in electrophysiology allows us to provide comprehensive cardiac services, including ablations and implantable EP devices for patients who suffer from heart arrhythmia. Dr. Keller is an outstanding addition to our already highly skilled and experienced cardiology staff, including Eesha Maiodna, M.D., Hassan Rajjoub, M.D., Fikadu Tekleyes, M.D., Donald Bowsher, APRN-CNP, Angela Raake, APRN-CNP, and Leslie Solomon, APRN-CNP.”

Dr. Keller received his medical degree from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He completed an internal medicine residency, a cardiovascular disease fellowship, and a clinical cardiac electrophysiology fellowship at The Ohio State University Medical Center. Dr. Keller is board certified in internal medicine, cardiovascular disease, and clinical cardiac electrophysiology.

Electrophysiology is the study of electrical properties in biological cells and tissues, including the heart. Electrophysiological studies are tests that evaluate the heart’s electrical system and diagnose abnormal heart rhythms, or arrhythmia. An electrophysiologist is a physician who is an expert in diagnosing and treating issues of the heart’s electrical system. Conditions that an electrophysiologist treats include:

- Atrial fibrillation (AFib)
- Atrial flutter
- Atrial tachycardia
- Ventricular fibrillation
- Bradycardia
- AV Blocks
- Palpitations

AFib is the most common form of arrhythmia and occurs more frequently with age. AFib is an irregular, rapid heart rate caused by disorganized electrical signals that force the heart’s two upper chambers, known as the atrium, to squeeze rapidly. A typical heart rate is 60 to 100 beats per minute, but AFib may cause the rate to increase to 100 to 175 beats per minute. People with AFib can experience heart palpitations, fatigue, chest discomfort, or shortness of breath.

“As the world population ages and medical advances improve, many people are surviving chronic diseases,” said Hassan Rajjoub, M.D., of Licking Memorial Cardiology. “We are continuing to see an increase of patients who have Afib, and the condition is beginning to be described as a global epidemic.”

Stroke is a major risk for patients with AFib. A rapid heartbeat for an extended period causes the cardiac muscle to weaken. When a person is in AFib, the heart muscle does not squeeze consistently, which can cause blood to pool in pockets of the heart and form a clot.

The clot can potentially travel up to the brain and cause a stroke. As a result, many

patients who have AFib are treated with anticoagulant medication, which decreases the risk of stroke. However, taking blood-thinning medicine requires frequent testing to check the thinness of the blood and adjust medication accordingly. There is also a risk for excessive bleeding when taking anticoagulant drugs.

AFib can be treated with anti-arrhythmic medications, such as beta blockers, which work to slow the heart rate. Patients often use a monitoring device to ensure their heart rate is being controlled. Another treatment is cardioversion, which is a medical procedure that uses quick, low-energy shocks to restore a regular heart rhythm. Cardioversion is an effective treatment for patients with AFib; however, the procedure does not prevent recurrence of AFib.

In instances where medication and cardioversion are not effective for the patient, ablation therapy may be used to treat the arrhythmia and reduce symptoms. AFib ablation is a minimally invasive procedure that treats irregular heartbeats caused by AFib using heat or cold energy to create scar tissue in the heart. During the procedure, a doctor guides a catheter through a vein into the heart. A device at the tip of the catheter emits energy to destroy small areas of heart tissue that are causing the heart’s electrical signals to misfire. Scar tissue blocks the faulty signals, helping to restore a regular rhythm to the heart.

Patients discharged from the Hospital who need EP will be referred to Dr. Keller for follow-up and additional treatments. Dr. Maiodna, Dr. Rajjoub, and Dr. Tekleyes will continue to manage their patients, but may refer them to Dr. Keller for any EP-related conditions.

New Technique for Clot Removal Now Available

Continuing the strong tradition of positive innovation throughout Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery has expanded the service offerings for patients diagnosed with deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Deep vein thrombosis is a common disease that causes blood clots in the veins. Complete removal of clots are associated with better outcomes, including decreased incidence of post-thrombotic syndrome symptoms of leg heaviness, pain, cramping, swelling, and discomfort. Percutaneous mechanical thrombectomy, a minimally invasive technique in which a catheter utilizes mechanical means to remove a blood clot, has been found to be a highly effective treatment. LMHS has acquired new instrumentation to perform the procedure locally.

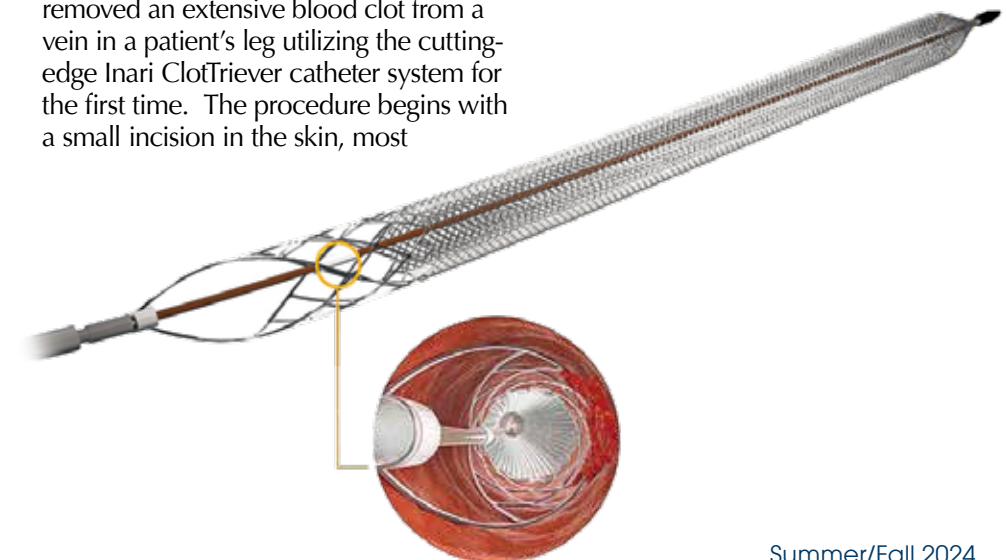
In the past, similar procedures required catheter-directed thrombolysis for the rapid removal of a clot; however, the process is associated with high bleeding risk. Nearly all previous thrombectomy devices were designed for the arterial system, posing increased risks for patients when used within the larger vessels of the venous system. Arteries transport oxygenated blood from the heart to all parts of the body, while veins return deoxygenated blood back to the heart.

Earlier this year, Howard L. Reeves, D.O., in association with William H. Phillips, D.O., and Mark T. DeFrancisco, D.O., all of Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery, removed an extensive blood clot from a vein in a patient’s leg utilizing the cutting-edge Inari ClotTrievers catheter system for the first time. The procedure begins with a small incision in the skin, most

commonly the leg. A sheath, a short hollow tube, is inserted into the vein, allowing the delivery of wires and catheters that are used to navigate and reach the clot.

Once the catheter, a long thin tube, reaches the location of the clot, the surgeons are able to capture and remove the clot utilizing a coring element and collection bag contained within the catheter. The procedure typically lasts one to two hours, and patients often feel symptom relief immediately after the procedure. The system may be used in either the upper or lower parts of the body and to treat the underlying causes of clotting in the area at the same time. The need for medication to thin the blood is also eliminated.

The ClotTrievers system is targeted to remove large clots without the need for thrombolytic drug therapy or admission to the intensive care unit. At six months post-procedure, patients can expect to continue to achieve gains in blood-flow, achieving between 60 to 70 percent overall improvement. The new instrumentation is expected to enhance patient outcomes, strengthen the mechanical capabilities of our experienced physicians and surgical staff, while greatly reducing the need for patient transfer to other area organizations for further treatment.



Renovations at Tamarack 2000 Will Offer Additional Surgery Options

Since 2013, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) has utilized space at Licking Memorial Hospital – Tamarack, located at 2000 Tamarack Road, for certain surgical and gastroenterology (GI) procedures. Now, plans are underway for additional renovations to create more efficient operation routines and provide additional surgery options. The renovations will promote better utilization of the current space and create a more efficient process for the surgeons and staff.

To create space for a new sterile supply area, the locker rooms and associated bathrooms located near the operating rooms will be relocated. The supply area will accommodate the needed equipment and instrumentation to support existing and additional specialties. A dictation room with two workstations for the surgeons will also be added.

The changes made will accommodate additional surgery options for elective orthopedic procedures currently not offered at Tamarack 2000, such as:

- Carpal tunnel surgery
- Arthroscopy
 - Knee
 - Shoulder
 - Ankle
 - Wrist
- Tendon repair

LMH is also purchasing new equipment, known as integration towers, to connect

medical devices to allow staff members to capture, display, and store surgical images. The towers will create a central command station, allowing the surgical staff to perform many of their tasks efficiently without needing to move around the operating room. Integration technology will also assist in preparing for the possibility of adding other elective surgical specialties in the future.

The reception area, current surgery manager's office space, and a break room will be renovated as well, which will provide a much-needed consultation room where surgeons can meet with the patient's family in private. During the renovations, the operating rooms will be updated and will include improved workspaces for the nursing staff and surgeons.

Overall, the benefits of this project are to:

- Improve the workflows at the Tamarack location
- Improve scheduling flexibility for the surgeons and patients at both the Tamarack location and LMH
- Accommodate for growth/expansion at the Tamarack location and LMH
- Provide new/updated equipment
- Increase staff, surgeon, and patient satisfaction



Dr. Greathouse Accepts Administrative Leadership Role at LMHS

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) is pleased to announce that Talya Greathouse, M.D., will transition to a new leadership position at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) by the end of the year. Dr. Greathouse joined LMHS in 1999 as a family practice physician and is a past Chief of Staff at LMH.

“Dr. Greathouse has exhibited exceptional standards in patient care throughout her career, which is made evident by the devotion of her patients,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. “We are proud to add Dr. Greathouse’s experience and

expertise to the LMHS leadership team and strengthen our mission to improve the health of the community.”

Due to her new position, Dr. Greathouse will resign from Licking Memorial Family Practice – West Main, after 25 years of service as a family practice physician. She will continue to provide patient care through the end of the calendar year. LMHS is currently in the process of recruiting a new physician to join Garth Bennington, M.D., at the West Main practice location.

Dr. Greathouse was recognized as the LMHS Physician of the Year in 2011 and Licking County Family Physician of the Year in 2012. She was nominated as the Central Ohio Academy of Family Physicians’ Family Physician of the Year in both 2013 and 2014. She earned her Doctor of Medicine degree from The Ohio State University College of Medicine. She became a Rotary member in 2012 and has been active with the Special Needs Committee, currently serving as Chairperson. She also serves on the advisory boards of The Ohio State University at Newark and Otterbein at Granville.

Sarah Wallace Named Businesswoman of the Year

Licking County resident, Sarah Wallace, was recently named Businesswoman of the Year by Columbus Business First. Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) President & CEO Rob Montagnese nominated Sarah for the award which was part of the Women of Influence recognition program. Columbus Business First began the program last year to honor women who are having an impact on their organizations, bettering the community by giving back, and helping foster the next generation of leaders by acting as advisers and mentors. Awards were presented to the honorees at a Gala Awards Reception in July.

Rob nominated Sarah, who serves as the Board Chair of First Federal Savings & Loan, because of her devotion to the community and professed love for the area. As the daughter of Louella and J. Gilbert “Gib” Reese, and the granddaughter of Martha and Everett D. Reese, the founder of First Federal Savings & Loan, Sarah witnessed the importance of philanthropy from her family and was encouraged to become involved in the community early in her career.

“In all her endeavors, Sarah consistently strives to better Licking County. Her outstanding leadership has been invaluable to each organization she serves,” Rob shared. “She supports the mission of LMHS, to improve the health of the community, through the excellent projects and organizations she leads that work to offer healthy lifestyle choices including outdoor activities and access to fresh produce.”

To increase outdoor activity opportunities, Sarah supported projects through the Thomas J. Evans Foundation, including a bike path system with over 44 miles of trails and land for local parks, among many others. She was instrumental in the creation of the Canal Market District, which opened in Downtown Newark in 2016. The project is the culmination of a 30-year vision of her father, J. Gilbert Reese. The Canal Market District hosts a Farmers Market every Tuesday and Friday from June through October to ensure that healthy, affordable, and locally produced food is conveniently available for community members. Sarah also worked with leaders of the business community in Licking County to create FRAMEWORK, a public/private visioning/planning initiative for

the area to align the communities who will be most immediately impacted by the presence of Intel, the world’s largest semiconductor chip manufacturer, and other economic development efforts.

Sarah’s extensive community involvement includes leadership positions within numerous organizations in Licking County. In addition to being the Board Chair for First Federal Savings, she is Board Chair and Trustee for the First Federal Foundation, Trustee and Chair of the Gilbert Reese Family Foundation, Trustee and Chair of the Thomas J. Evans Foundation, Trustee for the Newark Campus Development Fund, and a voting Director of the Community Governing Board for A Call to College. She became the first woman to hold the Board Chair of Trustees for her alma mater, DePauw University, and continues to serve as a Trustee.

Additionally, Sarah previously served on the Board of Trustees for both the Licking County Foundation and the Ohio Savings and Loan League. She also is a former President

and Vice President of the Newark City School Board, Board Chair of Central Ohio Technical College, Director and Treasurer of the Licking County Chamber of Commerce, and President of the Community Governing Board for A Call to College.



LMHS Celebrates National Hospital & Healthcare Week

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) paid tribute to the 2,400-plus employees who contribute to the organization's award-winning care in an annual observance of National Hospital & Healthcare Week. The five-day celebration at LMHS in May included a carnival, various food trucks offering lunch and assorted pastries, bingo, chair massages, and a visit from Pet Partners and the Licking County Humane Society. Additionally, LMHS held its annual Employee Recognition Event midweek and Award Reception to complete the week-long festivities.

