



Licking Memorial Health Systems

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Please take a few minutes to read this month's Report on **Behavioral Health**.

You'll soon discover why Licking Memorial Hospital is measurably different ... for your health!

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Community Report Card

Licking Memorial Health Systems

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Behavioral Health Care ... a community report on patient care quality.

HEALTH FACTS

Alcoholism is a very common illness and the most common forms of drug addiction. Although the actual cause of alcoholism has yet to be discovered, several factors may play a role in its development, including:

- Genetics
- Psychological factors
- Social and cultural factors
- Age
- Gender



Behavioral Health

How Do WE COMPARE?

Licking Memorial Hospital, we take pride in the care we provide. To monitor the quality of that care, we track specific quality measures and compare them to benchmark measures. Then we publish them so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your health care choices.

1 Behavioral health is a broad term that refers to psychiatric and/or chemical dependency illnesses. Inpatient hospitalization for either condition is often necessary for effective intervention. Licking Memorial Hospital provides a wide range of services for people with behavioral health illnesses at its Shepherd Hill facility. One goal of the psychiatric treatment program is to have the patient complete all of the treatment and not leave the hospital against medical advice (AMA). Another goal is to transition patients into outpatient settings where they can continue treatment, decreasing the need for readmission.

	LMH 2002	LMH 2003	LMH 2004	National ⁽¹⁾
% of psychiatric AMA discharges	1.7%	2.0%	1.4%	2.2%
% of psychiatric readmissions	5.8%	6.8%	2.6%	5.1%

2 Chemical dependency, also called addiction, is treated as a chronic, progressive and potentially fatal disease. Although Shepherd Hill staff members work with patients to develop individual treatment goals that will meet the patients' needs, the Shepherd Hill program is built around four consistent treatment goals: education, self-diagnosis, self-responsibility and self-treatment. Recovery is dependent upon completion of all goals; therefore, Shepherd Hill monitors when treatment is incomplete and why. When patients leave Shepherd Hill, staff members encourage continuity of care by referring them to other health care professionals as needed.

	LMH 2002	LMH 2003	LMH 2004	LMH Goal
% of people with complete treatment	50%	42%	49%	greater than 60%

3 Outcome studies are conducted to monitor and measure the success of chemical dependence treatment. Our data shows how patients are doing up to two years after completing the program.

	LMH 2004 - 4th Quarter	LMH 2005 - 1st Quarter	LMH Goal
% patients remaining abstinent	89%	87%	greater than 85%
% improvement in quality of relationships	100%	98%	greater than 85%
% improvement in overall physical and mental health	92%	98%	greater than 85%
% improvement in overall quality of life	100%	97%	greater than 85%

4 Detoxification — the safe, medically supervised elimination of addictive substances from the body — is the most intensive care offered for chemical dependency patients. Acute withdrawal symptoms are managed by medications such as Librium®, Catapres® and phenobarbital. The length of stay for detoxification depends upon the drug of choice and the severity of the withdrawal.

	LMH 2002	LMH 2003	LMH 2004	LMH Goal
Average length of stay — alcohol treatment	2.1 days	2.0 days	2.3 days	less than 3 days
Average length of stay — opiates treatment	3.0 days	2.4 days	2.4 days	less than 4 days
Average length of stay — tranquilizer treatment	3.0 days	2.1 days	1.6 days	less than 5 days

5 Upon completion of initial treatment at Shepherd Hill, patients are encouraged to attend aftercare for at least one year. Shepherd Hill's aftercare is a weekly, facilitated group that addresses early recovery topics. Aftercare is important in achieving long-term recovery. Information regarding abstinence one year after completing the program is self-reported by patients.

	LMH 2002	LMH 2003	LMH 2004	LMH Goal
% of people entering aftercare	93%	97%	97%	greater than 80%
% of people completing aftercare	56%	58%	64%	greater than 50%

6 Family participation is an important component in patients' recovery. For continuity of care, Shepherd Hill patients are encouraged to invite their family members to meet with them and a social worker during treatment. This standard applies to inpatients on the psychiatric unit only.

	LMH 2003	LMH 2004	LMH Goal
% attempted to contact family within 24 hours for initial social work meeting	87%	97%	greater than 95%
% with a social work meeting occurring within 24 hours	84%	85%	greater than 90%

Data Footnotes: (1) National benchmark from fourth quarter 2000 data, The Association of Maryland Hospitals & Health Systems QI Project. These data do not represent a rating by either the QI Project or MHA. Data are supplied by individual facilities and aggregated by the QI Project. Aggregate QI Project data represent the averages of all rates and are not meant to be considered as standards or thresholds. The data are intended for internal use by QI Project participants.

A Patient's Story of Addiction, Recovery and Life After

Treatment for drug dependence can be a very difficult but gratifying process, especially in the case of “Sam” (a name used here to protect this person’s identity). Sam was married, had two boys, and a thriving dentist practice, when his world came crashing down around him because of his addiction, only to be restored and better than ever through recovery.

