



Licking Memorial Health Systems

# Community Connection

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

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# LMHS Donates Life-saving Heat Tracking Devices to Area Schools

Each year, thousands of athletes across the United States experience heat illnesses such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and exertional heat stroke (EHS) – which can be deadly. The Korey Stringer Institute’s “Team Up for Sports Safety” initiative has been raising awareness of best practices and life-saving devices to protect athletes from heat-related illnesses and reduce sport-related deaths. Earlier this year, members of the Institute held a meeting, hosted by the Cleveland Browns at First Energy Stadium, with representatives from the Ohio High School Athletic Association, Ohio Athletic Trainers’ Association, sports medicine physicians, high school administrators, coaches, and others to discuss ways to make high school sports safer in Ohio. The discussion included information on the wet bulb globe temperature (WBGT) heat stress tracker.

A WBGT device measures heat stress in direct sunlight using ambient temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, sun angle, and cloud cover (solar radiation) to monitor the environmental conditions. It differs from the heat index which only takes into consideration temperature and humidity, and is calculated for shady areas. The use of a WBGT greatly reduces the risk of EHS and can save the life of a student athlete.

As environmental temperature and humidity increase, there is an increase in the heat stress that is placed on an athlete. When exercising in high temperatures, the body’s primary method of dissipating heat produced by working muscles is through the evaporation of sweat from the skin. However, evaporation is hindered as humidity increases, causing the body to maintain a higher temperature and increase the risk of EHS.

In keeping with the mission to improve the health of the community, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) purchased 30 WBGT heat stress trackers and tripods, donating two to 15 Licking County schools to assist in monitoring the temperature and humidity.

“The safety and wellbeing of student athletes in our community is a top priority,” said Rob Montagnese, LMHS President & CEO. “This donation will be worthwhile if we can save even one life from a heat-related illness.”

In August 2001, Korey Stringer, a Minnesota Vikings offensive lineman, passed away from EHS during training camp. Originally from Warren, Ohio, Korey attended Warren G. Harding High School where he played for the Raiders football team. He then attended The Ohio State University from 1992 to 1994, earning first-team All-American status in 1994. Korey was selected in the first

round of the 1995 National Football League Draft and earned Pro Bowl honors in 2000. He played six seasons for the Vikings, who retired his jersey number (77) in 2001.

After Korey’s death, his wife, Kelci, and his agent, Jimmy Gould, worked tirelessly to develop an EHS prevention institute to honor Korey’s legacy. To that end, Kelci joined forces with EHS expert Douglas Casa, Ph.D., A.T.C., at the University of Connecticut to create the Korey Stringer Institute (KSI) in April 2010. KSI partners with the NFL, Gatorade, National Athletic Trainers’ Association, Camelbak, Kestrel, Mission, and Eagle Pharmaceuticals to further advance its efforts and goals. The mission of KSI is to provide research, education, advocacy, and consultation to maximize performance, optimize safety, and prevent sudden death for the athlete, warfighter, and laborer.



Cover: Johnstown High School Athletic Director Robbie Brickner and LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese  
Above: LMHS Vice President Community Health & Wellness Ben Broyles, LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese, and Newark High School Athletic Director Jeff Quackenbush

# U.S. News & World Report Gives LMH High Performance Ratings

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) has received the High Performing rating from *U.S. News and World Report* in Heart Attack, Heart Failure, and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Over 6,000 U.S. hospitals were evaluated and scores were based on multiple data categories, including patient survival, discharging patients to home, nurse staffing, ICU specialists, and patient experience.

“Earning these recognitions is an outstanding achievement and clearly demonstrates LMH’s ability to provide top quality care to the community,” said Licking Memorial Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese.



“Our state-of-the-art technology, combined with the tremendous commitment our employees have to their patients and to the organization, makes

it possible for Licking County residents to receive the lifesaving medical services they need close to home.”

LMH was among 692 hospitals that received a high performing rating for heart attacks, among 1,144 hospitals that received a high performance rating for heart failure, and among 1,299 hospitals that received a high performance rating for COPD. Hospitals that earned high performing ratings were significantly better than the national average. *U.S. News and World Report* is a recognized leader in college, grad school, hospital, mutual fund, and car rankings.

# LMH Named Among the Best Hospitals in America

*Money*, an online publication, recently released its inaugural list of Best Hospitals in America to highlight facilities that consistently deliver safe, high-value care and an excellent hospital experience to patients. To compile the list, *Money* utilized data from the Leapfrog Group’s 2021 hospital survey, which included 39 performance measures within seven different categories. Of the more than 2,200 hospitals throughout the U.S. that participated in the survey, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) was one of only 148 to receive the prestigious distinction.