"Our success depends greatly upon the contributions and dedication of our staff," LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese said. "We value the significant contributions our employees have made to LMHS. We are grateful to them for sharing their time and talents to help us improve the health of the community."



55th Annual LMHS Employee Service Recognition Event

The Employee Recognition Event featured 256 LMHS employees who are observing anniversaries in five-year increments in 2024 and was held at the John Gilbert Reese Center on The Ohio State University at Newark campus. The event included a *Family Feud* game theme and offered honorees an opportunity to win prizes.

Among the notable honorees were two employees with 45 years of service – Jody Kline, Surgery and Chuck Rine, Radiology. Barb Gloss, Laboratory, and Veronica Patton, Vice President Development & Public Relations, celebrated 40 years of service. Each received a framed proclamation and gift to mark their special employment anniversary.



Manager of the Year

Rob also presented the Manager of the Year Award during the Employee Recognition Event. Established in 1987, the award recognizes management employees who demonstrate fair and consistent leadership in his or her area of responsibility. Nominees should demonstrate an ability to inspire his or her employees beyond the ordinary requirements of their jobs. Two managers were honored this year – Stephen Gombos and Becky Thomas.

Stephen Gombos joined LMHS in 2013 and now serves as the Director of Laboratory Services. Stephen was instrumental in automating laboratory processes and obtaining new tools to provide quicker diagnoses, which leads to better patient care and satisfaction. Under Stephen's leadership, Licking

Memorial Hospital (LMH) became the first institution in the United States to offer a test for an advanced cardiac marker, high sensitivity troponin-I, to aid in the rapid diagnosis of myocardial infarction. He also assisted in establishing the first drive-through COVID-19 testing facility in the area. Stephen is a helpful, kind, diligent, and obliging manager, and the epitome of dedication and customer service.

Since starting in 2017, Becky Thomas, Director of Human Resources (HR), has been instrumental in various initiatives. As the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) Specialist, she spearheaded LMHS' transition to UKG, equipping the organization with advanced workforce management tools. This year, she crafted compelling presentations to

enhance employees' understanding of the Compensation and Benefit Programs, fostering transparency and clarity. She has also led efforts in streamlining the organization's Leave of Absence program, optimizing HR services for employees. Her leadership style, characterized by thoughtfulness and trustworthiness, has made a great impact on the organization.



Rob Montagnese, Stephen Gombos, Becky Thomas, LMH Board Chair Jacqueline Parrill, Ed.D., and LMHS Board Chair Nancy Neely

Clarissa Ann Howard Nursing Award for Clinical Excellence

The Clarissa Ann Howard Nursing Award for Clinical Excellence is presented annually to recognize nurses who are respected by their peers for their expertise, professionalism, and clinical excellence while providing patient care. The 2024 award recipients are Lori Romshe, B.S.N., R.N., Critical Care Unit, and Amanda Spinks, B.S.N., R.N., Internal Medicine.

Lori received her Associate of Applied Science in Nursing and her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Ohio University in Athens. She began her nursing career at LMH in 1994. After working for nearly 10 years, Lori left to care for her small children. She returned to the workforce in 2010 working as a home health nurse in the community and then returned to

LMH in 2016 working in the Critical Care Unit (CCU) where she remains today. Lori serves as a charge nurse in CCU as well as preceptor for new employees and students. Lori is clinically outstanding; however, the compassion and empathy that she shows in the care she delivers to her patients and their families sets her apart. Her peers note that she routinely goes above and beyond for her patients, their visitors, and her co-workers. She is described as a haven for concerns and questions, and a nurse who everyone would entrust with the care of their loved ones.

Having already worked with David W. Koontz, D.O., Amanda joined Internal Medicine in 2018. She also serves as a level 2 Float nurse, which she began

doing during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. She earned her nursing degree from Central Ohio Technical College in Newark and Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Ohio University in Athens. Amanda is an active blood donor for the American Red Cross. When not providing top-notch care to her patients, she enjoys spending time on her farm, raising chickens, cows, pigs, and goats, and tending to her garden.



Greg Wallis, Amanda Spinks, B.S.N., R.N., Lori Romshe, B.S.N., R.N., Heather Burkhart, and Rob Montagnese

Healthcare Worker of the Year

Michael Brazil of Licking Memorial Physical Therapy was awarded the Healthcare Worker of the Year award. Michael is an exceptional healthcare worker who supports his coworkers, creates a productive and pleasant work environment, and inspires patients and visitors with his optimistic attitude. He is motivated, extremely dependable, a positive role model for the staff and patients, and an integral part of the Rehabilitation team. The Physical Therapy Department and the Licking Memorial Wellness Center have come to rely heavily on Michael to keep the areas running smoothly. The exercise and

medical equipment must be kept pristine and sanitized often for the health of the patients. Michael works diligently to ensure the highest standards of cleanliness in order to offer the best possible care to patients. His coworkers shared that Michael motivated and inspired them by being one of the hardest-working individuals in the Department and by his kindness. Those who work with him believe they are able to offer a better version of themselves to each other, patients, and visitors because they follow his example of lightheartedness, friendliness, and respect for others. Michael shows acceptance and grace to

all he encounters, and even people who do not have direct contact with him have commented about his hard work and compassion. In June, Mike was presented the Ohio Hospital Association's Albert E. Dyckes Health Care Worker of the Year Award.



Rob Montagnese and Michael Brazil

Advanced Practice Provider of the Year Award

A new honor added this year, the Advanced Practice Provider of the Year Award was awarded to Kelly Morrison, APRN-CNP, of Licking Memorial Pediatrics – Tamarack. Since 2001, Kelly has worked for LMHS as a Pediatric Certified Nurse Practitioner for Licking Memorial Pediatrics where she provides acute, chronic, and well-child care. Kelly also works at Licking Memorial Kids' Place where she provides evaluations, medical care, and guidance to children who have been physically or sexually abused. After graduating from Lakewood High School, Kelly attended The Ohio State University (OSU) where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree in 1996. In 2001, she earned her Master of Science in Nursing degree with a focus in pediatric primary care from OSU. Kelly is active in the Kids' Team of Licking County and the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP). In 2004, she received the Pediatric Nurse Practitioner of the Year award from the Ohio Chapter of NAPNAP for her contributions as a pediatric nurse practitioner through her work at LMHS. In 2013, she received the Champion of Victims Award for her outstanding service to victims of crime in Licking County.



Kelly Morrison, APRN-CNP and Rob Montagnese

MVP Awards

As part of Hospital & Healthcare Week, LMHS recognized 37 MVP Award recipients who were selected for their consistent demonstration of LMHS' values: compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence. The 2024 MVPs are featured on pages 32 to 35.

Cancer Survivors Honored at Annual Picnic

Approximately 160 Licking County residents gathered at the Licking Memorial Medical Campus on June 4 for the annual Cancer Survivors Picnic. The event celebrated and honored cancer survivors for serving as an inspiration to those currently diagnosed with cancer. Attendees were offered health information and community resources available to cancer survivors. Guests also received welcome gifts and enjoyed a few games before the main program.

Licking Memorial Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese recognized the attending cancer survivors and thanked family and friends for the continued support that they

provided to loved ones who fought and survived cancer. He then introduced the guest speakers, Aruna Gowda, M.D., Licking Memorial Hematology/Oncology Clinic, and Linda Parks, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council. Dr. Gowda shared that at LMH last year, 1,123 patients were diagnosed with cancer. She also commended the survivors, applauding their strength and determination during their journey.

Linda, a Career Specialist at Newark High School for the Jobs for America's Graduates program, is very active in the community, volunteering her time at

Vertical 196, Licking County Coalition of Care, Weathervane Theatre, and The Midland Theatre. She lives in Newark with her husband, Javon. The couple has two daughters, and three granddaughters.

Sharing her cancer journey, Linda explained how she found a lump in her breast while showering. She spoke about the initial fear of the diagnosis and the courage it takes to continue working to stay positive during treatment. While Linda confessed she felt blessed that her own experience with the cancer medication was mild, she feels a bond

with others battling the disease and encourages family members to remember to show compassion and kindness for those who experience the harsh side effects. She speaks to groups and individuals about the importance of self-awareness, knowing when something does not feel right, and early detection.

After thanking the guest speakers, Rob offered the guests the opportunity to play bingo. Winners were given gift cards to area restaurants and businesses. After the prizes were awarded, the traditional aerial photo of the survivors concluded the event.



LMHS Hosts Pataskala Chamber of Commerce Luncheon

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosted the Pataskala Chamber of Commerce luncheon at Tri-Village Christian Church in June. The Chamber members who attended the meeting enjoyed a catered lunch by LMHS Culinary Services. LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese spoke to the group about current projects and initiatives that LMHS is undertaking to continue the mission to improve the health of the community.

With unprecedented growth expected in the western part of Licking County, Rob shared that LMHS purchased land along State Route 161 near Johnstown. At this time, plans are still being discussed about the type of facility that will be built on

the property. Several options are being weighed.

Rob also spoke about health disparity concerns, preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations. Research has shown that life expectancy is largely affected by the zip code in which people live. Issues such as food insecurity and lack of transportation and housing are also factors. To reduce the effects of these factors, LMHS has partnered with other non-profit organizations in Licking County including Licking County Transit (LCT), the Food Pantry Network (FPN) of

Licking County, and the Licking County Coalition for Housing.

With the focus on the partnerships, LMHS has assisted LCT with the creation of three fixed bus routes: the Main Street Route, the 21st Street Route, and the Granville Route. The bus routes allow riders greater access to healthcare by stopping at many LMHS facilities. In addition to more transportation options, LMHS was instrumental in the creation of the FPN Market, which occupies the LMHS building at 131 McMillen Drive in Newark. The Market offers eligible customers a grocery-style shopping experience with a selection of food items including fresh produce, dry goods, dairy, and meat products.



“For Your Health” 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk Promotes Healthy Lifestyles

More than 1,300 participants gathered at The Dawes Arboretum for the sixteenth annual Licking Memorial Health Systems “For Your Health” 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk in July. Participants had the option to run or walk the 5K course, which weaved through The Dawes Arboretum’s renowned botanical collections. Walkers also had the option to follow a shorter one-mile route. Drs. Briana and Anthony Johnson served as the Honorary Chairs of the event, which was presented by the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council, The Dawes Arboretum, Buckeye Valley Family YMCA, and Park National Bank (PNB).

“The ‘For Your Health’ 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk is one of our primary community events to encourage physical activity each year and promote healthy lifestyles.” LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese said. “We are pleased by the number of participants who register and support the effort to improve the health of the community. The Dawes Arboretum annually provides a picturesque setting for the event, and we hope to reinforce the idea that the variety of attractions and parks in Licking County offer great locations for exercise.”

The overall male and female winners of the 5K Run included: first place –

J. Newman (16:23), (left photo below) and Bailey McCoy (20:47), (right photo below); second place – Chris Monroe (17:06) and Maddie Carpenter (20:51); and third place – Derek Williams (17:07) and Brittany Barchalk (21:02). The top three overall female and male finishers received medals and were offered gift cards to Dick’s Sporting Goods. Medals were also awarded to those who finished in the top three of their age and gender groups, and participation medals were given to all participants.



LMHS and PNB invited Licking County businesses to promote employee wellness by joining the Corporate Participation Challenge. Businesses were grouped into four categories based on their total number of employees with the winners determined by the highest percentage of participants to run or walk the event. The Corporate Participation Challenge winners were: Medium (21 to 99 employees) – Bloomberg Eye Center and Large (100 or more employees) – The Energy Cooperative.



LMHS Recognizes Donors at Receptions

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) recently honored the individuals and organizations who generously support the mission to improve the health of the community through financial contributions to Licking Memorial Health Foundation (LMHF) at special events. The Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council hosted a Donor Appreciation Reception in July to show gratitude to community members and businesses who made donations to LMHF over the past year. Guests enjoyed a variety of hors d'oeuvres and desserts and received a gift as a token of appreciation.

At the reception, LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese discussed the continued importance of supporting the community and offering more than health care for residents. "The best way for us to grow is by the breadth and depth of the services we provide to our community," said Rob. "Your contributions allow us to focus on sharing our resources to promote health and wellness for residents of Licking County. Donor generosity makes it possible for us to provide quality healthcare as well as education on prevention for the overall health of the community."

LMHS employees who provide support through PRIDE (Providing Resources in Dedicated Employees) were honored during the PRIDE Appreciation Open House in June. Currently, there are 830 PRIDE members. Employees enjoyed a complimentary breakfast and time interacting with other members. Since its inception in 1987, PRIDE has raised almost \$4 million to help fund major projects and capital improvements at LMH, including the recent Main Street Café renovation project, renovations in the Emergency Department Lobby and Main Lobby, and the John & Mary Alford Pavilion fireplace area.

LMHS, a not-for-profit organization, reinvests revenue over expenses back into the Hospital for the ultimate benefit of the community. Gifts may be designated for a specific department, service, facility, or piece of equipment. However, unrestricted gifts allow the funds to be directed to the greatest need. All donations are used for capital expansion, renovations, and equipment. Gifts are never used to pay for operating expenses

or salaries. Keeping up with modern medical technology is an expensive but necessary objective, and every gift received assists in meeting that challenge. In 2024, unrestricted contributions received for LMHF will be designated for technological advances at LMH and assist in the mission to improve the health of the community.



Project SEARCH Interns Celebrate Graduation

In May, eight interns and their families gathered at the John Gilbert Reese Center on The Ohio State University at Newark campus to celebrate graduation from the Project SEARCH program. Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) has hosted Project SEARCH, a program designed for high school seniors who have completed the requirements for graduation, but remain enrolled as fifth-year seniors, for eight years. The participants spend the equivalent of a school year at LMHS receiving a combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and on-the-job training.

