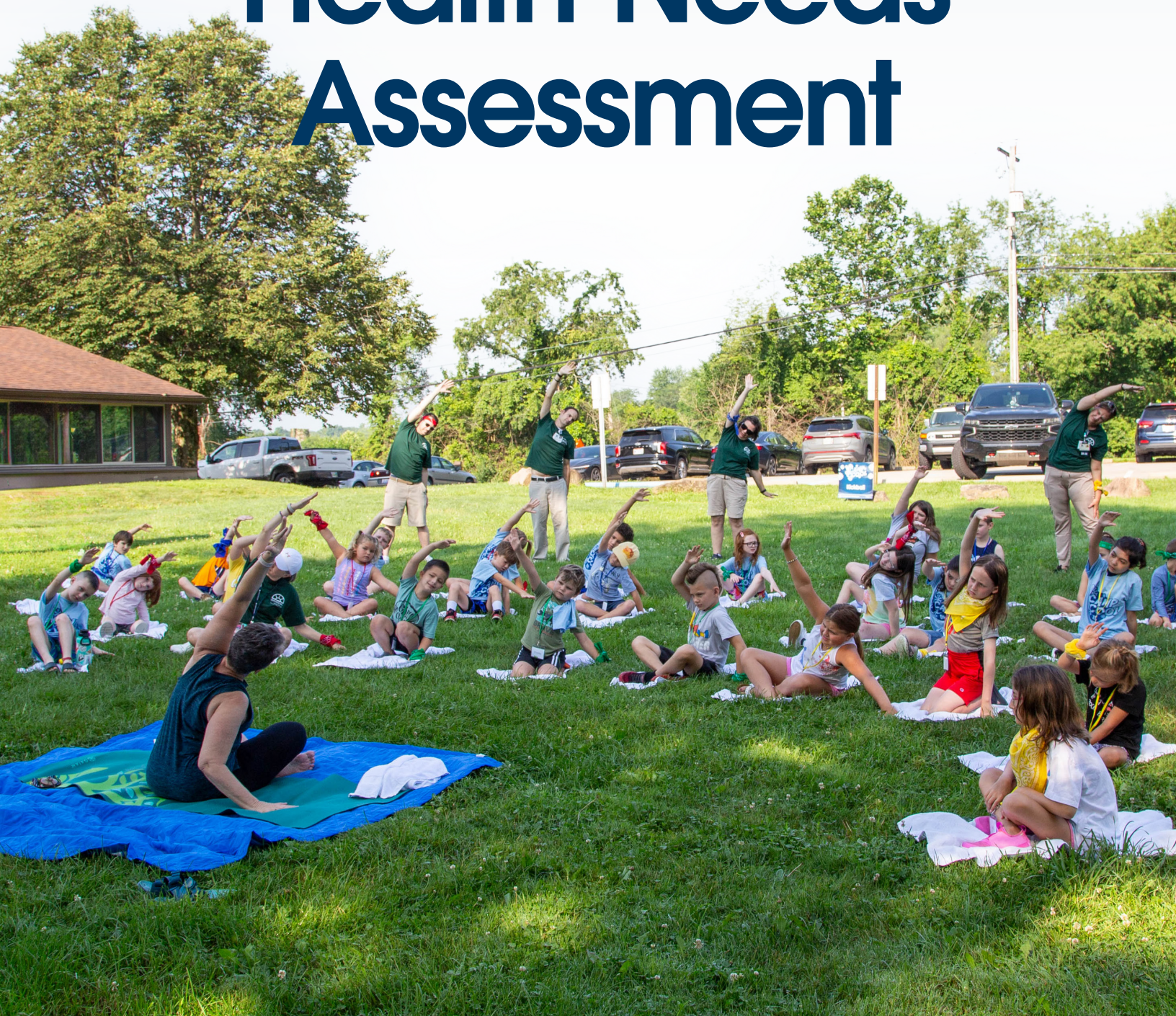


Licking Memorial Health Systems

# 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment







# Introduction

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) remains responsive to the healthcare needs of the Licking County area that it has served for more than 100 years. The 227-bed facility offers a full spectrum of quality patient care services, from emergency medicine to home health care. In addition, LMH offers a number of specialized medical services unique for a Hospital of its size. Comprehensive services are available in areas such as cancer care, heart care, maternity services, and mental health. Licking Memorial Health Systems' (LMHS) mission is to improve the health of the community.

The Licking Memorial Health Professionals is a group of 100-plus physicians in various practices. Physician offices are located throughout Licking County including Granville, Hanover, Heath, Hebron, Johnstown, Newark, Pataskala, and Utica.

The Licking Memorial Health Foundation is supported by the Development Council, which has various committees consisting of business leaders in Licking County. The Foundation is the fundraising and resource development organization for LMHS.

The LMHS staff consists of more than 2,600 employees in many areas. Physicians, nurses, pharmacists, respiratory therapists, culinary staff, environmental services staff, accountants, engineers, computer specialists, laboratory technicians, administrators, and many others work diligently together to provide the best care for patients and visitors.

LMH is pleased to present this Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) report to fulfill a requirement in the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, enacted in March 2010, requiring every 501(c)(3) tax-exempt hospital to conduct a CHNA to identify and prioritize the significant health needs of the community it serves and develop an implementation strategy to address those significant health needs identified. As part of this process, we solicited input from those representing the broad interests of our community. We would like to thank our community partners for participating in this process.

You may submit written comments on this CHNA report and related Implementation Strategy to the Director of Quality Management at Licking Memorial Hospital, 1320 West Main Street, Newark, Ohio 43055 or [bthatcher@LMHealth.org](mailto:bthatcher@LMHealth.org). Any written comments received will be considered in conducting the next CHNA. You may contact the Director of Quality Management at (220) 564-4354 or [bthatcher@LMHealth.org](mailto:bthatcher@LMHealth.org) to request a copy of this report at no charge.

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# Executive Summary

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) defines the “community served” to be Licking County, Ohio. Licking County is located in Central Ohio, just east of Columbus. Of the county’s predominately rural 687 square miles, less than 2 percent represent urban areas. Licking County has 5 major cities, 11 villages, 25 townships, 17 school districts, 3 universities, and 2 technical schools. In conducting this 2025 community health needs assessment (CHNA), LMH identified primary and secondary community data sources, solicited input from those representing the broad interests of the community, utilized existing community reports and surveys, and leveraged internally available data. The CHNA Committee reviewed this information and identified significant health needs of the Licking County community. The next step was to develop an implementation strategy to address these health needs. Through our implementation strategy, LMH will work with our community partners to engage in collaboration among healthcare and social service providers to address these significant health needs.

The following significant health needs for the 2025 LMH CHNA were identified and prioritized.