“I started using various chemicals/drugs when attending college — at that time, it was the thing to do. Alcohol was never really a factor for me, I didn't like the aftereffects of being sick, tired and suffering a hangover. Drugs could get me to the high I wanted to achieve without having all the side effects that I didn't like,” said Sam. “Marijuana was my love affair. I had experimented with other drugs, but marijuana was my drug of choice,” Sam remembered. When attending dental school, Sam began to run around with a crowd who did drugs. At that time, Sam was a recreational drug user. “I was able to contain my use to the weekends and not during the week. That way I was able to complete school and make good grades,” stated Sam.

As time progressed, Sam’s recreational weekend habit began to spill over into his workweek. By the time his two sons were born, Sam began to use marijuana throughout the week. “I had always made a promise to myself that I would never use at work or let it (my drug use) affect my work,” said Sam. “It soon came to a point where it would be the first thing I would do when I got to my car. By the time I got home, I would already be high.” In hindsight, Sam now realizes that even though he wasn’t high at work, his habit was still affecting his work. “There were signs that — even though I didn’t recognize it at the time — my habit was affecting my work. I was having withdrawal symptoms while working - irritable, tired, anxious and easily agitated,” said Sam.

It was when Sam’s drug use became an everyday habit that his wife really took notice of the change in his personality; his irritability hit a point where he was yelling at their kids and less tolerant with them for no real reason. Trust had also become an issue for Sam and his wife. “She began not to trust me because she wanted me to stop using drugs, but I didn’t want to so I would hide my use and lie and sneak around to cover up my use,” said Sam. “That is when I began to have a moral issue with my habit. I was raised in a Christian home, and lying was something that we just didn’t do. But, that being said, it didn’t stop my use.”

Lack of trust also became an issue for Sam at work — there was very little trust and respect from his employees and then partner. “All of my problems came to a head when I was falsely accused by an ex-employee of fraud. Even though in court the accusations against me were proven false, my character was tainted from all the lying and sneaking around that I did trying to hide my drug use,” said Sam. On the heels of winning the lawsuit, the Ohio State Board of Dentistry was notified by another employee of Sam’s about his drug use. The Board required a drug test, and Sam tested positive for marijuana. When his positive results came back, Sam’s license to practice dentistry was immediately suspended.

“When my license was suspended, I was devastated. There was so much uncertainty. How could I provide for my family?

What about my practice? Will everyone know about my problems? These were all really hard things to deal with,” stated Sam. “My world was crashing down on me — but I realize now that was the best thing to happen to me.”

One of the conditions for Sam to work toward getting back his license was completing a treatment program. Sam entered Shepherd Hill, a department of Licking Memorial Hospital. “Personally this was a very difficult thing for me. I am a very strong willed and prideful person and all the uncertainty surrounding me was difficult,” said Sam. Sam was in treatment for a total of 17 weeks, but after 10 weeks, he was released from the program, “I wasn’t being truthful and real with the counselors and myself and so I was released from the treatment,” stated Sam. He went through a time in limbo where he was not in treatment, “I remember lying on the floor praying to God to help me,” said Sam. After some negotiations, Sam was able to re-enter treatment at Shepherd Hill and continue treatment. “It was different this time — I was ready for help, I was able to get real and honest with myself.”

While in recovery at Shepherd Hill, Sam was taught several life lessons and principles that he practices today. Some of his favorite ideas to live by include: HOW — honesty, openness and willingness; the principles of the 12-step program; the serenity prayer and the quote, “Do the next right thing.” Sam said, “These ideas can be practiced by

everyone — not just the recovering addict. I realize now that I can lead by example. As a parent, I see the importance of showing my kids these principles through my actions, not just talking about them.”

Going through recovery at Shepherd Hill has taught Sam many life lessons, and he believes that it prepared him for his next big challenge in life. About one week before Sam was able to get his license back to practice dentistry, he was diagnosed with cancer — lymphoma. “I really believe that going through recovery and learning how to live well helped get me through my battle with cancer,” said Sam. While in recovery, Sam made many lifestyle changes; he gave up smoking cigars, eating junk food and leading a sedentary lifestyle. He began to eat properly (no caffeine, no sugar, no nicotine) and he began to exercise rigorously. “For the first six months of practicing dentistry again after recovery, I was in chemotherapy,” said Sam. He was able to beat his cancer and is now in remission; Sam credits all that he learned in recovery as helping him beat cancer.

Today, Sam is now back practicing dentistry with what he says is “the best staff in the world — they are amazing.” He and his wife and kids were able to stick together and are continuing to lead a happy life. Sam is also able to use his experience to help teach his kids as well as help other community members. He attends Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous weekly. Sam also tries to help others. He goes to Ross County Corrections quarterly for ministry-type sessions and is currently working on various charitable projects. “Recovery is a miracle. It is a message of hope — that anything is possible and that every moment in life is precious,” said Sam.

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What Are the Medical Complications of Alcoholism?

By: Richard N. Whitney, M.D.