The program provides real-life work experience, combined with training in employability and independent living skills, to assist youth with disabilities in making successful transitions from school to adult life. LMHS partners with the Licking County Educational Service Center, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Greenleaf Job Training Services, the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and area school districts to offer the program for local students. The interns began the program in August and completed three unique rotations in a variety of clinical and technological areas within LMHS.

At the graduation event, LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese spoke to the interns and their guests, sharing some of the accomplishments of the program and the students. "While the interns are a

tremendous asset to LMHS, we are proud to witness the growth and maturity that leads to successful employment. Since the first year of the program, 85 percent of the graduates have been hired through employers within Licking County," Rob shared. "This year's interns have expanded their horizons and knowledge, and continued to raise the bar on the standards and practices for this program."

For the first time, one intern was chosen to work in Fiscal Management for LMHS and another became the first to work in the Radiology Department. Another intern was able to learn welding skills he plans to use in the future to gain certification as a welder. Since the beginning of the program, LMHS has hired 22 of the 57 interns who have graduated. Three of the past Project SEARCH graduates went on to obtain a higher level of education.

Students from Newark, Granville, Licking Heights, North Fork, and Northridge School Districts participated in Project SEARCH this school year. During the ceremony, each intern shared details of which departments they served, the impact that the program had on their lives, and their future plans. One intern accepted a position with LMHS in the Culinary Services Department.

The long-term goal is to provide a set of transferable skills to people with disabilities that will result in a diverse group of motivated job seekers for employers throughout Licking County. At the conclusion of each academic year, students who graduate from the program are prepared for competitive employment and have assistance obtaining rewarding jobs. For the upcoming school year, six students representing four Licking County school districts will participate in the ninth year of Project SEARCH.



New Appointment



Varsha Atuluru, D.P.M.,
of Foot and Ankle Specialists
of Central Ohio, joined the
LMH Medical Staff.



Donald A. Bowsher,
APRN-CNP,
joined Licking Memorial
Heart Center.



Jennifer M. Hughes,
APRN-CNM,
joined Licking Memorial
Women's Health - Newark.



John J. Keller, M.D.,
joined Licking Memorial
Cardiac Electrophysiology.



Deana L. Lewis, D.P.M.,
of Foot and Ankle Specialists
of Central Ohio, joined the
LMH Medical Staff.



Aaron M. McNeilan,
APRN-CRNA,
joined Licking Memorial
Anesthesiology.



Courtney A. Morris,
APRN-CRNA,
joined Licking Memorial
Anesthesiology.



Charles L. Murray,
APRN-CNP,
joined Licking Memorial
Outpatient Addiction Medicine.



Benjamin A. Pasley, D.O.,
joined Licking Memorial
Internal Medicine.



Kush S. Patel, M.D.,
joined Licking Memorial
Emergency Medicine.



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

Garth A. Bennington, M.D., joined Licking Memorial Family Practice in 2005. He graduated from Newark High School, and received a Bachelor of Science degree at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Dr. Bennington earned a Doctor of Medicine degree from The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Public Health, and completed a family practice internship and residency at Grant Medical Center in Columbus. He is board certified in family medicine. In 2015, Dr. Bennington was named the Licking Memorial Health Systems Physician of the Year.

Ask a Doc – Tickborne Diseases with Garth A. Bennington, M.D.

Question: Can a tick bite cause disease?

Answer: Ticks do carry a number of diseases, and there has been an increase in such diseases and the presence of ticks in Ohio that is likely to continue. Multiple factors contribute to the increase in tickborne disease, including climate change, tick range expansion, and the increasing number of wildlife living near people.

Anaplasmosis and ehrlichiosis are two closely related tickborne bacterial diseases that are transmitted by the bite of infected ticks. Anaplasmosis, formerly called human granulocytic ehrlichiosis (HGE), is spread to humans by blacklegged deer ticks infected with the bacterium, *Anaplasma phagocytophilia*. Ehrlichiosis, or human monocytic ehrlichiosis (HME), is spread to humans by lone star ticks infected with the bacterium, *Ehrlichia chaffeensis*. Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* and rarely, *Borrelia mayonii*, and is spread to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. Spotted fever rickettsioses are a group of diseases caused by closely related bacteria, spotted fever group *Rickettsia*. The most serious reported spotted fever in the United States is Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of reported cases of ehrlichiosis and anaplasmosis have been steadily rising since the disease

was first reported in 2000. In 2021, there were more than 8,000 cases of ehrlichiosis and anaplasmosis reported across the nation. Ohio has reported 4 cases of ehrlichiosis and anaplasmosis this year. While these infections are not as common as Lyme disease, severe health risks can occur if left untreated.

Symptoms of tickborne diseases may appear one to two weeks after the bite of an infected tick and may include fever, muscle aches, weakness, and severe headache. Patients may also experience nausea, vomiting, and joint pain. Less common symptoms can include rash and confusion. Infection usually produces mild to moderately severe illness, with high fever and headache, but may occasionally be life threatening or even fatal. Typical symptoms of Lyme disease include a characteristic skin rash called erythema migrans. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

In Ohio, American dog ticks, blacklegged ticks, and lone star ticks are among the most likely to be encountered and can be found in wooded, brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter. The best way to prevent tickborne diseases is to prevent tick bites. Ticks are most active during the warm months between early spring and late fall. Avoid areas where ticks may be found and walk in the center of available trails through wooded areas. After being outdoors, check for

ticks by examining clothing and any gear carefully. Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors, preferably within two hours, to more easily find and wash off ticks that may be found on the skin. Conduct a full-body check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of the body upon return from tick-infested areas. Parents should check their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in the hair.

Preventive measures include:

- Wearing light-colored clothing, including long-sleeved shirts tucked into pants and long pants tucked into socks or boots
- Applying tick repellent and wearing clothing that has been treated with permethrin
- Perform frequent tick checks of the body while outside and when showering
- Protect pets with veterinarian-recommended anti-tick products

There is no need to visit a healthcare provider or the emergency department to have a tick removed. Most of the time, a tick can be safely removed at home. The best way to remove a tick is to use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible. Pull the tweezers away from the skin with steady, even pressure. Do

not twist or jerk the tick or the mouth-parts may break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth-parts easily, do not disturb the area and allow the skin to heal. Dispose of a live tick by placing it in alcohol, in a sealed bag or container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with the fingers. Wash hands and the bite area with soap and water. Do not use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish, or any other 'folk' remedies to remove a tick as these methods do not work.

Tickborne diseases may result in mild symptoms treatable at home to severe infections requiring hospitalization. Although easily treated with antibiotics, these diseases can be difficult for physicians to diagnose. However, early recognition and treatment of the infection decreases the risk of serious complications. Visit a healthcare provider immediately if you have been bitten by a tick and experience symptoms.



Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Behavioral Health

Patient Story – Mandy*

Struggling with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety began in childhood for Mandy. She felt she had to hide her feelings and that her emotions did not matter. As she matured, Mandy's mental health declined significantly and she sought assistance from a therapist. She was prescribed medication, which alleviated some of the symptoms, but she continued to experience extreme reactions to stress from her work. The anxiety and depression became overwhelming and she quit her job working as a telephone customer service representative. Soon after taking a new job in Newark, Mandy again began feeling depressed and anxious. Suicidal thoughts soon grew overwhelming.

"I kept having thoughts that everyone would be better off without me. That the world would be a better place if I were not here," Mandy shared. "I began thinking of ways to end my life and making plans. I received three months worth of my medication at once and convinced myself that it would be easy to overdose on that medication. I knew I was in trouble, so I finally reached out for help."

Mandy called the office of Psychiatrist Elizabeth A. Yoder, D.O. Dr. Yoder advised her to leave work and visit the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department (ED) immediately.

"The staff in the Emergency Department were amazing. As soon as I told them why I was there, they moved quickly to place me in a safe room and talk with me," Mandy remembered. "They took the situation very seriously, and their action showed me that someone did care about me, and wanted to help."

In 2019, LMH renovated four rooms specifically designed for patients who are exhibiting suicidal thoughts or behaviors. A separate entrance to the safe rooms provides a private setting for patients experiencing a mental health crisis. The isolation offers decreased stimuli from the rest of the ED, which helps the patient remain calm. A licensed social worker performs a comprehensive assessment of the patient to evaluate the severity of suicide risk and recommend appropriate treatment, such as a safety plan coupled with outpatient services or hospitalization. After her assessment, Mandy was admitted to Shepherd Hill.

"The first night was very rough. I was not in a good head space and did not feel well. I kept thinking that I did not want to be here on this earth," Mandy said. "The staff was incredibly kind to me. They treated me with respect, and I never felt judged. Over the next few days, I began to feel so much better. Staff members, including Jim Pfister, spent time talking to me while others engaged my attention with art, games, and puzzles. Everyone demonstrates a strong level of caring and kindness."

While at Shepherd Hill, the staff also assisted with medication adjustments to assure Mandy was taking the proper dose. After returning home, Mandy did feel better for a short time; however, she was readmitted twice more. After more adjustments to her medication and therapy sessions with Dr. Yoder, Mandy has been successful in overcoming the suicidal thoughts.

"It has been nearly a year since I have had a suicidal thought, and I feel more like myself," Mandy expressed. "Dr. Yoder is very intelligent and is able to set anyone at ease. You can tell

her anything. She has helped me heal and to put things in perspective. It has been a long road, but I am stronger and healthier for the effort."

"Talking with others who have experienced the same struggle with suicidal thoughts, I began to consider how my actions would impact those around me," said Mandy. "The question was posed – what if you had to watch your family live everyday after you died by suicide? I do not think that I could tolerate seeing the pain I had caused. I also now believe that I would instantly regret the decision to follow-through with a suicide attempt."

"For family members, I understand that watching a loved one battle depression can be difficult. Sometimes, it is easier to ignore the warning signs and believe the situation is not as serious as it is," Mandy commented. "Please do not ignore someone struggling with suicidal thoughts. Your reaction to them could be the difference between life and death. Everyone has the ability to brighten someone's day. Simply smiling, saying hello, or being kind can demonstrate to a person feeling alone and lost that someone does care about them."

Licking Memorial Outpatient Psychiatric Services includes physician services of general psychiatry. The physicians provide comprehensive assessments in the specialty of psychiatry, as well as ongoing treatment and medication management when appropriate. They consult with the primary care providers and specialists, and make referrals to individual or group therapy when appropriate. For physician office services, call (220) 564-4873. If you are in need of immediate help, call 988, the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Suicide Warning Signs

Suicide is a serious public health problem with far-reaching social, emotional, and economic consequences. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among adolescents and young adults, and rates have risen steadily in the last two decades. In 2022, suicide rates reached the highest point since 1941. While there is no single cause for the increase in suicide rates in the United States, experts point to several factors, including increased isolation and loneliness among young people, the opioid crisis, economic stress, social media use, and access to firearms.

People who are contemplating suicide may show warning signs that they are thinking about or planning a suicide attempt. Such signs may include talking about:

- Death or exhibiting a fascination with death
- Feeling hopeless, worthless, or trapped
- Feeling guilt, shame, or anger
- Feeling as if they are a burden to others

Other warning signs may include changes in behavior or mood, such as:

- Increased alcohol or drug use
- A recent episode of depression, emotional distress, or anxiety
- Losing interest in personal appearance or hygiene
- Losing interest in activities they used to enjoy
- Withdrawing from family, friends, or community
- Saying goodbye to family and friends
- Giving away prized possessions
- A recent suicide attempt
- Changes in eating and/or sleeping patterns
- Becoming violent or being a victim of violence
- Expressing rage or acting reckless