“We are honored to be designated as one of the Best Hospitals in America by *Money* and the Leapfrog Group,” Licking Memorial Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese said. “Our leadership and staff are committed to providing care that prioritizes safety, value, and patient experience. It is

very rewarding to see our efforts to improve the health of the Licking County community recognized at a national level, and I cannot thank our employees enough for their dedication to our mission.”

To qualify for the list, eligible hospitals were required to achieve an “A” letter grade on the Leapfrog Hospital Safety



Grade assessment for Fall 2021. LMH has received an “A” safety grade from the Leapfrog Group for 12 consecutive surveys dating back to 2016. Hospitals also had to meet a qualitative assessment of excellence, as well as criteria related to safe medication ordering practices, intensive care unit staffing, the response to “never events” – occurrences in the medical field that should never happen to patients – and performances related to certain high-risk surgeries including heart, bariatric, hip replacement, and lung cancer procedures.

The complete list of 2022 Best Hospitals in America can be viewed online at [money.com/best-hospitals](https://money.com/best-hospitals). For more information about LMH’s performance rankings in the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, visit [ratings.leapfroggroup.org](https://ratings.leapfroggroup.org).

# LMHS Announces Leadership Promotions

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) is pleased to announce several new leadership promotions. A new vice president has been chosen to lead all operations for the Information Systems Department, and several current directors have accepted promotions to serve as Assistant Vice Presidents within their respective departments.

“LMHS takes pride in recognizing the strengths of our employees and promoting from within,” said Rob Montagnese, LMHS President & CEO. “The newly promoted individuals have each consistently demonstrated fair and consistent leadership and the ability to inspire others to reach their maximum potential. We offer our sincere congratulations to them all.”

Upon the retirement of Vice President Information Systems Sallie Arnett, M.S., RHIA, at year’s end, Director of Information Systems Diana Ermlich, RHIA, has accepted a promotion to fill the position. Diana will assume responsibility for the Information Systems (IS), Health Information, and Communications Departments at LMHS.



**Diana Ermlich, RHIA, Vice President Information Systems**

Diana is certified as a Registered Health Information Administrator. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from The Ohio State University. She joined LMHS in 2004 as the Manager of Health Information Management. In 2006, she became a Systems Analyst in the IS Department, and was promoted to Senior Systems Analyst in 2007. She assumed her current responsibilities as Director of Health Information and Hospital Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Applications in 2012. In 2015, Diana was selected by her peers as LMH Manager of the Year.

In addition to the newly promoted Vice President of Information Systems, the following leaders have also accepted promotions to an Assistant Vice President role:



**Ian Bolden, Assistant Vice President Information Systems**

Ian began his career at LMHS in 2007 as a Senior Systems Analyst in IS and promoted to Manager in November of 2012. Ian was recognized in 2019 as LMH Manager of the Year. He has responsibility for management of all Epic clinical applications, web development, and medical device integration.



**Natalie Brown, Esq., Assistant Vice President Legal Services/General Counsel**

Natalie joined LMHS in 2018 as Director of Legal Services. She earned her law degree from the University of Dayton School of Law. Before accepting the position with LMHS, Natalie served as an Assistant Attorney General and then Legal Counsel for the Ohio Department of Medicaid.



**Laura Edelblute, LISW-S, Assistant Vice President Physician Practices**

Laura has been serving as the Director of the Pataskala Health Campus and the Licking Memorial Health Professionals Director of Operations. She began her career at LMHS in 2013. Laura is a licensed independent social worker having received a Bachelor of Arts in Business/Psychology from Miami University and a Master of Science in Social Administration from Case Western Reserve University. She was recognized as Manager of the Year in 2016.



**Paula Fry, CHCIO, MBOE, PMP, LSSBB, Assistant Vice President Information Systems**

Paula was hired in 2016 as a Manager of the Information Systems Project Management Office and promoted as Director in 2019. She is responsible for coordinating multiple teams within LMHS and ensuring vendor resources deliver projects on time and on budget. Paula received the Manager of the Year award in 2022.