1. Behavioral health – reduce the burden of addiction and reduce untreated depression and anxiety
2. Chronic disease – decrease negative health conditions associated with obesity, decrease the prevalence of tobacco use, and decrease the burden of cancer
3. Infant mortality – reduce infant mortality





# Community Served

LMH is located at 1320 West Main Street in Newark, where all inpatient and certain outpatient services are provided. Approximately one mile from the main Hospital is Licking Memorial Hospital – Tamarack, located at 2000 Tamarack Road. This location serves outpatients, including outpatient specialty clinics, outpatient surgery, and laboratory draw services. Additionally, Shepherd Hill, located at 200 Messimer Drive, services inpatients and outpatients in need of addiction treatment and behavioral healthcare. LMH also has three Urgent Care facilities that include Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Pataskala, located at One Healthy Place in Pataskala, Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Granville, located at 14 Westgate Drive in Granville, and Licking Memorial Urgent Care – Downtown Newark, located at 20 West Locust Street, in Newark.

LMH’s “community served” is identified as residents of Licking County, which includes the following areas that primarily fall within Licking County:

## Licking County Municipality and ZIP Code(s)

Alexandria – 43001	Homer – 43027
Brownsville – 43721	Jacksontown – 43030
Buckeye Lake – 43008	Johnstown – 43031
Croton – 43013	Kirkersville – 43033
Etna – 43018	Newark – 43055, 43058, and 43093
Granville – 43023	Pataskala – 43062
Gratiot – 43740	Saint Louisville – 43071
Hanover – 43055	Summit Station – 43073
Heath – 43056	Utica – 43080
Hebron – 43025	

Through 2024, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) required each hospital that is registered in Ohio to file an Annual Hospital Registration and Planning Report by March 1 of each year for the previous calendar year. A review of the patient origin data from the Annual Hospital Registration and Planning Report for LMH and internal hospital data supports the definition of the “community served” as being the community and residents of Licking County, Ohio.

Calendar Reporting Year	Total Hospital Admissions	Total Hospital Admissions from Licking County	Percent of Total Hospital Admissions from Licking County
2024	8,492	7,505	88.37%
2023	8,555	7,342	85.82%
2022	8,287	7,132	86.06%
2021	7,657	6,758	88.26%
2020	8,401	7,419	88.31%
2019	8,635	7,629	88.35%
2018	8,482	7,423	87.51%
2017	8,255	7,123	86.29%
2016	8,181	7,077	86.51%
2015	8,519	7,533	88.43%

# Demographic Information

The following provides a summary of Licking County demographic characteristics. Data was primarily collected from the U.S. Census, American Community Surveys (ACS), and Bureau of Vital Statistics.

## Population

In 2024, Licking County had a total population of 184,898.

## Race/Ethnicity

Percent of Population in 2024	Category
87.0%	White
4.0%	African American
0.0%	Native American
3.1%	Asian
0.0%	Pacific Islander
0.8%	Other
5.0%	Two or more races
2.3%	Hispanic (may be of any race)

## Age

Percent of Population in 2020	Age Category
5.8%	Persons under 5 years of age
17.2%	Persons 5-17 years of age
8.8%	Persons 18-24 years of age
24.6%	Persons 25-44 years of age
26.5%	Persons 45-64 years of age
17.1%	Persons 65 years and over

The median age is 40.2 years.

## Income

In 2024, the median household income is \$81,033 with 7.2 percent living in poverty.

## Education

Percent of Persons 25 Years of Age and Older in 2020	Category
93.2%	High school graduate or higher education
29.3%	Bachelor's degree or higher

## Housing

In 2024, 73.7 percent of housing units were owner occupied. The median value of owner-occupied housing units was \$250,700.

# Process and Methods

## Process for Obtaining Data

LMH identified data sources and indicators which reflect a healthcare issue that is pertinent to the community and came from sources that are reliable and are likely to be available in the future. Available Licking County data was compared to available state and national data for a variety of health and wellness topics. Areas of concern, based on the comparative data, were identified by the Hospital's leadership team. Web-sourced data, existing reports for federal, state, and local sources were also utilized in this CHNA.

## Process for Consulting with Persons Representing the Community Interests

The Licking County Community Health Improvement Committee (CHIC) was initially established by the Licking County Health Department (LCHD) in 2021 and has continued through 2025. This committee includes LMH representatives in addition to representatives from many other community agencies and social service providers, all working together to identify and prioritize community health priorities within Licking County. In developing the CHNA, some data was collected through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey. The BRFSS tool was first developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and issued nationwide to collect population health data. The BRFSS survey utilizes feedback directly from community residents to identify potential areas of concern, and results are reviewed by the CHIC Committee membership, areas of greatest community concern are identified, and priorities are established. LMH reviews this content to develop its own CHNA, which will include some alignment with the LCHD/CHIC Committee CHNA document.

Secondary data collection included data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the ACS, ODH, Ohio Cancer Incidence Surveillance System (OCISS), Bureau of Vital Statistics, and the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program.

The CHIC and CHIC sub-committees include key members of the LMH Senior Leadership team, as well as members of the Hospital's Process Improvement Department. Input was obtained from all required sources. No written comments on the previous CHNA or implementation strategy were received.

The CHIC reviewed data to identify common themes. In identifying significant health needs, the CHIC considered:

- Whether the need was identified as a problem across multiple sources
- Whether there is an adverse trend in the health need
- Whether the need is an emerging issue
- How the Licking County community compares to state and federal benchmarks

To prioritize the community health needs identified, the CHIC members considered the following:

- The size of the population affected by this need
- The severity of this need
- Ability to evaluate the outcome of efforts to positively impact this need
- Whether the community is currently addressing this need
- Whether addressing this need will impact other needs identified
- Impact of addressing this need on systems or health within the community
- The cost of addressing the need



# Prioritized Health Needs

The following significant health needs were identified and prioritized by LMHS for the Licking County Community:

1. Behavioral health – reduce the burden of addiction and untreated mental health needs
2. Chronic disease – decrease negative health conditions associated with obesity, decrease the prevalence of tobacco use, and decrease the burden of cancer
3. Infant mortality – decrease the infant mortality rate

## Description of Significant Health Needs and Resources Available to Address Identified Needs:

Behavioral Health		
Need	Description	Resources
Reduce the burden of addiction	<p>In 2017, there were 31 deaths per 100,000 population due to unintentional drug overdoses in central Ohio, compared to 44.1 per 100,000 for Ohio.</p> <p>In 2019, there were 36 unintentional overdose deaths in Licking County, down from 42 in 2018, a 14 percent decrease. Fentanyl was responsible for the increase in deaths.</p> <p>In 2020, there were 47 unintentional overdose deaths in Licking County, up from 36 in 2019, a 30 percent increase. Fentanyl was responsible for 75 percent of these deaths. The Licking County overdose death rate for 2020 was 31.1 deaths per 100,000.</p> <p>In 2022, there were 58 unintentional overdose deaths in Licking County, up from 47 in 2021, a 23 percent increase. Fentanyl was responsible for 69 percent of these deaths, with the number of fentanyl fatalities increasing by 21 percent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental Health America</li><li>• LMH Medication-assisted Therapy program</li><li>• Licking Memorial Health Professionals</li><li>• Mental Health and Recovery for Knox and Licking County</li><li>• Licking County Health Department</li><li>• Newark Addiction Recovery Initiative</li><li>• United Way's Community Blueprint Communities to promote a healthy community that addresses addiction</li><li>• "Our Futures in Licking County" initiative to reduce the use/abuse of marijuana, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs</li><li>• Free "Q&amp;A" sessions with addictionologist</li><li>• Community Health Clinic</li><li>• Local school districts</li></ul>