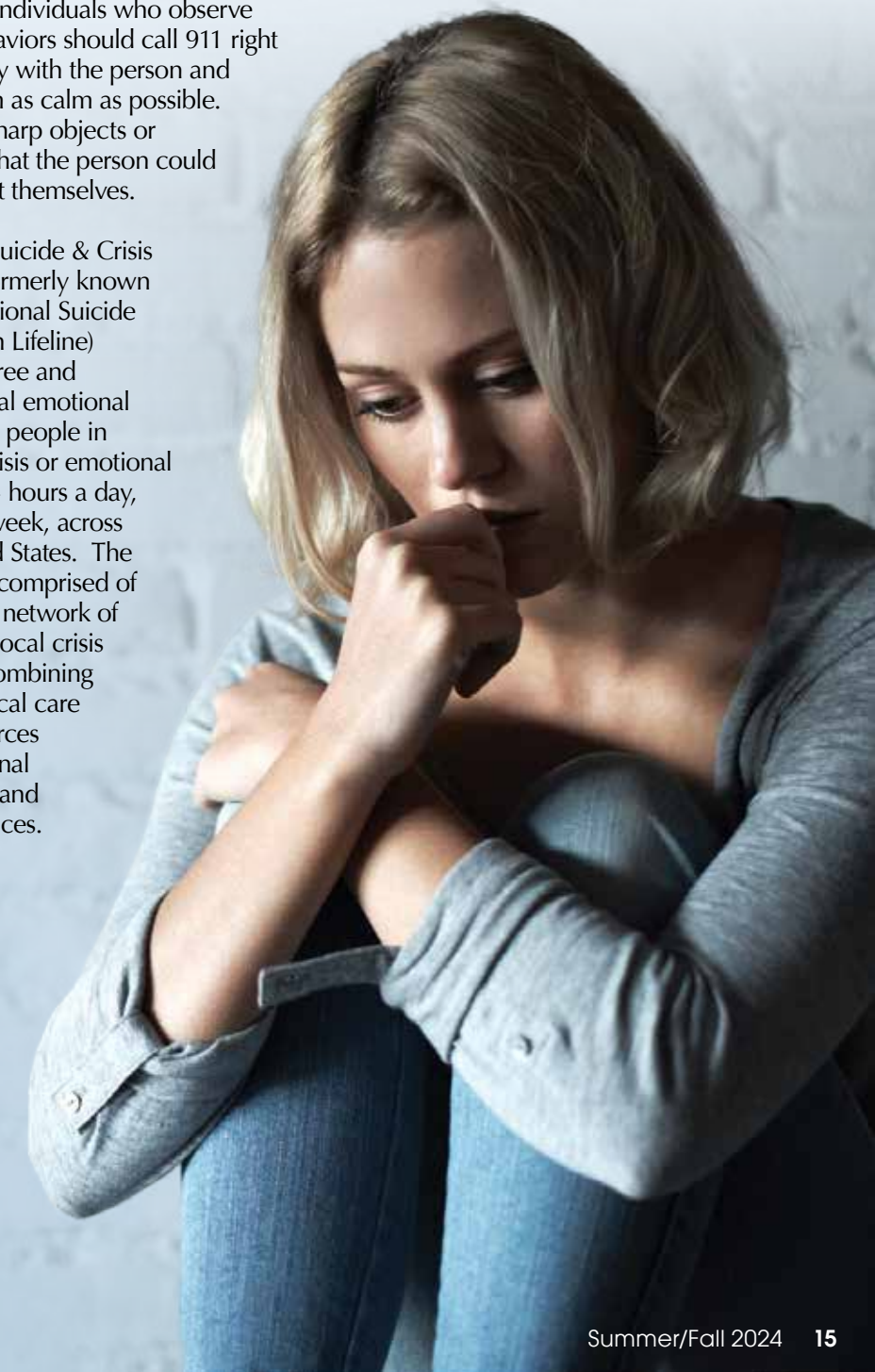
Suicide is not a normal response to stress. Suicidal thoughts or actions are a sign of extreme distress and should not be ignored. People who receive support from family and friends and have access to mental health services are less

likely to act on their suicidal ideations. Individuals who observe warning signs in a friend or loved one can let the person know they are concerned. Ask if the person is having thoughts about suicide. Listen attentively and without judgement, and let the person know they are cared for and supported. Offer to connect them with a mental health professional.

Some behaviors require immediate action. A person who is in crisis may be threatening to harm themselves, talking about suicide, or planning a suicide attempt. Individuals who observe these behaviors should call 911 right away. Stay with the person and keep them as calm as possible. Remove sharp objects or anything that the person could use to hurt themselves.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices.

Licking Memorial Behavioral Health Services offers assistance for those experiencing mental health issues. Physician services in general psychiatry are available and include comprehensive assessments, as well as ongoing treatment and medication management when appropriate. The physicians consult with the primary care providers and specialists.



*Mandy is not the patient's real name.

Behavioral Health 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. Behavioral health is a broad term that refers to psychiatric illnesses and/or substance use disorders. Inpatient hospitalization for either condition is often necessary for effective intervention. LMH provides a wide range of services for people with behavioral health illnesses at its Shepherd Hill facility. One goal is to transition patients into outpatient settings where they can continue treatment, decreasing the need for readmission.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	National ⁽¹⁾
Behavioral Health patients readmitted within 7 days	0.9%	1.3%	2.4%	1.4%

2. Outcome studies are conducted to monitor and measure the treatment success of addictive disease. Our data shows how patients are doing up to two years after completing the program. Information regarding abstinence one year after completing the program is self-reported by patients.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
Patients remaining abstinent	97%	90%	92%	greater than 85%
Improvement in quality of relationships	100%	99%	97%	greater than 85%
Improvement in overall physical and mental health	92%	100%	93%	greater than 85%
Improvement in overall quality of life	100%	100%	98%	greater than 85%

3. Withdrawal management, the safe and medically supervised elimination of addictive substances from the body, is the most intensive care offered for patients with addictive disease. Acute withdrawal symptoms are managed by the use of appropriate medications specific for each patient's situation. The length of stay for detoxification depends upon the drug of choice and the severity of the withdrawal.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
Average length of stay – alcohol treatment	2.4 days	2.9 days	2.8 days	less than 3 days
Average length of stay – opiate treatment	N/A*	2.5 days	2.3 days	less than 4 days
Average length of stay – tranquilizer (benzodiazepines) treatment	1.0 days	4.0** days	3.0 days**	less than 5 days

*In 2021, an accurate representation of the length of stay for opiate treatment could not be obtained due to fewer patients visiting Licking Memorial Behavioral Health.
**Shepherd Hill has implemented a new treatment protocol for benzodiazepine addiction that requires a longer stay at the facility.

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

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
Medication education provided for patients and/or family	100%	100%	98%	greater than 97%

5. In mental health, aftercare programs are recommended for patients who have completed intense treatment programs as well as hospitalization. At Shepherd Hill, follow-up appointments are required in order to continue monitoring patients for continued symptoms and medication effectiveness.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
Aftercare appointment scheduled within 2 weeks of treatment	100%	99.6%	93%	100%

Data Footnotes:
(1) Comparative data from the Midas Comparative Database.

Special Care Nursery Reunion

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosted the Special Care Nursery Reunion in June. The annual event offers families of former Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Special Care Nursery patients and their families the opportunity to visit with Hospital staff and fellow community members with shared experiences. More than 25 families were represented, including parents, guests, and children.

Games and informational booths were set up on the Hospital Front Lawn. While enjoying the activities, the guests were also able to speak with SCN staff members about breastfeeding, safety, and nutrition. During the dinner program, LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese shared more information about the Special Care Nursery with the families.

The Nursery provides a safe, secure environment where specially trained registered nurses care for ill newborns. In addition, pediatric physicians are available 24 hours, seven days a week to direct the care of infants born prematurely, as early as 32 weeks gestation, or infants who require medical assistance. Rob also introduced the guest speakers for the evening, Pediatrician Richard A Baltisberger, M.D., and Jesse McArtor.

Dr. Baltisberger is Chief of Pediatrics at Licking Memorial Hospital. He spoke about the quality of care offered by the staff at LMH and the need to assure patients that they can get care close to home. Jesse, a nurse in the LMH Surgery Department, gave birth to twins prematurely who stayed in the SCN. She shared her gratitude to the staff for the exceptional care offered to her and her daughters.



LMHS Hosts Summer Camps for Local Youth

To help local children care for their asthma, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosted **Camp Feelin' Fine**, an annual day camp comprised of educational games and activities. More than 30 children attended this year's event on June 18 at Infirmary Mound Park, south of Granville. The event included survivor-themed activities and presentations designed to help youth learn more about asthma, manage their symptoms, and interact with others who also have the condition.

Licking Memorial Pediatrician Richard Baltisberger, M.D., members of the LMH Respiratory Therapy Department, and other LMHS staff taught participants how to avoid common "triggers" of an asthma attack, such as pollen, strenuous exercise, dust, and pet dander. The LMH Respiratory Therapy Department is staffed with state-licensed respiratory care professionals who work under the direction of a physician and assist with the diagnosis, treatment, and management of patients with pulmonary disorders.

In July, 24 high school seniors had the opportunity to receive firsthand experience with various healthcare careers by participating in **Camp Med**. The students were selected through a rigorous application process and spent two days visiting departments and medical practices throughout LMHS. The attendees were divided into groups and allowed to participate in interactive medical demonstrations. They were also given the opportunity to use surgical and sonogram equipment, learn to draw blood, and discover how medications are prepared and dispensed. Students also spent time observing physician practices including Family Practice, Orthopedic Surgery, Pediatrics, and Women's Health.

On July 12, LMHS hosted **Camp Cool**, an annual one-day camp for youth, ages 6 to 12, that offers information and activities focused on improving mental health and mindfulness. During the event, campers learned relaxation techniques and mental health coping strategies while enjoying many fun activities, games, and presentations.

Mindy Dennis, M.S., L.P.C., LCDC III, and Charles Murray, APRN-CNP, of Licking Memorial Behavioral Health Services, shared information concerning mindfulness and self-regulation. Other activities included yoga, inflatables, and water games. This year's event, held at Infirmary Mound Park in Granville, was the second Camp Cool hosted by LMHS.

New this year, LMHS hosted **Mind Matters – a Mental Health Camp for Youth**, Ages 12 to 16, on Thursday, August 1, and Friday, August 2. The two-day camp was led by *because I said I would* staff who offered presentations, group discussions, interactive activities, and crafts that focused on building resiliency, mental strength, empowerment, and growth. The campers learned more about turning negative thoughts into a positive outlook, stress management, self-control, and mindfulness.

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



Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Stroke Care

Patient Story – Debbie*

Debbie had recently undergone some life-changing situations. One of those changes was that she and her husband decided to move from Arizona back to Ohio to be closer to family. Both were born and raised in Ohio and had moved to Arizona early in their marriage for Debbie's career. Now that Debbie and her husband were retired and their children were grown and living out of state, they decided it was time to move.

One Sunday morning in April, Debbie began to experience the feeling of numbness on the entire right side of her body. Following an excess of lifting and unpacking after moving into their new home, so Debbie thought that she had just pinched a nerve or overexerted herself. Her husband suggested that she take an aspirin just in case and see how she felt in the morning. She awoke with the numbness still present but had no other symptoms. She did experience a strange pulsing feeling in her side, which she assumed was her liver, and that concerned her. Debbie had just moved to the area, so she spent the morning searching for a primary care provider. She found one but needed to wait a few days for an open appointment. Her husband suggested that they go to Urgent Care. When they arrived at Urgent Care, there was a problem verifying Debbie's insurance, so they decided to go to Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department (ED).

Sami T. Getahun, M.D., was Debbie's attending physician. He ordered an ultrasound on her abdomen and a computed tomography (CT) scan with contrast on her head. Neither test revealed any findings. Debbie also had a CT scan with contrast on her abdomen, but this test also showed no abnormalities. A magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan was recommended by neurology.

It was not until neurologist, Gloria Galloway, M.D., of Licking Memorial Neurology, called the ED after reviewing Debbie's MRI scan that Debbie learned a small blood clot had been lodged into a small vessel in the thalamus. The thalamus is an egg-shaped structure in the middle of the brain that relays sensory and motor information from the body to the brain. Debbie had suffered a stroke.

A stroke occurs when blood flow is disrupted to an area of the brain, which deprives the brain cells of oxygen and nutrients causing the cells to die. Numbness on one side of the body is a common symptom of stroke. Other symptoms include face drooping, speech difficulty, confusion, vision problems, loss of balance or coordination, and severe headache.

"Nobody was more surprised than I was to hear that I had suffered a stroke," Debbie said. "I did not experience any other stroke symptoms. I did not feel impaired in any way, but I am so glad that the neurologist discovered it."

Debbie has a family history of brain aneurysms. Her mother died from a ruptured aneurysm when she was young, and her sister had also suffered from a brain aneurysm. A brain aneurysm is a weak area in the wall of a blood vessel in the brain that causes the vessel to bulge. Most brain aneurysms that have not ruptured do not cause symptoms. A ruptured aneurysm is a very serious condition. The most notable and common symptom is a sudden, severe headache. Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, a stiff neck, blurred or double vision, sensitivity to light, a drooping eyelid, seizure, loss of consciousness, or confusion.

"I was admitted to the Hospital, and the nursing staff and care team were

wonderful. I cannot say enough good things about them," Debbie said. "Dr. Kret was very thorough and so knowledgeable. Dr. Osubeni visited me during the night and was very compassionate when she spoke with me. I felt comforted and cared for greatly."

Because of Debbie's family history of aneurysm, an additional MRI was performed. The results came back clear for an aneurysm, and Debbie was relieved to hear the news. She was discharged from LMH and wore a heart monitor for two weeks to rule out atrial fibrillation, a common cause of blood clots. She was also prescribed 325 milligrams of aspirin and 20 milligrams of Crestor, a statin, which she takes daily. These medications are common for post-stroke care.

Debbie visited Sarah Robinson, APRN-CNP, of Licking Memorial Family Practice – Granville, for her one-week follow-up and later had an appointment with her primary care physician, Kalpana Jones, M.D., also of Licking Memorial Family Practice – Granville. She also has scheduled a follow up with Dr. Galloway.

"Dr. Jones is a great family physician. She is very thorough, knowledgeable, and compassionate. All are qualities that I want my physician to have."

Debbie is very grateful that the staff at LMH discovered her stroke. She still experiences some numbness in her shoulder but is thankful that she did not suffer any permanent damage. She will continue to follow up with her care team regularly and take her medications as prescribed.

*Debbie is not the patient's real name.

Navigating Life After a Stroke

Stroke is a leading cause of disability and death worldwide, and survivors often face significant physical challenges. Depending on the affected area of the brain, a stroke can impact movement, speech, memory, and thinking. Daily activities such as dressing, bathing, and communication may also be difficult. Timely intervention and treatment are critical for minimizing damage to the brain and maximizing recovery.

A stroke occurs when blood flow is disrupted to an area of the brain, which deprives the brain cells of oxygen and nutrients causing the cells to die. The two most common types of stroke that can occur are ischemic stroke and hemorrhagic stroke. An ischemic stroke occurs when a blood vessel supplying blood to the brain is blocked. Ischemic strokes account for 87 percent of all strokes. A hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a weakened blood vessel ruptures and there is bleeding in the brain. Both types of strokes require immediate attention and treatment to reduce the long-term effects of stroke and prevent death.