**Kim Heddleson, B.S.N., R.N., Assistant Vice President Acute Care and Cardiology**

In 2007, Kim accepted the position of Clinical Coordinator for Critical Care at LMHS and promoted to Manager in 2010, then Director of Cardiology Services in 2016. She was awarded Manager of the Year award in 2018 for her service as Director of LMH Cardiac Services and Physician Center Manager of the Licking Memorial Heart Center. Kim has led her team to receive and maintain numerous accreditations.



**Jeff Kovalik, Assistant Vice President Engineering Services**

Jeff joined LMHS in 2007 as the Facilities Manager, and was promoted to Director of Engineering Services in 2008. He oversees the maintenance of all LMHS buildings, manages Plant Operations and Maintenance Department staff, and also designs and oversees all building and remodeling projects. He was recognized as Manager of the Year in 2012.



**Lorei Kraft, B.S., MT (ASCP) SH, Assistant Vice President Laboratory and Oncology Services**

For 35 years, Lorei has been part of the Licking Memorial Hospital Laboratory Staff. She began her career as a Medical Technologist, became a Hematology Coordinator in 1993, and was promoted to Director of Laboratory Services in 2000 and also became Director of Oncology in 2019. Lorei has received the LMHS Manager of the Year Award twice.

## Distribution Survey of Community Connection

Licking Memorial Health Systems is conducting a survey to determine the best method of delivery for *Community Connection*. Currently, the publication is mailed to homes every other month; however, LMHS would like to know if subscribers prefer to receive a printed copy through the mail or digitally through email.

*Community Connection* readers are asked to contact LMHS Public Relations with their preferred delivery method at [publicrelations@LMHealth.org](mailto:publicrelations@LMHealth.org) or (220) 564-1560. *Community Connection* is produced to inform Licking County residents about the services, technologies, and healthcare information that LMHS provides to improve the health of the community.



# Kvamme Family Surgery Center Dedicated at LMH

During a special ceremony on September 13, Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) dedicated the Kvamme Family Surgery Center in the John & Mary Alford Pavilion in honor of area residents Megan & Mark Kvamme. Mark assisted in the unveiling of a new information wall and interactive kiosk that features technology available at LMH, including the da Vinci Surgical System. The Kvammes made a generous lead gift toward the acquisition of the robotic-assisted surgical technology which enhances the capabilities of surgeons' eyes and hands to provide minimally invasive procedures.

"Fifteen years after the ribbon cutting for the John & Mary Alford Pavilion, we are celebrating a surgery department that now accommodates some of the greatest medical technology you can find clinically throughout the state and even throughout the world," said Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) President & CEO Rob Montagnese. "The era of robotic-assisted technology is beginning, and we sincerely thank the Kvamme family and all of our donors, who through their generosity, allow LMH to acquire technology that furthers our mission of improving the health of the community."

Since the addition of the Pavilion in 2007, thousands of community members have benefitted from the continually increasing number of surgical services offered at LMH. Common procedures include cardiovascular, orthopedic, obstetrical, gynecological, vascular, reconstructive, and general surgery. Vice President Acute Care Services Heather Burkhart reported that more than 7,000 surgeries were performed in 2021.

Roy Brown, Jr., M.D., of Licking Memorial Urology, joined LMHS in 2021 and has been utilizing the da Vinci Surgical System since 2004. "The robot is an important instrument for physicians to have because it gives us the ability to perform minimally invasive procedures and improve the overall care for our patients," explained Dr. Brown.

The da Vinci Surgical System allows surgeons to view the operative field in 3D and more precisely execute delicate techniques. Due to the enhanced accuracy, robotic-assisted surgery offers less blood loss, decreased damage to skin, muscles and tissue, reduced risk of infection, and smaller, less visible scars. Other benefits include less pain, faster recovery times, and shorter Hospital stays.

"The ability to perform common surgeries – such as hernia repair, colon resection, and gall bladder removal – as minimally invasive procedures, will allow patients to return to their lives faster," said Brent Savage, M.D., of Licking Memorial Surgical Services. "Improving the recovery times of our patients is an immeasurable gift that we have been given with the acquisition of this robot."

William Phillips, D.O., of Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery, offered his thanks to LMHS leadership and donors and remarked on a number of technological advances that have benefitted his practice since he joined LMHS in 2020, including the new electronic health record system, Imprivata ID scanners, Artis Interventional Angiography Suite, state-of-the-art laboratory equipment, and smart bed technology.

"Nobody knows the healthcare needs of Licking County better than the Hospital, and the partnership with our generous supporters makes for a great opportunity to provide outstanding care to our community," said Dr. Phillips.