Need	Description	Resources																																				
Reduce untreated depression and anxiety	<p>According to Mental Health America, in January 2020 through December 2021 statistics, severe depression was identified in 385 total depression (PHQ-9) responses and 130 scoring severe depression, equaling 78.33 per 100,000 county population. This is above the state of Ohio (70.25 per 100,000) for the same reporting time frame. 2024 did show the lowest rate of severe depression scoring since the initiation of the CHNA.</p> <p>Total Number Scoring with Severe Depression per 100K:</p> <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>County Rate</th><th>State Rate</th></tr><tr><td>2020</td><td>33.78</td><td>36.8</td></tr><tr><td>2021</td><td>43.79</td><td>45.4</td></tr><tr><td>2022</td><td>50.67</td><td>50.9</td></tr><tr><td>2023</td><td>64.50</td><td>39.8</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>40.31</td><td>34.8</td></tr></table> <p>In 2021, there were 30 deaths by suicide in Licking County. This was up from 20 deaths by suicide in 2019.</p> <p>In 2023, there were 25 deaths by suicide in Licking County. This was down from 28 deaths by suicide in 2022. The 2024 county suicide rate fell significantly from 2023 to the lowest level seen since 2020.</p> <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>County Rate</th><th>State Rate</th></tr><tr><td>2020</td><td>34.41</td><td>39.7</td></tr><tr><td>2021</td><td>44.42</td><td>47.7</td></tr><tr><td>2022</td><td>53.80</td><td>54.1</td></tr><tr><td>2023</td><td>64.50</td><td>44.2</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>42.79</td><td>39.7</td></tr></table>	Year	County Rate	State Rate	2020	33.78	36.8	2021	43.79	45.4	2022	50.67	50.9	2023	64.50	39.8	2024	40.31	34.8	Year	County Rate	State Rate	2020	34.41	39.7	2021	44.42	47.7	2022	53.80	54.1	2023	64.50	44.2	2024	42.79	39.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Licking County Health Department</li><li>• LMH Emergency Department to increase access/options to receive services</li><li>• Licking Memorial Health Professionals</li><li>• United Way's Community Blueprint Communities</li><li>• Psychiatric counseling services</li><li>• Mental Health America</li><li>• Mental Health and Recovery for Knox and Licking County</li><li>• Our Futures in Licking County</li><li>• Community Health Clinic</li><li>• Local school districts</li></ul>
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## Chronic Disease

Need	Description	Resources
<p>Decrease negative health conditions associated with obesity</p>	<p>In 2015, 38 percent of Licking County adults polled are obese and 32 percent are overweight.</p> <p>In 2017, 3.2 percent of adults in Central Ohio were diagnosed with coronary heart disease, compared to 4.7 percent for Ohio; 4.1 percent of adults in Central Ohio were diagnosed with a heart attack, compared to 5.5 percent for Ohio; 32.8 percent of adults were diagnosed with hypertension, compared to 34.7 percent for Ohio; 9.3 percent of adults were identified by a health professional as having diabetes, compared to 11.3 percent for Ohio; 10.1 percent of adults in Central Ohio were identified by a health professional as having prediabetes, compared to 8.8 percent for Ohio.</p> <p>In 2019, 32 percent Licking County adults polled were obese.</p> <p>In 2021, 33 percent of Licking County adults polled were obese.</p> <p>In 2022, the estimated prevalence of obesity among adults aged 18 years and older in Licking County was 36 percent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licking County Health Department</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Health Professionals</li> <li>• Newark Advocate</li> <li>• Ohio State University Extension – Newark Campus</li> <li>• Pathways of Central Ohio/2-1-1</li> <li>• Licking County YMCA</li> <li>• Licking County Diabetes Forum</li> <li>• Licking County Wellness Coalition</li> <li>• Active•Fit Youth Wellness Program</li> <li>• Active•Senior Adult Wellness Program</li> <li>• Diabetes education with licensed diabetes educators</li> <li>• Free diabetes screenings at community events</li> <li>• Canal Market District to promote healthy food choices</li> <li>• Wellness Center &amp; CTEC with exercise equipment for the general public</li> <li>• Walk with a Doc program</li> <li>• Running/walking marathons and sports programs</li> </ul>
Need	Description	Resources
<p>Decrease the prevalence of tobacco use</p>	<p>In 2015, 24 percent of adults were identified as smokers.</p> <p>In 2019, 21 percent of adults reported smoking. 22.6 percent of adults 18+ in Licking County use tobacco, compared to 21.7 percent for Ohio.</p> <p>In 2021, 20.9 percent of Licking County adults reported smoking.</p> <p>In 2022, 19.4 percent of Licking County adults reported smoking, a continuous, slow decline over several years being noted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licking County Health Department</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Health Professionals</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Hospital Tobacco Cessation</li> <li>• Community Health Clinic</li> <li>• American Red Cross of Licking County</li> <li>• Pathways of Central Ohio /2-1-1</li> <li>• Our Futures in Licking County</li> <li>• Tobacco Use Reduction Network of Licking County</li> <li>• Local school districts</li> <li>• Quit For Your Health Tobacco Cessation Program</li> <li>• Quit for You, and Quit for Your Baby Tobacco Cessation Program</li> <li>• Smoking cessation education by respiratory therapists</li> </ul>



Need	Description	Resources
Decrease the burden of cancer	<p>As reported by the ODH in 2025, for 2018 – 2022 data, the cancer incidence rate in Licking County was 509.7 per 100,000 residents, compared to 471.1 per 100,000 for Ohio and 444.6 per 100,000 for the U.S.</p> <p>For this same time period, the Licking County cancer mortality rate was 161.7 per 100,000 residents, compared to the Ohio rate of 161.1 per 100,000 and the U.S. rate of 146.0 per 100,000.</p> <p>Cancer incidence and mortality rates among males were higher than the rates among females in Licking County.</p> <p>The top five cancers by percentage of new cancer cases in Licking County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breast – 15.0%</li> <li>• Lung and bronchus – 14.7%</li> <li>• Prostate – 13.2%</li> <li>• Colon and rectum – 7.5%</li> <li>• Melanoma of the skin – 6.1%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licking County Health Department</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Health Professionals</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Hospital, Comprehensive Cancer Committee</li> <li>• Newark Advocate</li> <li>• Community Health Clinic</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Hospital Tobacco Cessation</li> <li>• Community education on importance of timely screening</li> <li>• Walk-in screening mammogram days</li> <li>• Low-dose CT scanning for patients at high risk for lung cancer</li> <li>• ACR lung cancer screening registry</li> <li>• Community Smoking Cessation programs</li> </ul>