Starting rehabilitation as soon as possible after a stroke is vital in stroke recovery. Rehab begins while the patient is in the hospital with the goal of giving patients the greatest amount of independence to perform basic daily activities. Patients receive physical therapy to regain mobility, strength, and coordination. Occupational therapy assists in improving daily living skills, and speech therapy benefits communication and swallowing. Recovery time is different

for each person, depending on the severity of the stroke.

Upon discharge from the hospital, patients will receive a plan to continue their rehabilitation depending on their level of function. Options include an inpatient rehabilitation unit, an independent rehabilitation facility, or rehabilitation at home with visits to an outpatient facility as needed.

Individuals who have suffered a stroke are 25 percent more likely to experience a second one. Risk of disability and death increase with secondary strokes, which makes prevention a high priority. As part of their treatment plan, patients may be prescribed certain medications, such as blood thinners, drugs to control high blood pressure and cholesterol, and diabetes medication. Taking medications as prescribed is critical for post-stroke recovery and recurrent stroke prevention. Patients should consult with their physician before discontinuing any prescribed medications.

Making healthy lifestyle modifications after a stroke may prevent another stroke from occurring. Consuming foods that contain important nutrients, such as potassium, magnesium, folate and omega-3 fatty acids, can help to lower blood pressure and reduce cholesterol levels, which are two known factors that can increase the risk of a stroke. When making food choices, individuals should include a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, healthy sources of protein, and healthy oils.

Regular exercise improves brain and heart health by controlling blood sugar and lowering cholesterol and blood pressure. Physical activity also reduces depression and anxiety often associated with the physical and emotional changes that a person may experience after a stroke. Patients can discuss their exercise goals with their physician. It is best to start slowly and work up to the recommended amount of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity per week.

Tobacco cessation and limiting alcohol consumption also greatly reduces the risk of stroke. Alcohol can raise blood pressure. It is recommended that men should have no more than two drinks per day and only one for women. Cigarette smoking increases the chance of blood clot formation by thickening the blood and increasing the amount of plaque buildup in the arteries.

Self-care after a stroke is also important for an individual's mental and emotional well-being. Practicing mindfulness encourages people to be present in the moment and to focus on positive thoughts instead of negative ones. Maintaining social connections with friends, family, and other stroke survivors can help individuals to process and share their experience with others.

Stroke recovery takes time, and setbacks are a part of recovery. It is important for patients to remember to give themselves grace and be kind to themselves. Taking medications as prescribed, adopting a healthy lifestyle, and maintaining regular rehabilitation appointments will help patients to reach their recovery goal.

Stroke 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. Thrombolytic drugs, sometimes called “clot-busters,” often are effective in treating a stroke in progress, and may even reverse some of the neurological damage. However, thrombolytic drugs can have dangerous side effects. To lower the risk of complications, thrombolytic drugs can be given only to patients who have arrived at the Emergency Department (ED) quickly enough to have the drugs initiated within four and a half hours of their first symptoms of having a stroke.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH Goal
Eligible stroke patients who received timely thrombolytic drugs in the ED	100%	91.7%	96.9%	88%

2. Tenecteplase (TNK) and tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) – FDA-approved medications for acute ischemic strokes, are given through intravenous therapy (IV) in the arm, and work by dissolving clots and improving blood flow to the part of the brain being deprived. tPA can help reduce damage to the brain and the long-term effects of stroke. Minimal time to administration produces brain-saving benefits.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	LMH Goal
Median time from arrival to administration of tPA	68 Minutes	65 Minutes	57 Minutes	60 Minutes

3. Quick access to brain scan results is critical to physicians when treating a patient with a suspected stroke. Clot-buster medications can be administered, but only for a short period of time after the patient’s stroke symptoms begin, and the medications may not be given until a brain scan is completed. Quick completion of a brain scan upon the patient’s arrival can reduce the amount of time elapsed before these important medicines can be given, which then increases the patient’s chance for improved recovery from a stroke.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	National ⁽¹⁾
Stroke patients in the ED with brain scan results within 45 minutes	84%	84%	88%	69%

4. Ischemic stroke is a type of stroke that results in damage to the brain caused by an interruption or blockage in blood flow. It is the most common type of stroke. A stroke can result in death, so seeking medical attention quickly is vitally important. Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) measures the rate of in-hospital death of patients suffering an ischemic stroke. Prompt and comprehensive stroke treatment can reduce the risk of death and long-term complications. Lower percentages are preferable.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	National ⁽²⁾
Ischemic stroke – inpatient mortality rate	0.78%*	0.79%*	0.0%	2.40%

*In 2021 and 2022, one individual suffered a fatal ischemic stroke.

5. The “incidence rate” is a measure of how often ischemic strokes occur in our community, as compared to national averages. It is measured as the number of patients who are admitted with a stroke, out of every 1,000 admitted patients. Rates higher than average mean that more patients are admitted to the Hospital with strokes than the national average, while lower rates indicate fewer strokes occur in the community than the national average. Lower numbers are preferable.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	National ⁽²⁾
Incidence rate	20.51	21.43	16.06	20.10

6. Atrial fibrillation, also known as “AFib,” is a condition in which the heart does not pump blood effectively. Patients with AFib are five times more likely to suffer a stroke than the general population, and many patients may be unaware that they have it. Patients with AFib are at risk of having blood clots form inside their heart, which can travel to the brain, causing a stroke. This measure reflects the percentage of patients, diagnosed with stroke who had underlying AFib. Patients with AFib typically are treated with blood thinners to help reduce the likelihood of clots forming inside the heart. Lower percentages are preferable.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	National ⁽²⁾
Ischemic stroke – percentage with AFib	11.72%	14.96%	14.29%	18.45%

7. In some cases, after the immediate crisis is stabilized and the patient no longer requires hospital care, ongoing care may be required depending on the needs of the patient. Patients may be transferred to post-hospital care settings such as inpatient rehabilitation, skilled nursing facilities, or home health agencies. The LMH goal is for the patient to return to baseline functioning and be discharged directly home from the Hospital.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	National ⁽²⁾
Ischemic stroke – percent discharged home	53.13%	58.27%	50.00%	55.90%

8. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) office-based physicians use evidence-based measures in order to provide excellent, quality care to patients. The American Stroke Association and American Heart Association recommend the use of blood-thinning medication in order to reduce the risk of blood clots in patients with coronary artery disease.

	LMHP 2021	LMHP 2022	LMHP 2023	National ⁽³⁾	LMHP Goal
% LMHP coronary artery disease patients seen receiving blood-thinning medication	96%	88%	88%	>80%	>85%

Data Footnotes: (1) Comparative data from www.medicare.gov/care-compare. (2) Comparative data from the Midas Comparative Database. (3) American Heart Association/American Stroke Association/National Committee for Quality Assurance Heart/Stroke Recognition Program.



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

TIA vs. Stroke: What is the Difference?

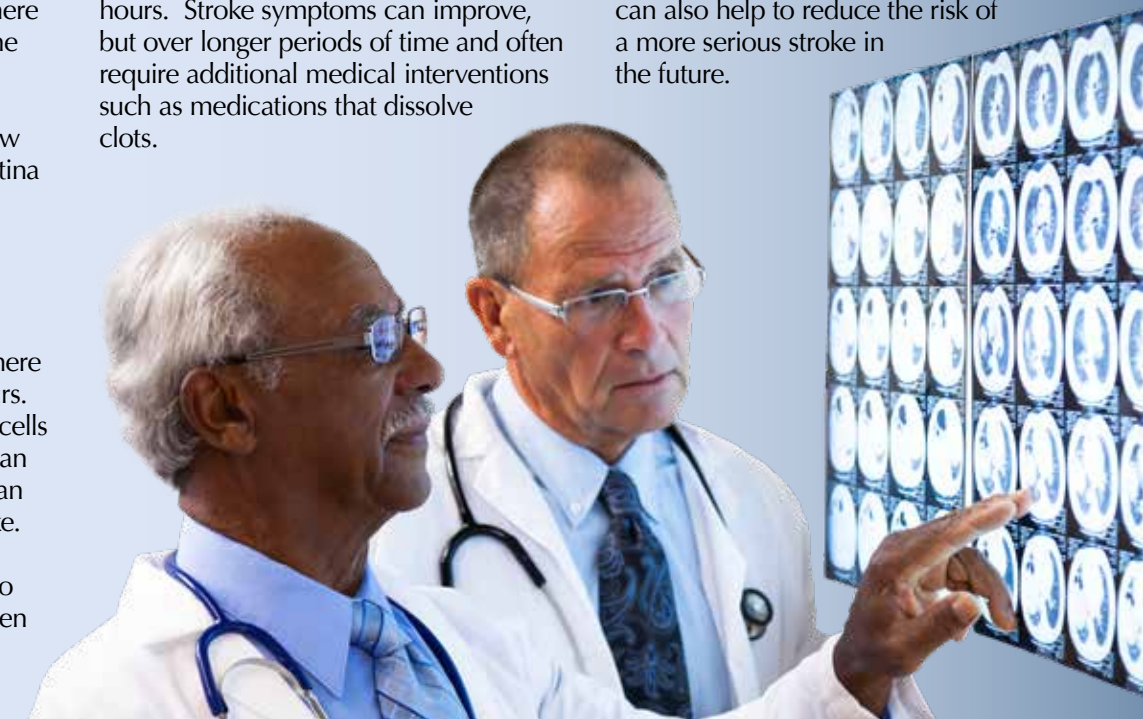
A transient ischemic attack (TIA) is commonly referred to as a mini stroke. However, the term “mini stroke” is not an accurate description of the condition. TIA is still considered a serious medical emergency. While the symptoms of a TIA are similar to those of a stroke, there are significant differences between the two.

A TIA is a brief blockage of blood flow to part of the brain, spinal cord, or retina that can cause stroke-like symptoms including numbness or weakness on one side of the body, dizziness or loss of balance, trouble speaking or understanding speech, and vision problems. Symptoms can last anywhere from just a few minutes up to 24 hours. TIA does not cause damage to brain cells or permanent disability. TIA is often an early warning sign that a person has an increased risk of experiencing a stroke.

A stroke occurs when blood supply to an area of the brain is blocked or when

a blood vessel in the brain ruptures. The brain cells are deprived of oxygen and then begin to die. Stroke can cause lasting brain damage, long-term disability, or even death. Symptoms of a stroke are persistent for greater than 24 hours. Stroke symptoms can improve, but over longer periods of time and often require additional medical interventions such as medications that dissolve clots.

It is important to seek immediate medical attention if someone is experiencing symptoms of a TIA or stroke, as symptoms can be the same. Early assessment allows physicians to diagnose the cause and prescribe treatment, which can also help to reduce the risk of a more serious stroke in the future.



Patient Story – Josh James

In his lifetime, Josh James had not experienced a serious illness. He grew up in the Licking County area where he graduated from Granville High School and was content with his health. Even when he began to feel pain on the right side of his lower abdomen, Josh believed the pain would subside and he would recover quickly. He did not feel unwell; however, the pain grew worse and Josh decided he could no longer ignore the symptoms. Josh's grandmother accompanied him to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department (ED) for treatment.

"From the very first contact, the nurses and staff were very kind. I was directed quickly to a triage room where the nurse informed me and my grandmother that I might be septic," remembered Josh. "Working in registration at a different hospital, I understood what it meant to be septic, but my grandmother was frightened. Together with the staff, we were able to explain what was happening."

Sepsis is a serious, potentially life-threatening condition in which the body responds improperly to an infection. Infections may be caused by bacteria, parasites, fungi, or viruses that enter the body. During sepsis, the immune system, which defends the body from diseases, begins attacking healthy tissue which in-turn triggers inflammation that can lead to organ damage. At the same time, an abnormal chain reaction in the blood clotting system may cause blood clots to form in the blood vessels reducing blood flow to the various organs and can also cause significant damage to the organs or even failure. Just as a stroke or heart attack, sepsis is a medical emergency that requires rapid diagnosis and treatment. Symptoms include a temperature higher or lower than normal, shivering, confusion,

sleepiness, pain, discomfort, or shortness of breath.

After the triage process, Josh was taken to the Licking Memorial Radiology Department for a computerized tomography (CT), a type of imaging that uses X-ray techniques to create detailed images of the body. A computer then creates cross-sectional images, also called slices, of the bones, blood vessels, and soft tissues inside the body. The scans are used to diagnose disease or injury.

With the information gathered from the CT scan, it was determined that Josh was suffering from appendicitis, an infection in the appendix. The appendix is a thin tube that is joined to the large intestine in the lower right part of the abdomen. As a young child, the appendix functions as part of the immune system; however, as a person ages, the appendix is no longer utilized. Appendicitis occurs when the appendix becomes blocked and may be caused by various infections such as a virus, bacteria, or parasites, in the digestive tract.

Once infected, the appendix may become sore and swollen, and the blood supply to the area may stop, causing more swelling and soreness. Without enough blood flow, the appendix begins to die. The appendix can burst or develop holes or tears in the walls, which allow stool, mucus, and infection to leak through and enter the abdomen. The result can lead to more serious infections including sepsis. Symptoms may include dull pain centered around the navel, which progresses to a sharp pain in the lower right side of the abdomen, fever, vomiting, or loss of appetite.

To treat his appendicitis, Josh required immediate surgery to remove the infected appendix. Brent M. Savage, M.D., of Licking Memorial Surgical

Services, met with Josh and his grandmother to explain the procedure. If the appendix has burst or the infection has spread, the surgeon may have to remove the organ using an open procedure which means creating an incision approximately four inches long to remove the organ. In most cases, however, laparoscopic or robot-assisted surgery may be performed which is much less invasive. After creating several small incisions, a long, thin tube called a laparoscope is inserted into one of the incisions. With a small video camera and surgical tools, the surgeon performs the procedure while watching a monitor to view the inside of the abdomen and guide the tools. The appendix is removed through one of the small incisions.