Prior to the unveiling of the wall, Rob offered a toast of gratitude in honor of the Kvamme family and recognized Mark and Megan for their generous donation. He also presented Mark with tokens of appreciation, including a framed photograph of the Kvamme Family Surgery Center wall, a commemorative glass piece, flowers for Megan, and gifts for the children.

"One thing I have learned from living near Licking County is the importance of having excellent community healthcare, which is dependent on the availability of the latest technology to attract outstanding surgeons like the ones at LMH," said Mark. "I am excited that the Kvamme family has provided the resources needed to bring these technologies here. Fundamental change is coming to Licking County, and if we embrace the opportunity for change and growth as a community, we will experience amazing progress."

LMHS continues fundraising efforts to replenish monies used to purchase the da Vinci surgical system. "LMHS leadership critically considers new technology, investigating how many patients will benefit from its use before purchasing any new equipment," Rob disclosed. "Replenishing these funds now will ensure that we are financially prepared to consider future technology purchases."

Gifts are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. To make a gift or for additional information, please call the Licking Memorial Hospital Development Office at (220) 564-4102 or visit [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org), and click on the Donate button at the top right corner of the page.



# Planning Effort for Intel Seeks Public Input

The Thomas J. Evans Foundation and area business leaders have created FRAMEWORK – an initiative to define a collaborative vision that supports specific community planning in Licking County. Members involved in the effort will address the economics, land use, character of place, transportation, and other topics associated with the growth expected when Intel begins construction in western Licking County. Beginning in October, the group will seek public input in hopes of aligning the communities who are immediately impacted by the anticipated growth.

Licking County has already been experiencing significant growth and development. Earlier this year, Intel announced it would build two leading-edge processor factories in western Licking County investing \$20 billion in the area and creating investment 3,000 jobs. Many additional jobs will be created by Intel suppliers and supportive development.

FRAMEWORK is focusing on 15 jurisdictions – Granville Township, Harrison Township, Jersey Township, Liberty Township, Monroe Township, Saint Albans Township, Union Township, Village of Alexandria, Village

of Granville, Village of Hebron, City of Heath, City of Johnstown, City of Newark, City of Pataskala, and Licking County Government – which currently contain roughly 75 percent of the population, housing, and jobs in Licking County.

“Many people are eager to learn how they can be involved in planning the future of Licking County. No one knows the community like those who live or work here, so an authentic voice is essential to this process,” said Sarah R. Wallace, Board Chair, The Thomas J. Evans Foundation. “The team feels a sense of urgency and is focused on achieving the best outcomes for the community. We need to be aligned to garner the most support from the state, county, federal government, and other potential sources. The goal is to create a rational, yet aspirational, picture for how growth should occur to ensure sustainability for our lifetimes and future generations.”

Those involved in FRAMEWORK have been collecting data and reviewing plans for county-wide initiatives focused on transportation, utilities, comprehensive community plans, housing, school district growth, and more, to determine the best strategy to define healthy communities in the future. “This is a

unique time period in Licking County. Spectating is not an option, and FRAMEWORK offers an opportunity for community members to answer the question of how to shape the future,” Sarah emphasized.

The group looks forward to engaging the public in the discussions. FRAMEWORK team members will be present at various community events, such as football games, farmers markets, and civic organization events, to share and collect information. Electronic surveys and a comprehensive website – frameworklc.org – will also be used to gather information and share information. Scan the QR code to visit the website on a mobile device. Residents are invited to share feedback including thoughts, perspectives, and emotions concerning what a healthy community should entail and defining the most important assets. The information will be utilized to assist county leadership in creating a comprehensive growth plan and secure future funding.

The creation of FRAMEWORK is being funded by six organizations and public sector funding. Private sector funders include: First Federal Savings, Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority, Licking Memorial Health Systems, Park National Corporation, Southgate Corporation, and the Thomas J. Evans Foundation.



# Project SEARCH Welcomes Five New Interns



For the seventh year, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) is participating in the Project SEARCH program – a unique opportunity that provides real-life work experience to help youth with disabilities make successful transitions from high school to adult life. LMHS partners with 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 training for local students. Seven Licking County high school students have joined Project SEARCH for the 2022-2023 school year.

“We are delighted to continue our partnership with Project SEARCH and the outstanding community organizations that help to make this special program possible,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. “Our staff enjoy the opportunity to work alongside these wonderful students who are so eager to learn. The Project SEARCH program provides students with the opportunity to learn numerous vital skills that will be used in their transition to a long-lasting career in the Licking County workforce.”