### Infant Mortality

Need	Description	Resources
Decrease the infant mortality rate	<p>For the state of Ohio, in 2020, 864 infants died before their first birthday, which was a 6.7 overall infant mortality rate (6.7 deaths per 1000 births).</p> <p>In 2023, 904 infants died before their first birthday, which was an infant mortality rate of 7.1 in the state of Ohio.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licking Memorial Hospital initiatives to promote best practices in infant feeding and bonding, Baby Friendly-designated Hospital</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Health Professionals</li> <li>• Community Health Clinic</li> <li>• Ohio Hospital Association</li> <li>• Licking County Health Department</li> <li>• Ohio Department of Health</li> <li>• “Safe Sleep” education for new parents</li> <li>• “Safe Sleep Sacks” for newborn babies and those admitted to the Hospital nursery</li> <li>• Provide onesie to all newborns that states “This Side Up”</li> <li>• “Quit for You, Quit for Baby” Tobacco Cessation programs at Women’s Health Services</li> <li>• Suboxone Clinic targeting pregnant mothers suffering from addiction</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Hospital Level II Special Care Nursery</li> <li>• Licking County Coroner’s Child Fatality Review Board to review all infant deaths and discuss opportunities to reduce infant death rate</li> <li>• Licking Memorial Hospital’s CenteringPregnancy program</li> </ul>

# State Health Improvement Plan

## Alignment with the State Health Improvement Plan

The ODH identified three priority topics in the 2020 – 2022 State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). During the implementation of LMH's 2025 CHNA, Ohio's 2025 – 2029 SHIP was under development. As part of the alignment process, ODH encourages hospitals and local health districts to select at least two priority topics and at least one priority outcome for the topics chosen from the SHIP to address in the collaborative community health improvement plan/implementation strategy. However, the final priority health needs selected by the hospitals and local health districts should be guided by the needs identified through the data collection and analysis for the community served. As such, the CHNA, CHIC, and LMH, through review of the data and discussion, identified the following significant health needs for the Licking County community which align with all three priority topics in the SHIP.

SHIP Priority Topic	SHIP Priority Outcomes	LMH Significant Health Needs that Align	LMH Outcomes that Align
Community conditions	Reduce depression Reduce suicide Reduce drug dependency/abuse Reduce drug overdose deaths	Mental health and addiction behavioral health	Reduce untreated depression and anxiety Reduce burden of addiction
Health behaviors	Reduce heart disease Reduce diabetes Reduce childhood conditions (asthma, lead)	Chronic disease	Decrease negative health conditions associated with obesity
Maternal and infant health	Reduce preterm births Reduce maternal morbidity Reduce infant mortality	Maternal and infant health	Reduce infant mortality

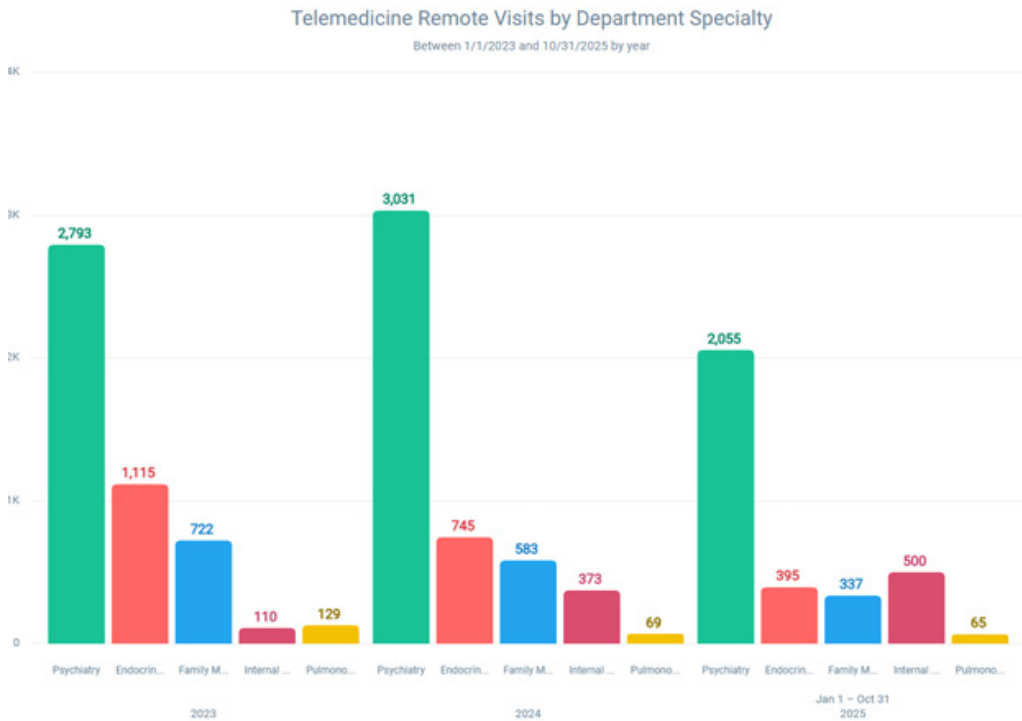
# Impact of Prior CHNA

## Evaluation of the Impact of the Actions in the 2022 CHNA

### Reduce the Burden of Addiction and Address Mental Health Issues

LMHS maintained both inpatient and outpatient behavioral healthcare services to the community, including its service-referral programs to non-LMHS entities, both inside and outside of Licking County, that are specifically tailored to the individualized needs of each patient. Services offered include emergency behavioral healthcare, inpatient psychiatric care, inpatient chemical dependency, outpatient psychiatric, outpatient chemical dependency, ambulatory psychiatric care, and medication-assisted therapy services.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in law with respect to telemedicine, nearly 14,000 patient encounters have occurred via telemedicine from January 2023 through October 2025. Since the inception of the telemedicine program at LMHS, psychiatry is the highest utilized service line within the LMHS telemedicine program. There are a number of patients in this group that otherwise would not have sought (or have been able to seek) care for mental health issues within Licking County.



Inpatient psychiatric patient days in 2022 were 1,051, falling slightly to 1,028 (-2 percent) in 2023, with a steeper decrease in 2024 to 908 days (-12 percent). However, inpatient chemical detoxification days in 2022 were 355 days total, increasing significantly in 2023 to 475 days (25 percent), and again in 2024 with 504 days (6 percent).