Alcoholism is a chronic disease that is often progressive and fatal. It is a primary disorder — not a symptom of other diseases or physical or emotional disorders. Symptoms of alcoholism may be subtle and develop more strongly over time. They include blackouts, craving alcohol, loss of control over the use of alcohol, increasing tolerance to the effects of alcohol, and withdrawal symptoms during periods of abstinence.

Alcoholism is a major social, economic and public health problem, involved in more than half of all unnatural deaths and almost half of all traffic fatalities. Additional deaths are related to the long-term medical complications associated with the disease. The lifespan of an alcoholic is shortened by an average of 15 years, as a result of various complications of the disease.

Once drinking has stopped, some alcohol-related health problems can often be controlled or prevented. However, some kinds of damage may be permanent, even fatal.

Gastrointestinal Complications

Long-term alcohol use affects almost every major organ of the gastrointestinal tract — the liver, esophagus, stomach, small intestine and pancreas. The liver metabolizes more than 90 percent of the alcohol consumed; this is very toxic to the liver and could cause:

- Fatty liver — accumulation of fat in liver cells, which is reversible with abstinence.
- Alcoholic hepatitis — results in fever, malaise, yellowing of the skin (jaundice), enlarged, tender liver and dark urine. Close to 80 percent of alcoholics with this condition will recover when they abstain from drinking alcohol.
- Cirrhosis — symptoms include hard, shrunken liver, enlarged spleen, gynecomastia (enlargement of the breast tissue in men), testicular atrophy (shrinkage of testicles); “spider” angiomas, accumulation of fluid in the abdomen, swelling of the hands and feet, red palms, tremors, yellowing of the skin, and confusion. Cirrhosis is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States.

Reflux esophagitis and squamous cell carcinoma (cancer) can develop in the esophagus as a result of heavy drinking. It can also cause inflammation, erosion and bleeding of the stomach. Alcoholism can cause the small intestine not to be able to absorb folic acid, vitamin B-12, thiamine and vitamin A. Alcoholism is the cause of more than one-third of all pancreatitis. Symptoms of pancreatitis include abdominal pain, fever, weakness, nausea and vomiting.

Cardiovascular Complications

Excessive drinking may lead to high blood pressure, which is significantly raised in those consuming at least three alcoholic beverages per day. It can also cause cardiomyopathy, which is damage to the heart muscle tissue, leading to an enlarged heart and heart failure. Binge drinkers could also suffer from arrhythmias, which are abnormal rhythms of the heartbeat. All of these conditions increase the risks for heart failure or stroke.

Central Nervous System

Alcohol affects the nervous system and can result in various diseases of the nerves and impaired brain function. Acute intoxication produces initial mental stimulation and can result

in uninhibited behaviors. A person may have the feeling of warmth and flushing due to brain actions/alterations. Acute intoxication leads to various degrees of exhilaration and excitement, loss of restraint, irregularity of behavior, irritability, drowsiness, stupor and coma. Blackouts may occur due to inability to form new memories. Serious depression, and/or slowed breathing can result. If this should occur, family or friends should immediately call 9-1-1 for help.

Withdrawal symptoms of alcoholism may appear when the person stops drinking. Anxiety, irritability, restlessness, anorexia, insomnia, hallucinations and seizures may all be symptoms of severe alcohol withdrawal.

Optic neuropathy — nerve degeneration of the eye — may cause permanent damage to vision of the excessive drinker. It results in total loss of vision or blurred vision with decreased acuity and color recognition.

Alcoholic organic brain syndrome is typically a permanent brain dysfunction. Physical symptoms include disorientation, impaired memory, distorted perception and psychosis. Emotional disorders of alcoholic organic brain syndrome include depression, anxiety and irritability; behavior disturbances include poor impulse control, sexually acting out, aggression and exhibitionism.

Birth Defects Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Excessive drinking during pregnancy can cause fetal alcohol syndrome. This condition results in birth abnormalities and later developmental disabilities in the child. Physical problems that may be apparent in a child with fetal alcohol syndrome growth include retardation and abnormal features of the face and head — including small head, small lips and thin upper lip. Abnormalities in the central nervous system of a child with fetal alcohol syndrome include mental retardation, decreased sleep, hyperactivity and developmental delays. Abstinence of drinking while pregnant will prevent fetal alcohol syndrome in a child. There is no safe consumption level of alcohol during pregnancy.

To find out more information about alcoholism, other chemical dependencies, and how to get treatment, please visit the Shepherd Hill Web site at www.ShepherdHill.net.

20 Years of Success!

Shepherd Hill graduates are invited to attend the celebration of Shepherd Hill in recognition of their 20th Anniversary.

Date: Saturday, Sept. 17, 2005
Time: 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Location: Shepherd Hill
200 Messimer Drive, Newark, Ohio 43055

Shepherd Hill is celebrating 20 years of services providing outpatient and extended residential treatment for alcohol or other drug dependence with a compassionate treatment team approach in a tranquil setting. We are proud to use the modern medical model of chemical dependence integrated with 12-step recovery.

Registration is required. To register or for more information, please call (800) 223-6410 and ask to speak with Anne Hohman at extension 4878, or visit our Web site at www.ShepherdHill.net.