Students from Newark, Granville, Licking Heights, and Northridge school districts are participating in Project SEARCH this school year. In addition to serving as the host site, LMHS provides uniforms to all of the students and transportation through Licking County Transit Services. The students began the program in August with orientation and time to adapt to the healthcare environment. They were offered the opportunity to choose work areas within LMHS that appealed to their interests, then interviewed with LMHS management in the chosen departments to gain interviewing skills and ensure they were a proper fit with the staff.

The interns attend an hour of classroom instruction on employability and independent living skills each day. After class, they report to their assigned departments within LMHS for hands-on job training. Each intern is offered three unique rotations during the year in a variety of clinical and technological areas, including Cardiology, Concierge Services, Culinary Services, Dermatology, Engineering Services, Environmental Services, Maternal

Child, Oncology, Orthopedic Surgery, Purchasing, and Physical Rehabilitation.

The internship rotation allows the students to acquire marketable and transferable skills necessary to be hired by Licking County businesses for entry-level positions, with new responsibilities added as they become more proficient in their core areas. These work experiences also help the students build communication, teamwork, and critical thinking skills.

The long-term goal of Project SEARCH 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 and integrated employment and have assistance obtaining complex and rewarding jobs.



# Local Partnership Helps Pregnant Women with Substance Use Disorder

Women who use substances, alcohol, or tobacco during their pregnancy are more likely to have negative health outcomes for themselves and their baby. Children with prenatal substance exposure are more likely to be diagnosed with developmental delays or other medical diagnosis, such as Neonatal Opiate Withdrawal Syndrome. Many women with a substance use disorder (SUD) are hesitant to seek medical care due to the fear of child welfare involvement and mistreatment from healthcare professionals. Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) has joined other Licking County agencies to form the Licking County Plan of Safe Care (POSC) Partnership with the goal of strengthening families and keeping children safely at home.

A POSC is a voluntary plan that provides support and resources for individuals with substance misuse during pregnancy and after birth. The partnership consists of caring experts from medical, social services, mental health, and treatment facilities that are available in Licking County. Consulting with the patient and her POSC team provides a collaborative opportunity to explore creative solutions and resources that assist in delivering comprehensive services and ensuring a healthy pregnancy, birth, infant, and family.

“As the sole Hospital in Licking County, we want our patients to know that we are here to provide support, be an ally, and promote the best health outcome for mother and baby,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. “Licking Memorial Hospital’s (LMH) Maternal Child Department works collaboratively with a woman’s OB/GYN to identify expectant mothers who may have a substance use disorder and provide preventive assistance.”

A POSC can help prevent local child protective service agency involvement. A perinatal nurse navigator will work with a patient through their women’s health provider to acquire resources such as safe housing, food, utilities, transportation, medical care and coverage, mental health, and substance use treatment. The POSC also identifies support for the infant such as pediatric care, diapers, cribs, car seats, breastfeeding support, formula, and other needed items. Support for delivery preparation and postpartum home visits can also be included in a POSC.

“Pregnancy can be a very motivating time for a woman to make lifestyle changes and get the help she needs for herself and her unborn baby,” said Heather Burkhardt, Vice President Acute Care Services. “LMH wants women to feel empowered and in control of their healthcare and offering a Plan of Safe Care can help our patients to feel supported and cared for.”

A professionally trained social worker will meet with the patient to identify her needs and expectations to form a Plan of Safe Care. Pregnant women with SUDs may be referred to a treatment facility as part of their plan. Shepherd Hill is a nationally accredited treatment center located in Newark that is affiliated with LMH. Referred patients receive an assessment that includes medical history and history of substance use. Based on their assessment, patients may participate

in an intensive outpatient treatment program which consists of meeting three to four hours each day three times a week as well as medication assisted treatment. Treatment includes receiving education on addiction, understanding the biological and psychological components of addiction, and learning how to live safely with their SUD.

“In most cases, pregnant women who have a substance use disorder are open to receiving treatment because they want to have a healthy baby, but they may be afraid to seek treatment for fear of losing their child or being viewed as a bad mother,” explained Andrew Highberger, M.D., of Licking Memorial Behavioral Health and Addiction Services. “It is crucial that we eliminate the stigma that society has of people with substance use disorder. Addiction is a disease like any other medical condition, and our goal is to educate patients and the community so they can recognize that substance use disorder is a treatable condition and there is no shame in receiving treatment for their disease.”