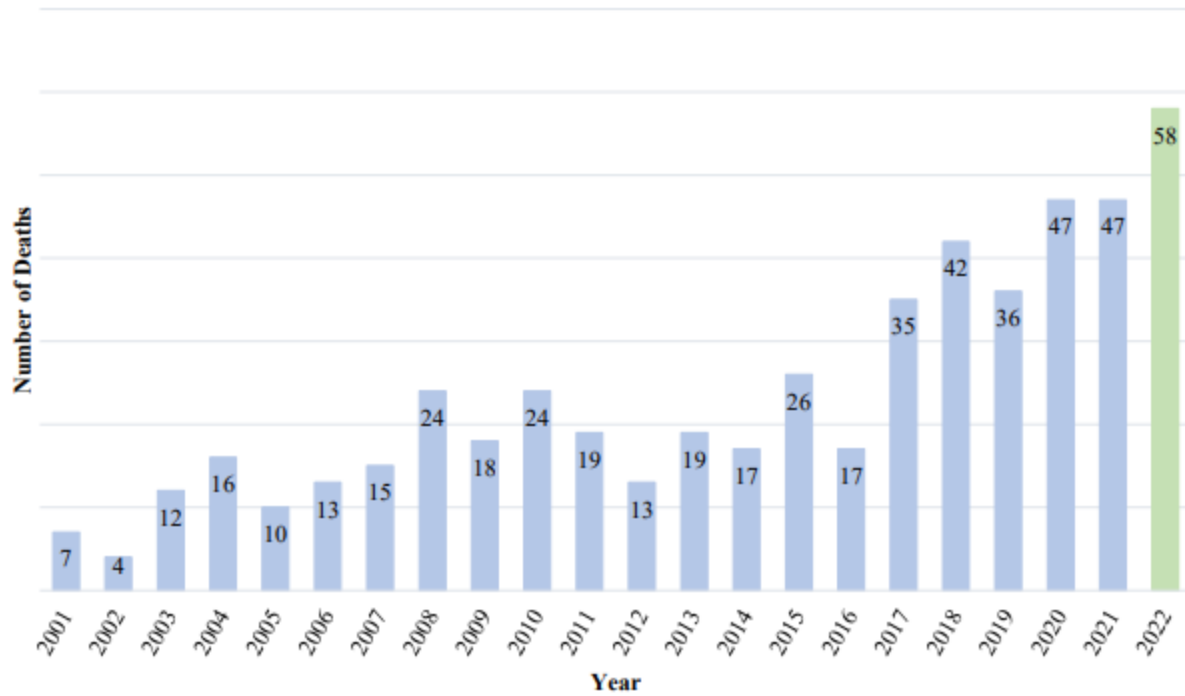
Intensive outpatient chemical dependency visits in 2022 were 867 total, falling in 2023 to 778 visits (-10 percent), but increasing very significantly in 2024 to 1,382 visits (44 percent). Partial hospitalization program visits in 2022 were at 1,594 total visits, increasing to 1,770 (10 percent) in 2023, and further increasing in 2024 to 2,371 visits (25 percent).

Licking County overdose deaths showed a decrease from 2018 to 2019, although deaths increased in 2020. The majority of those deaths were contributed to fentanyl.

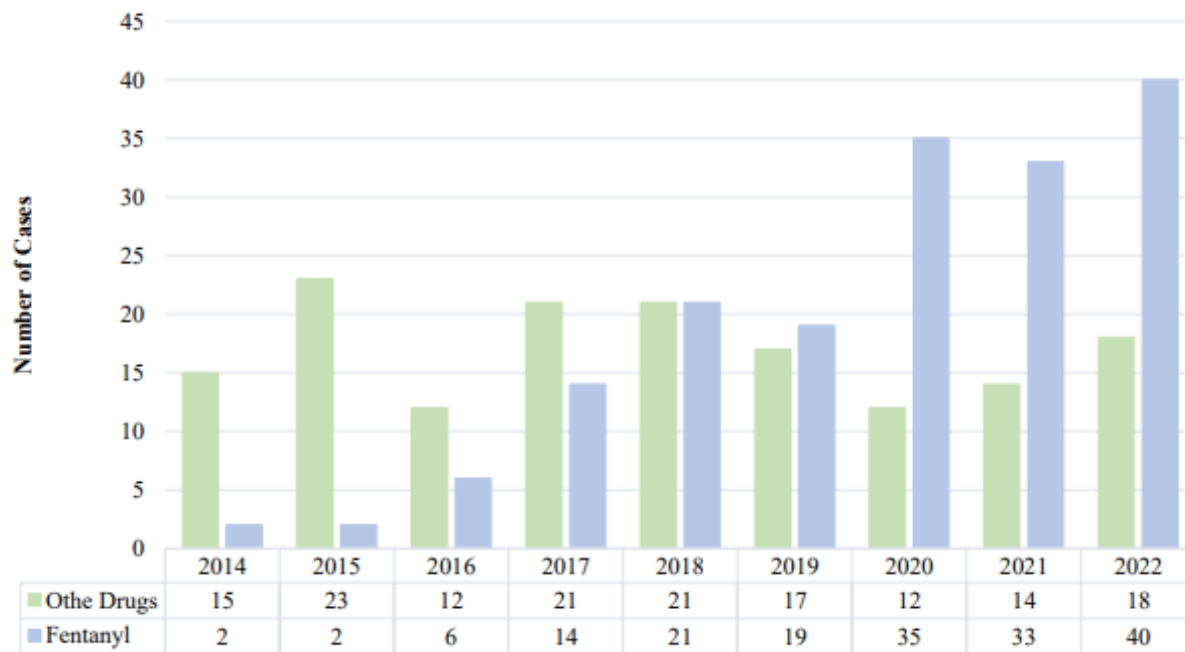
Overdose deaths continued to increase from 2020. In 2022, there were 58 unintentional overdose deaths in Licking County, with fentanyl contributing to 69 percent of these deaths.



## Frequency of Overdose Fatalities By Year



## Fentanyl-Related Overdose Fatalities



## Reduction in Cancer Mortality

### Colon Cancer

LMHS offers routine colon cancer screenings to patients within the community, and over the past two years has implemented additional tools to improve community awareness, identification, and screening of at-risk patient populations, reducing access-to-care delays through physician/provider recruitment and new electronic tools for tracking compliance. LMHS expanded adoption of the use of Cologuard in patients with contraindications or an adversity to colonoscopy.

While county-level cancer data tends to be outdated because of reporting time lines (currently available are cases from 2018 – 2022), colon cancer in Licking County makes up approximately 7.5 percent of all newly diagnosed cancers, and is the third highest type of cancer resulting in death (7.6 percent of total cancer deaths). Incidence rates in Licking County have improved and are now lower than Ohio state averages; however, Licking County remains higher than the national average according to the OCISS and Bureau of Vital Statistics (ODH, 2025, reported as number of cases or deaths per 100,000 population).