"Dr. Savage quickly became my favorite physician," Josh shared. "He was very helpful as we talked through the process, and he made me very comfortable. He ensured both me and my grandmother completely understood the procedure." After spending two days recovering, Josh was released and advised to follow-up with his primary care physician.

"I was impressed with everyone I came into contact with at LMH," Josh said. "All of the nursing staff were amazing. During my stay, they were quick to assist when needed, especially with my pain control. When I felt uncomfortable, I was able to contact them, and they responded with kindness and great care. I would highly recommend LMH to anyone who is in need of care."

Since his recovery, Josh has returned to work and participating in the activities that he enjoys. He has a three-year old daughter whom he adores, and is happy to be able to spend time with her. Josh does suggest that anyone who experiences pain or other symptoms should seek care immediately.

Molecular Testing to Identify Bacterial Infections

Infections caused by bacteria have a major impact on public health, and the rapid spread of multidrug-resistant bacteria poses a serious threat to public health worldwide. Traditional microbial culture methods can take several days, making diagnoses difficult and often leads to an overuse of broad-spectrum antibiotics to combat the illness. Molecular testing for bacterial infections can help clinicians rapidly identify serious bacterial infections in patients. This method of testing can also detect antibiotic-resistant genes, which leads to quicker, more targeted treatment.

When a person visits a physician office, urgent care, or emergency department with an infection, the physician may order a bacteria culture to identify organisms causing the illness. A sample of tissue, blood, or other body fluids may be collected at the site of the suspected infection and sent to the laboratory for testing. With microbial culture testing, enough bacteria must grow to test the sample for infection. Results can take several days or weeks, as some types of bacteria grow slowly. Once there are enough bacteria, the sample is examined using biochemical and other techniques to identify the causative pathogen.

Molecular diagnostic testing is much quicker and produces more sensitive results than microbial culturing. A molecular test analyzes a patient's sample for deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) or ribonucleic acid (RNA) coming from microorganisms. DNA is located in the nucleus of every human and bacterial cell and is comprised of long strands of molecules that contain all of a person's genetic information. RNA is a single strand of genetic material found outside the nucleus that tells the functional structures in the cell what to do.

A polymerase chain reaction (PCR) is a specific type of molecular testing technique that amplifies and detects specific DNA and RNA sequences from a wide range of pathogens. Molecular probes are used to identify and measure amplified DNA and RNA. The probes are designed to target specific gene sequences that are unique to each pathogen, ensuring greater accuracy in identifying specific microorganisms. Results are available within a few hours, making them useful in emergencies and for rapidly diagnosing contagious diseases.

Licking Memorial Hospital Laboratory uses molecular testing instruments to quickly identify infectious diseases. The Cepheid GeneXpert is a closed-system PCR instrument that allows for testing a specific infectious disease, such as COVID-19 or Group B Streptococcus. The BioFire FilmArray is a multiplex PCR system that can detect and identify several infections in a single sample simultaneously. Such panels include:

- Respiratory Panel – can identify numerous viruses and bacteria that cause respiratory illness, including influenza, COVID-19, and RSV.

- Gastrointestinal Panel – can identify a wide range of viruses, bacteria, and parasites responsible for gastrointestinal problems.
- Meningitis/Encephalitis Panel – identifies pathogens that cause infections of the central nervous system.
- Blood culture panels – identifies infections in the blood stream, such as sepsis.

Molecular testing offers faster, more accurate diagnoses, which aids in timely treatment decisions, especially in an emergency setting. This leads to improved patient outcomes, shorter hospital stays, and lower healthcare costs due to targeted therapies and reduced complications. Molecular testing is also beneficial in rapidly identifying antibiotic resistance profiles for specific pathogens, which helps to promote antibiotic stewardship and reduce the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.



Emergency 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. During 2023, there were 50,365 visits to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Emergency Department (ED).

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
Median length of stay in the ED for all patients*	218 min.**	190 min.	187 min.	Less than 188 min.
Median length of time from arrival until seen by a physician*	27 min.**	23 min.	18 min.	Less than 28 min.
Median length of stay in the ED for patients discharged home*	204 min.**	182 min.	189 min.	211 min.⁽¹⁾
Median length of time from the ED physician's decision to admit a patient until the patient arrives in their Hospital room	75 min.	85 min.	73 min.	135 min.⁽¹⁾
Percentage of patients who are in the ED for more than 6 hours	8.9%**	6.4%	6.3%	8.0%⁽²⁾

**LMH data represented on this table reflect nearly 100 percent of all ED visits, while goals reference Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services hospital comparative data, which use a small sampling of all U.S. emergency department patients.*

***In 2021, admittance times were affected by an increase in patient visits and the need to test patients for COVID-19.*

2. LMH operates three Urgent Care facilities: Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Pataskala, Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Granville, and Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Downtown Newark. Patients are encouraged to visit Urgent Care rather than the ED when they have illnesses and injuries that are not life-threatening, but need immediate attention, such as ear infections, minor fractures, and minor animal bites. Urgent Care visits usually require less time and offer lower costs than visits to the ED. During 2023, there were 17,766 visits to Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Granville, 9,306 visits to Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Pataskala, and 21,879 visits to Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Downtown Newark.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
Urgent Care – Downtown Newark: median length of stay	68 min.*	57 min.	47 min.	Less than 60 min.
Urgent Care – Granville: median length of stay	46 min.*	42 min.	31 min.	Less than 60 min.
Urgent Care – Pataskala: median length of stay	52 min.*	46 min.	38 min.	Less than 60 min.

**In 2021, length of stay times were affected by an increase in patient visits and the need to test patients for COVID-19.*

3. Emergency angioplasty restores blood flow in a blocked heart artery by inserting a catheter with a balloon into the artery to re-open the vessel. The procedure has been proven to save lives during a heart attack and is most effective when performed within 90 minutes of the patient's arrival to the ED to minimize irreversible damage from the heart attack.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
Median time to opened artery	60 min.	53 min.	60 min.	90 min.
Percentage of patients with arteries opened within 90 minutes	99%	100%	98%	96%
Median time from arrival to completion of EKG	3 min.	2 min.	4 min.	National⁽¹⁾ 7 min.

4. Patients who are seen in the ED and return home can sometimes develop further problems that warrant a return to the Hospital. Returning to the ED within 24 hours may indicate a potential problem with initial diagnosis and treatment of a patient's condition. For this reason, LMH measures the rate of unplanned returns to the ED. LMH sets an aggressively stringent goal for this, as listed below.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
ED patients who return to the ED within 24 hours of discharge	0.9%	1.2%	1.1%	Less than 2%

5. A high rate of patients who return to the Hospital within 72 hours after an ED visit and are admitted can possibly signal a problem with patient care. These cases are very heavily reviewed and scrutinized, and LMH sets an aggressively stringent goal for this indicator, as listed below.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
Patients admitted to the Hospital within 72 hours of ED visit	0.4%	0.8%	0.7%	Less than 1%

6. For personal reasons, some patients may elect to leave the ED prior to completing any recommended treatment. Doing so can place the patient at serious health risk. As a measure of ensuring patient safety, LMH measures the percentage of patients who elect to leave the ED prior to completing their treatment.

	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH 2023	Goal
ED patients who leave before treatment is complete	2.2%	1.4%	1.7%	Less than 3%

Data Footnotes: (1) Hospitalcompare.hhs.gov national benchmarks. (2) Comparative data from the Midas Comparative Database. *LMH data represented on this table reflects nearly 100% of all ED visits, while goals reference CMS hospital comparative data, which uses a small sampling of all U.S. emergency department patients.

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

Advance Care Planning

Advance directives are legal documents that convey a patient's healthcare wishes in the event that they are unable to communicate their preferences. Having an advance directive helps to reduce the burden on families, especially during an emergency situation, and also prevents costly interventions and tests that the patient would not want performed, saving costs for both the family and healthcare facility.

An advance directive is typically comprised of a living will and a durable power of attorney for healthcare. A living will outlines an individual's preferences for medical treatments

if they become terminally ill or permanently unconscious. A durable power of attorney for healthcare designates a trusted person to make medical decisions on an individual's behalf if they are incapacitated.

State-specific forms can be found online or through a healthcare provider or attorney. It is not necessary to consult a lawyer to create an advance directive; however, it may be beneficial if a person has complex medical wishes or a large estate. Individuals can complete the forms themselves by following the state guidelines. Documents must also be

signed and witnessed according to state requirements.

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) offers advance care planning resources and counseling. Providers are available to meet with individuals and their families to discuss issues and questions related to advance care planning. To schedule a free consultation, contact Dave Mason, Director of Pastoral Care, at (220) 564-7729.



Licking Memorial Health Foundation Recognizes New Donors

Contributions to Licking Memorial Health Foundation (LMHF) assist Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) in providing excellent, quality healthcare for the community with state-of-the-art technologies and facilities. Several donors recently were recognized for pledging their financial support.

Benefactor Level

Benefactors are special friends of Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS). Comprised of individuals, businesses and organizations, Benefactors support the LMHS mission to improve the health of the community with a commitment of \$50,000 or more.

Brian and Janine Mortellaro

LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese and LMH Board Chair Jacqueline Parrill, Ed.D., presented Brian and Janine Mortellaro with a glass recognition piece in recognition of their Benefactor Level commitment. Brian is the Owner and Operator of 15 McDonald's in Licking, Knox, and Guernsey Counties, and Janine serves as the Community Relations and Donations Director for Mortellaro McDonald's.

Brian is a graduate of Mount Vernon High School and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from John Carroll University in Northeast Ohio. He is currently a member of the Central Ohio Ronald McDonald House Board, the Licking County Foundation Finance

Committee, and Newark/Heath Rotary. He is also a Board member for John Carroll University. Brian enjoys running half marathons and putting on extensive Christmas light displays.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Janine received her Bachelor of Arts degree in education from John Carroll University. She is actively involved in the Licking County Foundation, serving on the Grant Partnership and Scholarship Review Committees. Janine enjoys cooking and trying new recipes with the couple's three daughters, Emma, Abby,

and Sarah. Brian and Janine reside in Granville.



The William Schaffner Society

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

Mike and Pat Massaro

Mike and Pat Massaro recently accepted a glass recognition piece from President & CEO Rob Montagnese and LMHS Board Chair Nancy Neely for their financial support and commitment to join the William Schaffner Society. Mike currently serves as Vice Chair for the LMHS Board of Directors.

Mike is retired from Tectum Inc., where he served as President. He graduated from Newark Catholic High School and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business

Administration from Xavier University. He served in the 2291st U.S. Army Hospital Unit of the U.S. Army Reserves from 1970 to 1976. Mike is a past Board Chair of the Licking County Family YMCA Board of Directors. He is also a past Board Chair for the Licking County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Mike served as a member of the Licking County Foundation Grant Review Committee, and Past President and current member of the Newark Rotary Club. Additionally, he is the Past President of Rinascimento Lodge Sons and Daughters of Italy in America. Mike and Pat live in Newark and have three children, Andrea, Michael, and Genna, and seven grandchildren.



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

The John Alford Fellowship

The John Alford Fellowship honors the commitment and efforts of longtime supporter John Alford, the recipient of Licking Memorial Hospital's first Lifetime Achievement award and the namesake for the 2007 John & Mary Alford Pavilion, providing the local community with a new Emergency Department and Surgery Department in the 100,000-square-foot addition to Licking Memorial Hospital. Individuals donating to the John Alford Fellowship support his efforts to ensure local, quality healthcare by contributing \$25,000 or more over a period of 10 years.

The Family of Jim & Julie Cooper

On behalf of The Family of Jim & Julie Cooper, Jim Cooper accepted a glass recognition piece from LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese and Vice President Development & Public Relations Veronica Patton in appreciation for the family's 30 years of generosity and support of LMHS. The pledge commitment date, June 13, 2024, was chosen in honor of Jim's father who would have celebrated his 100th birthday on this day. Jim currently serves as Vice Chair for the LMH Board of Directors.

A lifelong resident of Licking County, Jim is an attorney and partner with Morrow, Gordon & Byrd, Ltd., in Newark. Jim earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame and received his Law Degree from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. His professional memberships include the Ohio State Bar Association and the Licking County Bar Association. He served four and half years of active duty with the United States Navy and another 23 years in the United States Navy Reserves. Jim is a member and past president of the Newark Rotary

Club and has served in many other community endeavors.



LMHS Honored as Top Contributor in Operation Feed Campaign

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) raised \$30,000 to benefit the Food Pantry Network (FPN) of Licking County. In May, LMHS was presented the Grand Gourmet Award at Operation Feed's annual award ceremony and celebration at Marne United Methodist Church. The award recognized LMHS as the top overall campaign contributor in Licking County. FPN Funds Development Director, Alyssa Shepherd, and FPN Board Chair, Mike Birkmeyer, presented a plaque to Holly Slaughter, Vice President Human Resources & Support Services, Becky Thomas, Director of Human Resources, and Kalani Friend, Human Resources Specialist. The Food Pantry's Operation Feed campaign provides LMHS and other area employers, churches, and schools with the opportunity to help community members in the Licking County area. LMHS employees have been participating in the campaign for more than 25 years.



Donors

Undesignated contributions to Licking Memorial Health Foundation benefit new technology at Licking Memorial Hospital. This section highlights our donors and their very generous gifts, which were received recently.