In addition to a POSC for expecting mothers, LMH provides a Centering Pregnancy Program, a group where women with similar due dates meet in groups for support, health assessment, and education. The group meets 8 to 10 times, beginning at the 14th week of pregnancy and continuing through the duration of pregnancy. Each session includes a prenatal appointment, prenatal education, and social support in a two-hour visit. Prenatal education includes discussion on topics such as pregnancy, nutrition, breastfeeding, stress reduction during pregnancy, exercise, birth, newborn care, child safety, and new mothering issues. Sessions are held at Licking Memorial Hospital. Women interested in participating in the Centering Pregnancy Program can contact Megan Layman or Kaylissa Smith at (220) 564-3685 or email [mLAYMAN@LMHealth.org](mailto:mLAYMAN@LMHealth.org) or [kbsmith@LMHealth.org](mailto:kbsmith@LMHealth.org).

# Resource Fair Offers Education About LMHS Maternity Services

The Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Development Council hosted Preparing for Baby – A Resource Fair in August. The event was designed to offer education about Licking Memorial Health Systems’ (LMHS) available services for mothers and children, as well as health and safety issues. New or expecting parents, those considering pregnancy, and guardians, were able to browse the various information displays set up in the LMH First Floor Conference Rooms.

LMHS employees were available to discuss a wide variety of topics including tobacco cessation, nutrition, pediatric healthcare, breastfeeding, infant CPR, and car seat safety. Items for a safe nursery were also on display and included a crib, changing table, pack and play, stroller, and car seat. Attendees participated in a raffle drawing for several of the items.

In addition to the educational displays, staff members from the Maternal Child Department provided guided tours of the Labor and Delivery and post-partum areas. Attendees learned about the different tools and birthing techniques offered to create a low-intervention birthing experience and family-centered care. In the post-partum area, the attendees were able to view a bassinet, clothing, and other items available for the newborn and mother after birth. LMHS encourages both parents to stay in the room and care for their newborn.



# Patients and Staff Reconnect at Reunions

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) recently hosted the Special Care Nursery Reunion and Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation Reunion. The annual events offer patients, their families, and guests the opportunity to visit with Hospital staff and fellow community members with shared experiences.

On June 14, families of former Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Special Care Nursery patients gathered on the Hospital Front Lawn. More than 30 families were represented, including mothers, guests, and children. The event provides patients and staff members an opportunity to visit and celebrate the children and offers additional education about caring for an infant. The guests also had the chance to speak with staff 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 John P. Lazar, M.D., and Taylor Grant.

Dr. Lazar expressed his gratitude for the Nursery staff and praised their high level of care and kindness. He also thanked the parents for setting an example of self-sacrifice and assisting in the healing of the newborns. Dr. Lazar earned his Medical Degree from The Ohio State University College of Medicine in Columbus and completed a pediatric residency at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus. He joined Licking Memorial

Inpatient Pediatrics in 2017 and takes a special interest in the care of newborns.

Taylor, a mother of three, shared her family's experience when her youngest son, Oliver, was a patient in the Special Care Nursery. Oliver was born eight weeks prematurely due to a placental abruption. He received care in the LMH Special Care Nursery for 11 days. Taylor expressed her appreciation for her son's attentive care from the Special Care Nursery staff. A resident of Newark, Taylor currently works in the LMH Laboratory.



At the Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation Reunion on August 18, former patients reunited with the staff members who helped them become more independent after an illness, accident, or surgery. The patients and their guests also enjoyed a catered dinner, received blood pressure screenings, explored informational tables, and met others who received care in the LMH Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit.

During the event, David Koontz, D.O., of Licking Memorial Internal Medicine, welcomed the guests and recognized the Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation staff and their dedication to providing the highest-quality care to patients. The goal of the Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation program is to help patients develop the skills necessary to live as independently as possible after leaving the Hospital.

An interdisciplinary team, including physical, occupational, and speech therapists, focuses on the patient's specific area of need.

Former patient Todd Shroyer also spoke to the group about how the staff helped him regain the functions he lost after suffering from Guillain-Barre syndrome – a rare

neurological disorder in which the body's immune system attacks the nervous system. He commended the staff on the compassionate and committed care he received. Todd has spent over 40 years in emergency services and currently serves as the Director for Coshocton County Emergency Medical Services.