- Licking County colon/rectum cancer incidence rate: 39.8 (stable vs previous reported result of 39.9)
- Ohio colon/rectum cancer incidence rate: 38.2
- National colon/rectum cancer incidence rate: 36.4

Colon cancer mortality rates are now exhibiting a similar pattern:

- Licking County colon/rectum cancer mortality rate: 12.6 (reduced vs previous reported result of 14.5)
- Ohio colon/rectum cancer mortality rate: 13.9
- National colon/rectum cancer incidence rate: 12.9

Late-stage colon & rectum cancer identification rates have fallen, aligning with state averages. Previously, the late-stage identification rate for Licking County was higher than state average, but now is slightly lower than the Ohio average:



Improved community awareness of the need for colonoscopy screening to aid in the detection of colon cancer is achieved through the use of community education programs and colon cancer-specific educational offerings and materials. Gastroenterology (GI) Laboratory procedural volumes in 2022 were 7,657 total procedures. This remained stable in 2023, with a total of 7,672 procedures. In 2024, after additional recruitment efforts for GI providers, volumes increased significantly to 8,823 procedures (13 percent), resulting in higher colon cancer screening volumes.

### Breast Cancer

LMHS provides breast cancer screening services to the community in its efforts to improve early identification of breast cancer. LMH has invested in state-of-the-art mammography technology that uses artificial intelligence to better identify subtle, very early stage breast cancers. Mammograms are offered for free to members of the community that are uninsured or underserved, which has reduced barriers and delays to care. In addition, LMH has adopted a mammography patient self-scheduling model in which patients can select their own date and time for their mammogram, thereby helping to eliminate any barriers to access based upon patient availability concerns. Recent mammography volumes include:

- Walk-in mammography (May-November 2025): 68 patients
- Direct-schedule mammograms (January-November 2025): 960 patients
- Ticket-scheduled mammograms (April-November 2025): 729 patients

Breast cancer in Licking County makes up approximately 15 percent of all newly diagnosed cancers, and is the fourth-highest type of cancer resulting in death (7.3 percent of total cancer deaths). Incidence rates in Licking County remain higher than both state and national rates according to the OCISS and Bureau of Vital Statistics (ODH, 2025, reported as number of cases or deaths per 100K population).

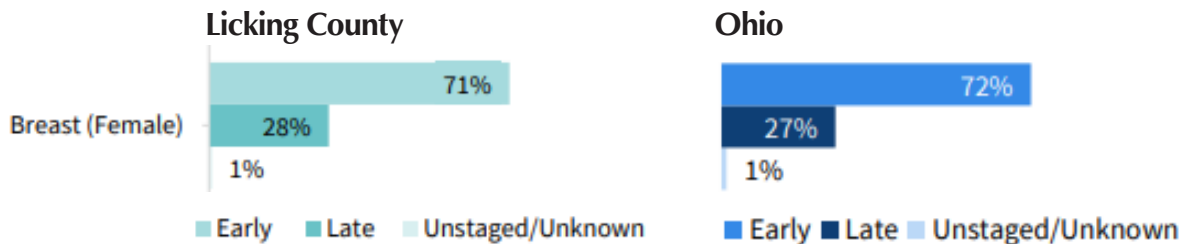
- Licking County breast cancer incidence rate: 148.3 (slight increase vs prior reported result of 138.2)
- Ohio breast cancer incidence rate: 133.0
- National breast cancer incidence rate: 129.8

Breast cancer mortality rates for Licking County also remain higher than state and national rates:

- Licking County breast cancer mortality rate: 22.1 (slight decrease vs prior reported result of 22.6)
- Ohio breast cancer mortality rate: 20.2
- National breast cancer incidence rate: 19.3

(Source: OCISS and Bureau of Vital Statistics, ODH, 2025)

When comparing late-stage onset breast cancer statistics, Licking County is very similar to the state of Ohio averages and roughly equal to the state performance identifying breast cancer at early and late stages:



LMHS’ Comprehensive Cancer Care Committee refined workflows to decrease the wait times between screening-mammograms-to-diagnostic-mammograms (in days) and diagnostic-mammograms-to-biopsy (in days) in an effort to reduce patient stress and improve satisfaction when suspected or confirmed cancers are identified. This effort has resulted in the following:

- 2022 average elapsed time between screening mammogram until diagnostic mammogram performed was 6.4 days. This increased significantly in 2023 to 9.1 days, at which point additional improvement actions were implemented, resulting in a significant decrease in 2024 to 4.8 days.

LMHS’ genetic testing and counseling program for patients identified as high-risk for breast cancer continues to expand, with the creation of an electronic medical record (EMR)-based patient registry in Epic, where these patients are continually tracked and managed by the Genetics Navigator and Cancer Registrar to ensure that all appropriate care targets are being followed.

The Epic EMR provides specific reporting capabilities that maximize the Hospital staff’s ability to track patients who are coming due or overdue for screenings and generating reminder letters. New tools are also available for reporting out screening results in a more timely and effective manner.

## Lung Cancer

LMHS provides screening, diagnostic, and treatment services for lung cancer patients and those who may be at risk for lung cancer. LMHS has expanded its programming in an effort to reduce the high rates of lung cancer diagnoses in Licking County as well as higher-than-average rates of mortality. Patients who have been formally diagnosed with lung cancer and those who have been identified as high-risk for lung cancer are monitored closely via the Hospital’s EMR.

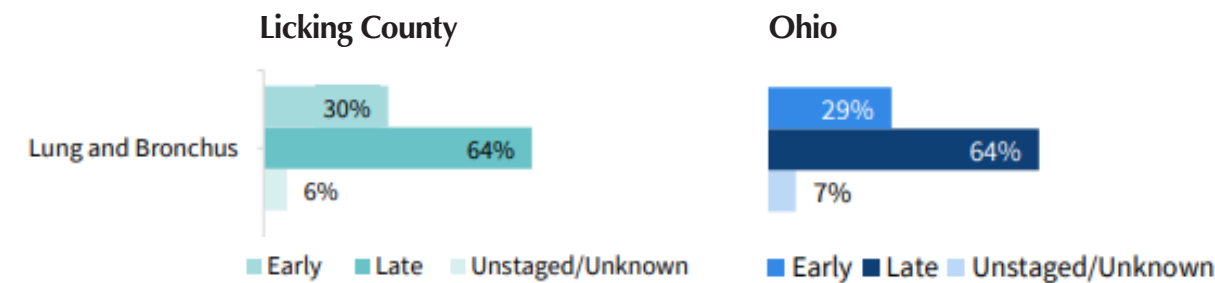
Lung cancer in Licking County makes up approximately 14.7 percent of all newly diagnosed cancers (reduced from 16.4 percent from previous CHNA results), and is the most common type of cancer resulting in death (28.7 percent of total cancer deaths, reduced from 31.5 percent from previous CHNA results). Incidence rates in Licking County remain higher than both state and national rates according to the OCISS and Bureau of Vital Statistics (ODH, 2025, reported as number of cases or deaths per 100,000 population).