Capital Improvement Fund

TWIGS 6
TWIGS 8

Community Cornerstone Club

Brandon and Ellie Akey
Jerry L. Ashcraft
Louie Ashcraft
Ronald and Patricia Babcock
Kay Barton
John and Dorothy Brown
Stanley Carpenter
Centratech Service, Incorporated
Jeff and Jane Cox
Mr. and Mrs. Lee Crader
Nancy Criswell
Roger and Mary Ann Draa
William Fielding
First Impressions Concrete & Design
John and Elaine Gard
Tracy and Arlene Gentry
E. Elliott and Barbara Gerber
Brandon Hess
Tim and Ann Hickman
Marsha and Jerry Hurt
Janet R. Ignatius
Carmen and Jeffery James
Donald and Judy Jones
The Reverend John M. Kauffman
Steve and Michele Layman
Tom and Nancy LeBlanc
Al and Sandra Lyons
Bill and Barbara Mann
Mr. and Mrs. John Mazzone
Thelma McCurdy
Tom and Eileen McNemar
Judith Mitchell
Jim Mitchen
Chris and Tom Montis
Charles Moore
Tom and Ann Mullady
Linda and Pete Myer
Charles and Joy Ott
Wanda Patterson
Mrs. Cheryl K. Rose
Nawar Saieg, M.D.
Larry and Penny Sargent
Scott and Jody Shipley
Dave and Tickie Shull
Glenn and Annette Smith
Hank Speaks
Doris Ann Spriggs
Dr. and Mrs. Sharad Thakkar
Karen A. Thissen
Trevor and Becky Thomas
Chuck and Jane Walker
Jim and Pattie Weisent
Josh and Robin Whittington
Carol E. Wollenburg
In Memory of Beth Yocum – Harry Yocum
Craig Young

Cradle Roll

In honor of: Boone Morgan Alexander
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Jack Richard Arthurs
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Linden Robert Birchard
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Eleanor Jean Burkholder
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Brynlee Anne Carr
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Ruth Christine Dawson
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Aaliyah Rose Dejesus
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Hudson Scott Delcecato
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Liam Garza
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Augustus Allen Lynd
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Freyja Ann Marcum
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Laythe Allen McClain
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Tobias Haven Meerschaert
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Hallie Kay Nininger
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Norah Abigal Pennington
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Brantley Davis Robinson
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Olivia Grey Smith
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Avalyn Rose Spring
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Wrenlee Reese Vernon
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Elliana Roma Weese
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Archer James Wright
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In honor of: Elaine Zander
By: Licking Memorial Hospital

Doctor's Day

In honor of: Emilia N.U. Anigbo, M.D.
By: Tom and Ann Mullady
In honor of: Roy R. Brown, Jr., M.D.
By: Tom and Ann Mullady
In honor of: Craig B. Cairns, M.D., M.P.H.
By: Tom and Ann Mullady
In honor of: Lacie A. Emerine, APRN-CNP
By: Tom and Ann Mullady

In honor of: David W. Koontz, D.O.
By: Ms. Julie Ketner Barrett
In honor of: Mark S. Law, M.D.
By: Tom and Ann Mullady
In honor of: Robert W. Mueller, M.D.
By: Tom and Ann Mullady
In honor of: D'Anna N. Mullins, M.D.
By: Tom and Ann Mullady
In honor of: Suba Pathmanathan, M.D.
By: Tom and Ann Mullady
In honor of: Hassan Rajjoub, M.D.
By: Tom and Ann Mullady
Barbara Quackenbush
In honor of: Kari M. Vance, APRN-CNP
By: Tom and Ann Mullady

General

Anonymous
Miss Clarissa Ann Howard (D)
The Twentieth Century Club

Grants

Licking County Foundation

Honorary

In honor of: The Meeraj Mehta Family
By: Southgate Corporation
In honor of: The Stefan Schurter Family
By: Southgate Corporation

John Alford Fellowship

The Family of Jim & Julie Cooper
Shannon Italiano

Memorial

In memory of: Lori Ann Arnold
By: Licking Memorial Hospital
In memory of: Bill Henry
By: Sue Henry-Mounts
In memory of: George Marovich
By: Christ's Church in Bowling Green
In memory of: Lew Mounts
By: Sue Henry-Mounts
In memory of: Monti Rajjoub
By: Licking Memorial Hospital Medical Staff

Paving Our Future

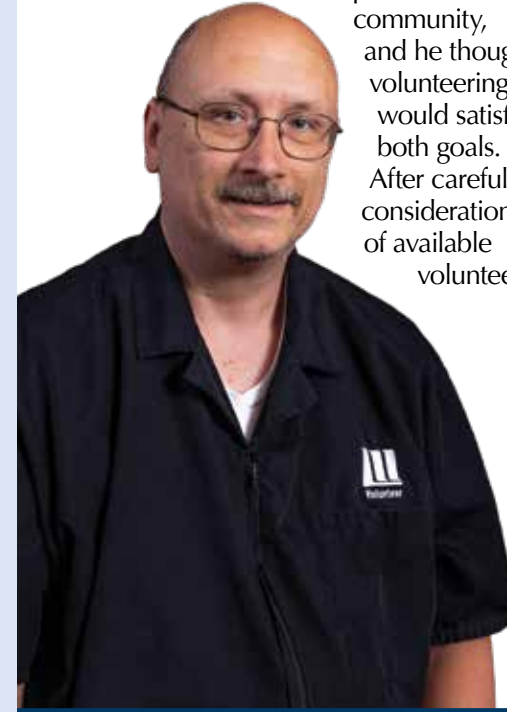
Ms. Joyce Corder
Mandy Dougherty
Licking Memorial Executive Administration
Barbara Quackenbush

William Schaffner Society

Paula D. Fry
In Loving Memory of Jerry Hayes

Volunteer Spotlight – Corey Peck

In 2022, Corey Peck endeavored to meet new people and make a positive impact on the community, and he thought volunteering would satisfy both goals. After careful consideration of available volunteer



opportunities, Corey decided that Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) was the perfect fit.

“When I thought about volunteering, the Hospital was one of the first places that came to mind,” said Corey. “As a patient, I have always had a great experience.” As a volunteer, he also reports having great experiences and appreciates the friendships that he has developed with the staff and other volunteers. “I really enjoy all the people that I work with at LMH,” said Corey.

Twice a week, Corey volunteers as messenger, delivering flowers, cards, and other items as needed. He also assists the Volunteer Department with special projects. More recently, he has offered his services to the new Food Pantry Network (FPN) Market located

at 131 McMillen Drive in Newark. A joint venture between Licking Memorial Health Systems and the Food Pantry Network of Licking County, the FPN Market provides a grocery-style shopping experience where eligible residents can shop independently for their food each week.

Corey is a lifelong resident of Johnstown and an alumni of The Ohio State University (OSU). As an alumni, he dedicates time to watch and cheer for OSU sports teams. This summer, he also enjoyed viewing the Olympics. When not watching sports, he loves spending time with his great nephew, Miles.

Walk with a Doc

In May, Licking Memorial Health Systems hosted a Walk with a Doc event at the Buckeye Lake Bike Path. Mohammad Islam, M.D., of Licking Memorial Pulmonology, led a discussion about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). During the June event at the Johnstown Bike Path, James DeSapri, D.O., of Licking Memorial Family Practice – Tamarack, shared information about eczema. The July event was held at William V. Karr Park in Pataskala, and Michelle Monroe, D.O., of Licking Memorial Outpatient Psychiatric Services, discussed bipolar disorder.

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



LMHS Hosts Family Movie Night

On June 7, families joined Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) at Licking Heights High School for an evening of active play on a variety of inflatable fun areas, as well as healthy snacks and beverages. Afterward, attendees enjoyed a viewing of the Disney animated film, *Aladdin*, on a 30 foot-high inflatable screen.

“The goal of Family Movie Night is to promote the health benefits of our Active•Fit Program and family-oriented activities, so we were excited for families to enjoy some community fun in addition to an outdoor movie with others,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese.

The Active•Fit Youth Wellness Program is a valuable community resource for youth, featuring guidelines designed to prioritize exercise and youth health. LMHS utilizes its resources to help Licking County children learn about their health, make and accomplish goals, provide activities for fun exercise, and socialize with those in their age range.

Since its creation in 2012, the Active•Fit program has registered more than 12,000 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 be active and learn about their health.

Period 3 for 2023-2024 began on May 1 and ended on August 31. Period 1 for 2024-2025 began on September 1 and runs through December 31. For more information, or to register for the Active•Fit Youth Wellness Program at any time throughout the year, please visit ActiveFit.org.



LMHS Hosts Active•Fit & Active•Senior Events

Approximately 100 Licking County youth, ages 6 to 12, and seniors, ages 60 and older, attended the Active•Fit and Active•Senior Bowling event on June 12. The event took place at Park Lanes Bowling Center in Heath and included free bowling for a two-hour period. Attendees enjoyed healthy snacks and beverages and opportunities to win prizes.

Participation in the event counted toward the Active•Fit Program Period 3 goals. The current period began May 1. All Program participants had an opportunity to choose and complete new wellness goals by August 31 to qualify for the next incentive prize drawing. Since 2012, the Active•Fit Program has registered more than 12,000 participants who select health-related goals and track their progress on the Active•Fit website. For more information or to register for the Active•Fit Youth Wellness Program, please visit ActiveFit.org.

Licking Memorial Health Systems hosted the Active•Senior Celebration, on June 19, for seniors, ages 60 years and up. Nearly 100 participants

attended the event at the Bryn Du Mansion Field House, and enjoyed a delicious meal featuring grilled chicken kabobs, roast beef, and roasted teriyaki shrimp. The attendees also participated in fun activities including Plinko, Hit the Bucket, Bowl and Roll, and Spin the Wheel. Those who earned points through the Active•Senior Program received raffle tickets to participate in a pick-a-prize drawing with a plethora of items such as gift cards to local businesses, an iPad Mini, a Fitbit, and an Apple Watch. President & CEO Rob Montagnese served as the emcee for the evening.

The Active•Senior program was designed with activities which have been reviewed and approved by medical staff, physical therapists, and dietitians to ensure a well-balanced program. However, individuals should discuss their personal exercise and nutrition goals with their physician. The 2024-2025 program began May 1, 2024, and continues through April 30, 2025. For more information or to

register for the Active•Senior Program, please visit LMHSActiveSenior.org or call LMHS Public Relations at (220) 564-1560.



Active•Fit Period 2 Prize Winners

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) recently recognized the Active•Fit prize winners from Period 2. Participants in the Youth Wellness Program who completed their fitness goals between January 1 and April 30 were entered into a special drawing. Winners received their prizes from LMHS as special recognition for their achievements.

Meta Quest 2 Virtual Reality Headset & Fitness Software

Aavin Tamang
Jamie Trick
Melody Walker

Athletic Shoes

Ava Moore
Aricia Thapa
Holden Zarzabal

\$100 Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Card

Zachary Armand
Nariah Armour
Athena Bishard
Brett Burlingame
Lydia McFarland
Nora Miltimore
Clayton Payne
Griffin Smith
Margot Smith
Kimberlynn Young

Bicycle & Helmet

Lydia Dunwoody
Ella Summers
Souleymane Sy

iPad & Fitness Software

Henley Bodie
Aric Tamang
Vince Trovato

\$50 Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Card

Max Atwell
Lucy Conley
Javon Pearson
Kylie Pepper
Leo Peruscini
Lola Poindexter
Anuj Subedi
Lisa Tamang
Noelle Vanscoy
Liam Yost

The Active•Fit Program has registered over 12,800 participants who select health-related goals and track their progress at ActiveFit.org. There are exciting Active•Fit events and opportunities for children to get active and learn about their health during the year. Period 3 for 2023-2024 began May 1 and ended on August 31. Period 1 for 2024-2025 begins on September 1 and runs through December 31. For more information, or to register for the Active•Fit Youth Wellness Program at any time throughout the year, please visit ActiveFit.org.

2024 MVPs

Licking Memorial Health Systems' (LMHS) 2024 MVPs were chosen for their consistent demonstration of the LMHS CARE values: compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence.



Abhay Anand, M.D.

Pain Management

Dr. Anand joined LMHS in 2009. He received his medical degree from Swami Ramanand Teerth Rural Government Medical College in Ambajogai, Maharashtra, India. He completed a residency in transitional medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and a residency in anesthesiology at Medical College of Wisconsin Affiliated Hospitals, Inc. (MCWAH) in Milwaukee. He also completed a fellowship in pain management at MCWAH. Dr. Anand is board certified in anesthesiology and pain management.



Yulia Artemenko

Emergency Department

Yulia was born in Russia where she completed high school and received a bachelor's degree in public relations. After moving to Ohio, she earned an Associate of Science in Nursing degree from COTC and is now working on her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at Chamberlain University. She is a member of the Nurse Practice Council. Yulia lives in Thornville with her significant other, Jay, and her daughter, Alyssa. She enjoys boating, riding jet skis and motorcycles, and spending time with family and friends.



Perry Ashcraft

Endoscopy and Gastrointestinal Laboratory

Perry is a lifelong resident of Licking County and graduated from Licking Valley High School. He joined LMHS in 2020 and is currently a certified endoscopy reprocessing technician. Perry and his husband, Michael, live in Newark with their three dogs, Bella, Mallee, and Zarin. He enjoys traveling, music, working out, and spending time with family.



Kacie Bell, R.T. (R)(M)(CT)

Radiology

Kacie began her career with LMHS in 2001, and is currently an imaging specialist in the Mammography Department. She is a graduate of Bishop Rosecrans High School in Zanesville, Ohio, and earned an associate's degree from Central Ohio Technical College (COTC) in 2002. She currently lives in Frazeyburg, Ohio, with her husband, Dave, and their son, Kohwen. Kacie enjoys taking family vacations to Walt Disney World and going on cruises.



Shanti Bhandari

Patient Care Assistant

Shanti joined LMHS in 2021. He is the lead patient care assistant (PCA) on 4-West, providing personal care to patients and training new PCAs on his unit. He plans to expand his healthcare career in the future. Shanti and his wife, Leela, live in Pataskala with his two children, Lisa and Suvan. He enjoys playing chess, soccer, and traveling with his family. His favorite sports team is the Baltimore Ravens.