# Behind the Scenes – Rheumatology

Rheumatology is a specialty that focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of inflammatory and autoimmune diseases that affect an individual's bones, muscles, joints, ligaments, and tendons. These diseases can cause pain, swelling, stiffness, and possibly joint deformities. Many of these conditions are chronic and require lifelong treatment from an attentive and qualified rheumatologist. At Licking Memorial Rheumatology, Lydia Cortes-Betancourt, M.D., and her staff provide quality and empathetic care to patients allowing them to lead happy and satisfying lives.

The American College of Rheumatology estimates more than 50 million people in the United States have a rheumatic condition, including rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, lupus, Sjogren's disease, and Paget's disease. These conditions cause a person's immune system to attack normal cells in the joints, muscles, bones, and organs. Most are usually painful, chronic, and progressive.

Symptoms vary depending on the type of rheumatic condition; however, most patients experience:

- Joint pain and stiffness
- Swelling
- Inflammation
- Limited movement
- Fatigue

These symptoms often make everyday tasks, such as cooking and cleaning, challenging for patients. However, early diagnosis and treatment can slow the progression of the disease and provide relief to

most individuals. Licking Memorial Rheumatology develops personalized care plans for patients, which include medical treatments, discussions about coping mechanisms, and techniques to regain function needed to carry out their normal daily activities.



“Our goal at Licking Memorial Rheumatology is to improve the quality of life for our patients,” said Dr. Cortes-Betancourt. “We provide them with treatments, procedures, and education to manage their illness effectively.”

Treatment recommendations may include medications, physical therapy, occupational therapy, braces and other assistive devices, or surgery. Licking Memorial Rheumatology offers a wide range of services, both hospital-based and within the office, including joint injections to treat conditions such as osteoarthritis. Joint injections deliver steroids, a medication that reduces inflammation, pain, and swelling, directly into the affected joint for faster improvement. Commonly injected joints include the knee, shoulder, ankle, elbow, wrist, the base of the thumb, and the small joints of the hands and feet. Most injections can be performed in the office under local anesthesia. Joints that are difficult to inject, such as hips or some small joints, may require the aid of an ultrasound or fluoroscopy for guidance.

Based on the specific disease, a patient's care most likely will involve a combination of treatments, including medications and lifestyle changes. For example, stretching, low-impact aerobic, and strengthening exercises benefit patients with rheumatoid arthritis. Additionally, finding ways to lower stress, such as taking time to rest or joining a support group, is essential in managing rheumatic disease. Patients are also advised to streamline their approach to everyday tasks. Creating a plan, saving energy, and dividing tasks throughout the day can help individuals achieve their goals.

Dr. Cortes-Betancourt understands her patients' struggles with their illnesses and aims to provide care that focuses on their overall well-being. She recalls her time as a caregiver for two family members struggling with terminal illnesses. During this time, she learned firsthand the difficulties that patients encounter and has used this experience to influence the care she provides her patients. Dr. Cortes-Betancourt and the staff at Licking Memorial Rheumatology strive to provide compassionate, high-quality care that enhances the lives of their patients. To learn more about the services offered by Licking Memorial Rheumatology, visit [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org)

# LMHS Summer Camps Provide Fun, Educational Experiences

During the month of July, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosted a summer camp for Licking County youth with diabetes featuring safe, active play and education. The one-day camp offered an opportunity to meet other children and learn how to stay healthy. Licking County high school seniors also were invited to participate in a two-day camp to learn about careers in healthcare at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH).

### Camp Med

On July 12 and 13, Camp Med offered an opportunity for high school seniors to receive firsthand experience with various healthcare careers. Twenty-three students, who were chosen through a rigorous application process, spent two days visiting departments and medical practices throughout LMHS. The attendees were divided into groups and allowed to participate in interactive medical demonstrations. The students were given the opportunity to use surgical and sonogram equipment, learn to draw blood using a phlebotomy educational tool, triage a mock patient in the Emergency Department, and prepare and administer medications. Students visited with staff from Acute Inpatient Rehab, Anesthesiology, Cardiology, Emergency, Information Systems, Laboratory, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Radiology, Respiratory Therapy, and Surgery, in addition to a number of physician practices.



### Camp A1C

LMHS hosted Camp A1C on July 29 for children, ages 7 to 12, under a physician's care for diabetes. Diabetes is a long-term health condition that causes high blood sugar and inadequate insulin levels in the body. The group met at Infirmary Mound Park for the one-day camp, which featured a dinosaur theme. Throughout the day, the attendees participated in activities to encourage teamwork, exercise, and healthy lifestyle habits. LMH Community Wellness Dietitians discussed the pitfalls of diabetes, carbohydrate counting, and creating a balanced plate. Campers also enjoyed an inflatable obstacle course, a scavenger hunt, and water games.