- Licking County lung cancer incidence rate: 71.6 (reduced from 78.3 from previous CHNA results)
- Ohio lung cancer incidence rate: 63.3
- National lung cancer incidence rate: 53.3



- Lung cancer mortality rates for Licking County remain higher than state and national rates:
- Licking County lung cancer mortality rate: 44.7 (reduced from 53.6 from previous CHNA results)
  - Ohio lung cancer mortality rate: 39.8
  - National lung cancer incidence rate: 32.4

This data is complicated by the county’s comparably high smoking rates, in addition to high concentration of radon in homes within the community. When comparing late-stage onset statistics for lung cancer, Licking County is very similar to state of Ohio averages, which is an improvement, as Licking County results have been historically higher than state averages.

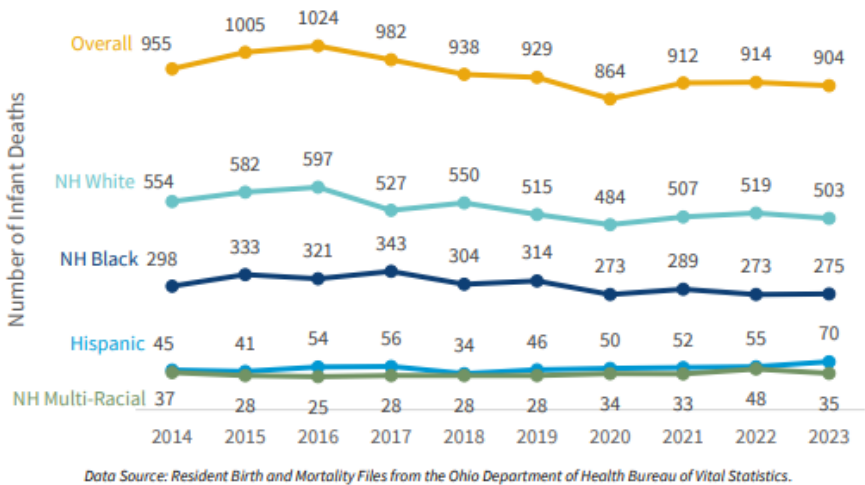


LMHS’ Comprehensive Cancer Care Committee has engaged in efforts to expand its low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) lung screening program to identify lung cancer early in patients who are screened and found to be at high-risk. This program identifies patients who have a greater than 20 percent lifetime risk for developing lung cancer, who are then placed into a dedicated registry. Patients in this registry are actively followed, and ongoing LDCT scans are ordered to reduce late-stage diagnosis of lung cancer, identify lung cancer earlier, and ultimately reduce mortality. This registry has been expanded significantly under Epic as new workflows have been established to effectively track these patients over time to ensure compliance with screening recommendations.

### Reduce Infant Mortality

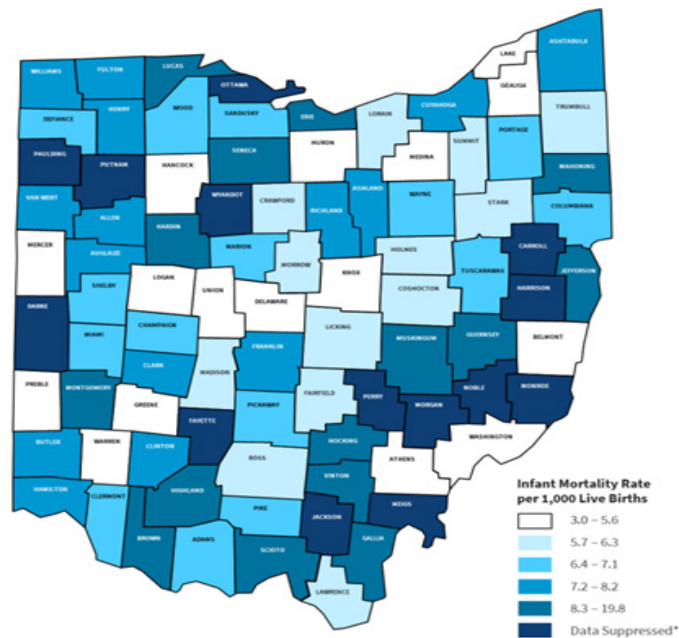
Historically, Licking County and the state of Ohio have demonstrated higher rates of infant mortality than the national average. While the most recent Ohio data shows that infant deaths declined in 2023, the overall infant mortality rate remained the same from the prior year due to a decline in total births in the state.

Figure 1: In 2023, the number of **non-Hispanic Black** and **Hispanic** infant deaths increased, while the number of other race/ethnicity groups decreased.



Compared to the state target of 6 deaths per 1,000 live births, Licking County performed in the second quintile, in the range of 5.7 – 6.3 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Ohio's Five-Year Infant Mortality Rate by County (2019 – 2023)  
See Appendix A for Ohio five-year infant mortality rates by county and race.



\*Data for counties with fewer than 10 infant deaths in the five-year period (2019-2023) are suppressed due to insufficient reliability and confidentiality requirements.

LMH continues to provide Safe Sleep education to new parents and remains a Baby Friendly designated hospital.

Over the span of January 2022 through October 2025, a total of 1,145 pregnant mothers who smoke were referred to the LMHS Quit for You, Quit for Your Baby Tobacco Cessation Program.

LMHS has maintained the Medication-assisted Therapy program to assist pregnant mothers suffering from addiction issues.

In-hospital fetal deaths and intrauterine fetal deaths are monitored closely to include case reviews that identify potential causes/contributing factors by the Hospital's Obstetrical Quality Committee.

Special Care Nursery (SCN) volumes have fallen, along with total birth counts, since 2019; however, the SCN continues to provide immediate and ongoing medical care to infants with critical care needs. The percentage of newborns requiring admission to the SCN has gradually been increasing since 2023.

Year	Total Births	Special Care Nursery Admissions	Special Care Nursery Admission Rate
2019	975	140	14.4%
2020	884	114	12.9%
2021	868	103	11.9%
2022	801	85	10.6%
2023	822	103	12.5%
2024	823	122	14.8%
2025 YTD	594	96	16.1%

The ODH identified infant mortality as a priority topic to be addressed by SHIP. According to the ODH 2016 Infant Mortality Report, Licking County had an infant mortality rate of 9.5 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to a rate of 7.4 deaths per 1,000 live births for the state of Ohio. The latest ODH Infant Mortality Report in 2023 indicates that the infant mortality rate in Licking County (2019-2023) improved to a rate of 6.0 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to a state rate of 7.0 deaths per 1,000 live births.