Kim Bice

Laboratory

In 2011, Kim began her career in Critical Care. Currently, she serves as an administrative assistant for the Laboratory and Oncology Departments. She holds an Associate of Applied Science degree from Zane State College and is currently enrolled in the University of Cincinnati's Cancer Registry Management program. Kim has four children and ten grandchildren. In her spare time, she enjoys sports, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.



Londa Braunbeck

Health Information

Londa received an associate's degree from COTC and began her career at LMHS in 1992 at Shepherd Hill where she worked as an administrative secretary for the counseling department. She served as Lead Transcriptionist for LMH for 14 years and has been the Document Controller for Health Information since 2008. Londa enjoys walks with her husband, Earl, and spending time with her son, Joe, his wife, Chelsea, and granddaughter, Evelyn. She enjoys being a grandmother, as well as gardening and cooking.



Julie Brooks, P.T.A.

Physical Therapy

Julie joined LMHS in September 2015 as a Physical Therapy Assistant. She earned a Sports and Fitness Management degree from Columbus State Community College and a Physical Therapy Assistant degree from Rhodes State College (formerly Lima Technical College). Julie heads the Sportsmetrics Program at LMH. Julie resides in Newark with her husband, Clayton, and they have two adult children, Courtney and Chance.



Lindsay Carbaugh, R.M.A.

Endocrinology

Lindsay joined LMHS in April 2006 as a physician center clerk and currently serves as a Registered Medical Assistant (RMA). A Licking County resident and Newark High School graduate, Lindsay earned her RMA certification from Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-TEC). Lindsay has been married to her husband, Brandon, for 21 years, and they share three children, Connor, Maggie, and Luke.



Kelly Frazer

Hospital Billing

Kelly has served as a Patient Account Representative for LMHS since 2015. Originally from Columbus, she has lived in Granville for over eight years with her husband, Mike. They have two adult children, Michelle and Chaz. In her spare time, Kelly enjoys taking walks, playing card games, and spending time with her family.



Ashley Frick, B.S.N.

Intensive Care

Ashley joined LMH in 2017 as staff nurse on 4-west. Currently, she serves patients in the Intensive Care Unit. Ashley received a Bachelor of Science in Social Work degree and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from The Ohio State University. In 2022, she was nominated for the Lifeline of Ohio Nurse of the Year award for demonstrating extraordinary patient care for several of the Lifeline of Ohio cases at LMH including organizing the honor walk for each patient. Ashley lives in Newark with her husband, Andy, and their three children – Charlotte, Oliver, and Josephine.



Jenny Grower

Fiscal Services

Jenny is a lifelong resident of Licking County and graduated from Heath High School. After earning a bachelor's degree from the University of Mount Union (formerly Mount Union College), she joined LMHS in 1991. Currently, Jenny prepares the annual budgets, compiles statistics, and prepares annual cost reports along with monthly financial reports. She loves pickleball and can be found on the pickleball courts most evenings.



Taylor Hayward

Concierge Services

Taylor is the Concierge Coordinator and was hired in 2023. She is a lifelong resident of Licking County and graduated from Johnstown High School. Currently she lives in Buckeye Lake. In her spare time, Taylor enjoys renovating her home, golfing, thrift store shopping, and taking rides in her golf cart around Buckeye Lake with her fiancé, Robert, and their dog, Bailey.



Tim Hunt, R.N., B.S.N.

Interventional Cardiology

Tim began his career at LMHS in 2012 and joined the Interventional Cardiology Department in 2020. Tim earned his Associate in Nursing degree in 2009 and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Ohio University in 2010. He enjoys home improvement, gardening, boating, fishing, hunting, woodworking, and spending time with family. Tim and his wife, Ashley, live in Newark with their three children, Adaline, Amelia, and Isla.



Brenda Jacobs, R.N., B.S.N.

Case Management

Brenda began her career at LMHS in 2017. She received her Associate in Nursing Degree from COTC in 2014 and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree from Muskingum University in 2020. As a Case Management nurse, Brenda provides support and resources to patients and their families. She enjoys reading, listening to music, and spending time with her daughter, Cadence, and her fiancé, Justin.



Christina Kasper, R.N.

Outpatient Chemical Dependency

Christina Kasper, R.N., originally joined LMHS in 2011 in Maternal Child and Labor & Delivery. She returned to LMHS in December 2022 when she began her current position at Shepherd Hill. A Newark resident, Christina earned an Associates Degree in Nursing from Central Ohio Technical College (COTC) in 2010. Christina, and her husband, Derek, share two children, Emma and William.



Cynthia Kearse, D.O.

Licking Memorial Women's Health

Dr. Kearse joined Licking Memorial Women's Health in September 2019. She earned her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree at Touro University Nevada in Henderson, Nevada, and completed an obstetrics and gynecology residency at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Kearse is currently the Chair of the LMHS Obstetrics and Gynecology Department. Dr. Kearse enjoys cooking, gardening, and spending time with her husband, Mike, and their two children, Addie and Lincoln.



Elma Kintz

Communications

A lifelong Licking County resident, Elma is a graduate of Utica High School and the Reynoldsburg Police Academy. She joined LMHS in 1994 and is a Private Branch eXchange (PBX) operator. She is state-certified as an emergency dispatcher and a nursery technician, and is currently studying to become a certified herbalist. She received her first MVP recognition in 2018. Elma enjoys competitive rifle shooting, quilting, landscaping, and gardening.

**David Koontz, D.O.**

Internal Medicine

Dr. Koontz received his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from the Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1986. He completed an internship at Doctors' Hospital and his internal medicine residency at Riverside Methodist Hospital, both in Columbus. Dr. Koontz is active with Honor Flight Columbus and flies as the chief medical lead, responsible for all veterans and guardians on board. He and his family reside in Newark. As member of Spring Hills Baptist Church, Dr. Koontz recently participated in a mission to Bulgaria.

**Jennifer Malone**

Corporate Compliance

Jennifer was an LMH volunteer before she became an employee in 2006. As a compliance auditor, Jennifer assists various clinical departments with compliance needs, maintaining Medicare regulations, and helping to appeal denials. She and her husband, Doug, live in Granville with their teenage daughters, Megan and Madeline, and their long-haired dachshund, Cocoa.

**Georgia Marcum**

Professional Billing

Georgia is a biller in the Professional Billing Department and was hired in 2021. She graduated from Utica High School and obtained coder certification in 2014. She and her fiancé, Dustin, are planning to wed in June 2025. In her free time, Georgia enjoys reading, crafting, and spending time with family and friends.

**Scott McElhiney**

Engineering Services

After receiving an associate degree in Medical Laboratory Science, Scott began working in the Licking Memorial Hospital Laboratory in 1997 as a technician. He spent 20 years in the Lab before moving to his current position in the Biomed Department where he repairs, tests, and maintains medical and other equipment. Scott and his wife, Jaime, live in Heath and enjoy spending time outdoors and traveling.

**John Mitchell, M.D.**

Licking Memorial Surgical Services

Dr. Mitchell joined Licking Memorial Surgical Services in February 2020. He earned his Medical Degree from Northeast Ohio Medical University in Rootstown, Ohio. He completed a general surgery residency at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is board certified in general surgery. Dr. Mitchell is a member of the American College of Surgeons. He is married, has four children, and enjoys reading, outdoor activities, and spending time with his family.

**Lisa Norman, R.N.**

Maternal Child

Lisa joined Licking Memorial Hospital in 1988 as a nurse assistant. Currently, she serves as a staff nurse for the Special Care Nursery. Lisa graduated from Licking Valley High School in 1984, and earned an Associate in Nursing Degree from Ohio University in 1996. A lifelong resident of Licking County, she is highly involved in several community organizations. Lisa lives in Newark with her husband, Jeff. They have four children, Spencer, Connor, Lauren, and Brooklyn.

**Dan Pennington**

Safety & Security

Dan Pennington is a safety specialist in the Safety & Security Department and holds a police commission through the Licking Memorial Police Department. He is a graduate of Licking Heights High School and is currently taking classes at COTC. He and his wife, Melissa, have four children, Lilah, Owen, and twin daughters, Norah and Noelle, who were born in May 2024. In his spare time, Dan enjoys being with his wife and children, and also hunting and hiking.

**Shannon Price**

Culinary Services

A lifelong Licking County resident, Shannon joined LMHS in 2008 and is a Culinary Services Supervisor. He manages the Main Street Café and trains staff on proper food sanitation and customer service. Shannon was a previous MVP recipient in 2011. He enjoys watching football and basketball, as well as physical fitness and weight training. He loves working outside and being with his family and friends.

**Alyssa Priest, CPhT**

Pharmacy

Alyssa joined LMHS in November 2021 as a Certified Pharmacy Technician. She assists in Hematology/Oncology with preparing chemotherapy medication for patients. In her spare time, she enjoys playing with her animals and spending time with family.

**Karen Richards**

Occupational Therapy

Karen joined LMHS in March 2014 as a certified Occupational Therapy Assistant in Acute Care. She earned an Applied Science - Occupational Therapy Assistant degree from Zane State College in 2012. Karen is a member of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). She has two daughters, Mackenzie and Madison.

**Alexis Riggelman**

Coronary Care

Alexis joined LMHS in 2018 as a unit clerk in the Coronary Care Unit (CCU). She admits patients to the CCU, schedules appointments for discharged patients, and keeps her area organized. Alexis was born and raised in Newark. She enjoys walking her dog, Stella, painting, listening to music, craft projects, and spending time with her best friends, Cristal and Bella, and her boyfriend, John.

**Debbie Rill**

Environmental Services

Debbie began her career at LMHS in 2001 in Environmental Services. Debbie was born in Columbus and graduated from Gahanna Lincoln High School. She has lived in Licking County for many years where she now lives with her boyfriend, Dave. Debbie enjoys spending time with her son, Michael, daughter, April, four grandchildren, and her "grandpup." She also loves to read, crochet, and do yard work.

**Cheryl Simpson**

Pastoral Care

Cheryl joined LMHS in November 2016 as a part-time chaplain. Cheryl received an education degree from The Ohio State University and taught sixth grade social studies at Watkins Memorial Middle School for 35 years. Cheryl has been married to her husband, Ken, for 48 years. They share two children and five grandchildren.

**Wyatt Slonaker**

Information Systems

After graduating from Licking Valley High School, Wyatt enlisted in the Marine Corps and served for five years. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems degree from DeVry University and began his career at LMHS in 2017. Wyatt and his wife, Wren, live in Newark with their two daughters, Lainey and Leia, and their golden retriever, 'The Dude.' In his spare time, Wyatt enjoys camping with his family and friends, and spending time outdoors.

**Eve Smith**

Surgery

Eve was hired in 1989, and is currently a registered nurse in Outpatient Surgery. She is married to Timothy, and has two adult children, Benjamin and Elizabeth. Eve is Chair of the Holy Trinity Alumni Association and is certified with the American Board of Perianesthesia Nurses. She enjoys camping, gardening, and canning in her spare time.

**Stacia Stiltner, L.P.N.**

Women's Health - Pataskala

Stacia joined LMHS in 2017. She earned her nursing degree from Hondros College of Nursing and medical assistant certification from C-TEC. Stacia enjoys outdoor activities with her husband, Garrett, and daughter, Alaina.

**Barbara Taylor**

Physician Center Clerk

After serving LMHS from 1993 to 2000, Barbara rejoined the LMHS staff in 2022 as a Physician Center Clerk (PCC) for Licking Memorial Neurology. As a PCC, Barb delivers excellent patient care through coordinating appointments, arranging rides, and contacting patients with memory issues multiple times to ensure they are connected with the Neurology team. A lifelong resident of Licking County and Newark High School graduate, she lives in Newark with her husband, Kevin.

**Mary Ann Wade, R.N., CNOR, RNFA**

Vascular Surgery

Mary Ann earned her nursing degree from COTC and a registered nurse first assistant certification from Columbus State Community College. She served as a private scrub technician and office medical assistant for Chang Sup Lee, M.D., and Surgical Interventions for Howard L. Reeves, D.O. She joined Surgical Services in 2022. Mary Ann is a member of the National Nurses Honor Guard.

**Brittany Ward, R.D.N., L.D.**

Oncology

Brittany joined LMHS in December 2012 as a Registered Dietitian. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Food and Nutrition degree from the University of Cincinnati. Brittany currently works in Oncology and assists cancer patients to help optimize nutrition during and after treatment. Brittany resides in Reynoldsburg with her husband, Michael, and their three children, Riley, Kennedy, and Michael.



Licking Memorial Health Systems

1320 West Main Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

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Permit No. 8757

Community Events

Monthly Cancer and Caregivers Support Groups

Fourth Tuesday of each month, 5:00 p.m.
Ground Floor Conference Room/Auditorium

A meal will be provided during each group session. Registration is required and may be completed by calling (220) 564-1890.

Ask the Doc

Fourth Saturday of each month, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Shepherd Hill
200 Messimer Drive, Newark

No charge, open to the public. A provider will answer questions about chemical dependency and treatment options. Call (220) 564-4878 for more information.

First Impressions – Maternal Child Classes

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

Unless otherwise noted, classes are located in the Licking Memorial Hospital First Floor Conference Rooms. To register for classes, visit LMHealth.org or call (220) 564-3388.

Diabetes Self-management Education and Support (DSMES)

Class sessions are offered twice a month:

Session 1

First two Wednesdays of each month, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
Downtown Education/Conference Room – 2nd Floor
20 West Locust Street, Newark

Session 2

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

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

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

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

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