While improvement has been shown, efforts must continue to see sustained improvement and address any identified racial disparities in birth outcomes.

**Decrease the Prevalence of Tobacco Use**

LMHS continues to provide a free smoking cessation program to residents of Licking County. The Quit For Your Health Tobacco Cessation Program offers free counseling to smokers, as well as complimentary nicotine patches and gum to aid participants in quitting.

Average counts of counseling visits per month for the past 6+ years:

- 2019: 257
- 2020: 188
- 2021: 125
- 2022: 126
- 2023: 135
- 2024: 134
- 2025 YTD: 119

Internal metrics available that lend insight into the efficacy of LMHS’ Quit For Your Health Tobacco Cessation Program:

- Patient-reported tobacco cessation rates have been improving gradually over several years, and current patients who have completed the program are reporting high levels of success (following completion of the full cessation program):

Year	Quit Rate <i>(percentage of patients reporting no smoking six months after program completion)</i>
2019	68%
2020	73%
2021	80%
2022	100%
2023	90%
2024	92%

- Total dollars expended (unreimbursed) per month for smoking cessation supplies/aids (nicotine patches/gum) used for patients during cessation treatment:

Year	Total cost per year
2019	\$40,674
2020	\$26,047
2021	\$18,131
2022	\$16,819
2023	\$20,612
2024	\$26,882

The number of Licking County adults who report smoking has continued to decrease. In 2022, 19.5 percent of



Licking County adults reported smoking, which is down from 20.9 percent in 2021. According to internal LMH statistics, the number of patients treated in the Tobacco Cessation Clinic who use vaping products increased dramatically from 2021 through 2023, and has remained stable since that time.

## Decrease Negative Health Conditions Associated with Obesity

LMH provides numerous community education programs focused on making healthier food choices, exercise, and good lifestyle habits. The education events include health cooking demonstrations, prescriptions for healthy foods that can be used at local farmers markets to obtain produce for free, sponsorships for local walking and running events, hosting “Walk with a Doc,” provision of exercise equipment for general public use, and an employee wellness center open 24-hours for use by LMH employees.

The Healthy People 2020 target for obesity in adults was 30.5 percent. In 2015, Licking County reported an estimated 38 percent of adult residents with a body mass index (BMI) of greater than 30 (obese). In 2021, Licking County reported an estimated 33 percent of adult residents who are considered obese. The Healthy People 2030 target for reducing the overall proportion of adults with obesity is 36 percent (an increase from Healthy People 2020) after seeing a significant worsening in the trend between the baseline and final values. In 2022, Licking County’s estimated prevalence of obesity among adults, aged 18 years and older, is 36 percent, which is in line with the Healthy People 2030 target.

Examples of LMHS programming include:

- **Dining with Diabetes** – this program was reconvened in 2022 as a virtual program and returned to in-person educational programming in 2023.
- **Healthier for Life** – this exercise and healthy living program was temporarily suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic and restarted in 2022.
- **Walk With a Doc** – this in-person walking program covering various health topics (to include healthy lifestyle topics) was suspended during the COVID pandemic and was restarted in person in 2022.
- **Free Diabetes Screenings** – these screenings are performed during community events in which the Hospital is requested to participate/manage a table.

## Collaborating Partners To Conduct the CHNA

LMH collaborated with the LCHD and organizations represented on the chart below to conduct this CHNA.

Organization	Populations Represented
Licking County Health Department*	All populations of Licking County, including medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations. LMH works in conjunction with the Licking County Health Department to identify and prioritize community health disparities and to align CHNA topics between the organizations.
Licking County Board of Health*	All populations of Licking County, including medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations.
Licking Memorial Hospital	All populations of Licking County.
Pathways of Central Ohio/211	Provides a variety of social services, including a 24/7, 2-1-1 Crisis Hotline and text line, parent education, training, and support; and youth prevention services.
Heath City Schools	Students and families of Licking County.
Canal Market District	Farmers Market held Tuesdays and Fridays in Downtown Newark. Mission is to improve community access to healthy, local food and promote economic development rooted in the county’s history, culture, and local bounty. Representing food producers and entrepreneurs.

Organization	Populations Represented
Licking County Job and Family Services*	All populations of Licking County, including medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations.
Mental Health Recovery for Knox and Licking Counties	Use Recovery and Resiliency Methodology to enhance the quality of life for individuals and families, and to diminish the problems caused by alcoholism, drug addiction, and mental illness for the residents of Licking and Knox Counties.
Ohio State University	All populations of Licking County, including medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations.
United Way of Licking County	Advances the common good by creating opportunities for all. The focus is on <b>education, income, and health</b> – the building blocks for a good quality of life and a strong community.
Public at Large	All populations of Licking County, including medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations.
Licking County Children and Families	Association of public and non-profit organizations, schools, clergy, parents, and elected officials, committed to strengthening families and improving the local social and human service delivery system by working together and sharing resources.
Licking County Infant Mortality Taskforce	Multiple county agencies working together to put forth an action plan to help prevent future infant deaths.
Licking County Diabetes Forum	To reduce the adverse health effects of type 2 diabetes on Licking County residents.
Licking County Wellness Coalition	Help promote healthy lifestyles by increasing physical activity, promoting healthy eating, and reducing tobacco use among Licking County residents.
Tobacco Use Reduction Network of Licking County	Work toward system and policy changes to reduce tobacco use among Licking County residents.
Food Pantry Network of Licking County	Cooperative to coordinate the acquisition and distribution of emergency food supplies by working through its member food agencies with the goal to ensure that no one in Licking County would have cause to suffer from hunger. LMH has established a community food market in collaboration with the Food Pantry Network. This market is located adjacent to Hospital property and has the broadest operating hours of any food pantry in the county. LMH will continue this partnership to benefit the members of the Licking County community.
Hospice of Central Ohio	Provide compassionate, individualized end-of-life care regardless of the ability to pay. Patient and family desires guide the physical, emotional, and spiritual care support provided. Members of the community – patients' families, children, and anyone experiencing loss – find support through bereavement services.
Licking County Healthcare Disaster Planning Coalition	All populations of Licking County, including medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations.
Licking County Prevention Partnership	Dedicated to educating, informing, and advocating for effective mental, emotional, and behavioral healthcare for Licking County residents.
Licking County Addiction Taskforce	Address addiction services for all populations of Licking County, including medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations.
Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention Coalition	Address prescription drug abuse and overdose through policy, systems, and environmental change strategies to address the issue for Licking County residents.

\*Knowledge, information, and expertise in public health

## Hospital Identifying Information

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Licking County

CHNA Report approved by the Board: 12/17/2025  
CHNA Report initially posted to the website: 12/18/2025  
Tax identification number: 31-4379519

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**Licking Memorial  
Health Systems**

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