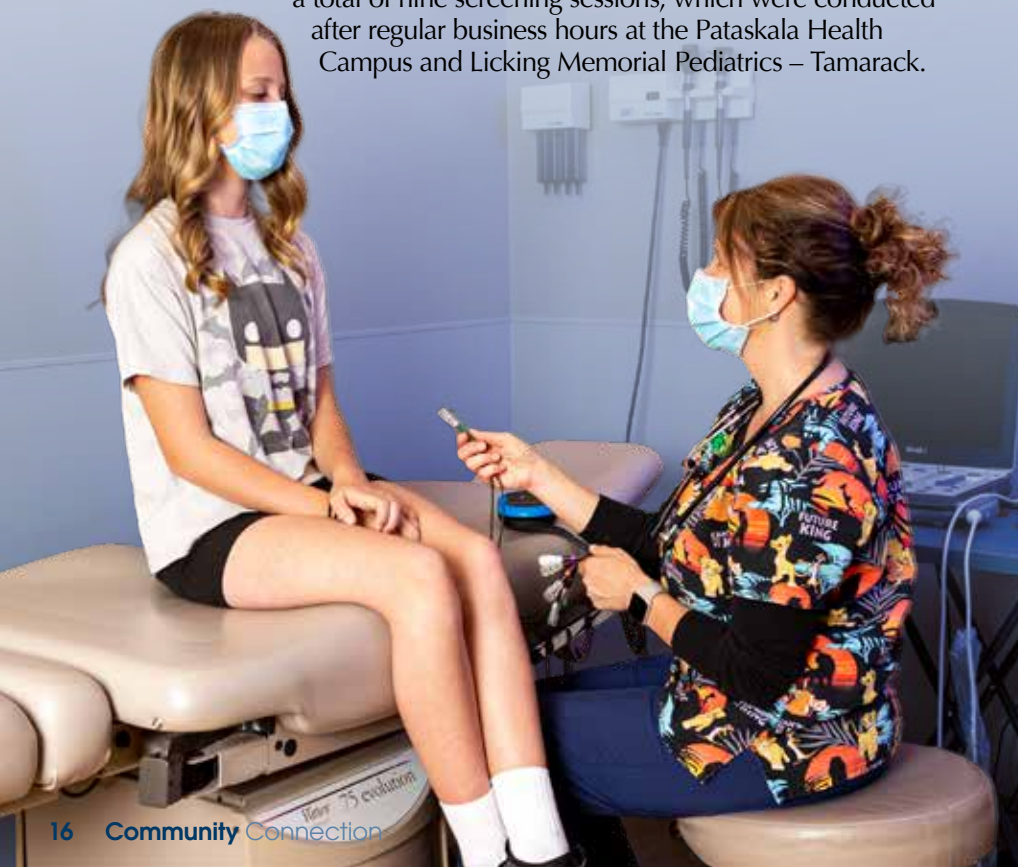
# Sports Screening Program Safeguards Area Students

Throughout the month of May, Licking County student-athletes participated in the Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) Sports Screening Program. The annual program is offered at no cost to local youth entering grades 7 through 12 who are involved in sports, marching band, and C-TEC's Criminal Justice, Fire, and Physical Therapy programs.

A total of 618 students from 15 Licking County schools participated in this year's program, which provided pre-participation physical examinations, ImpACT baseline concussion testing, and the Heart to Play electrocardiogram (EKG) and echocardiogram heart screenings. EKGs, which displays the heart's electrical impulses, and echocardiograms, which screens the functioning of the heart's valves and muscles, can identify conditions that place the athlete at risk for a sudden cardiac death even when there are no symptoms. Of the 323 students who received the heart screenings, five were referred to a pediatric cardiologist for further evaluation and treatment after preliminary results indicated possible abnormalities.

"Strenuous physical activity carries a measure of risk, which is why LMHS is committed to the well-being of our area students," LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese said. "The Heart to Play screenings provide an opportunity to limit serious and potentially fatal issues by diagnosing and treating previously undetected heart conditions before a tragic event occurs. We were pleased to once again offer the program at no cost this year, and I am grateful to all who partnered with us to help keep youth in our community safe and healthy."

A total of 63 LMHS employees – including pediatricians, other family practice and specialty physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, and support personnel – staffed the LMHS Sports Screening Program in 2022. The program included a total of nine screening sessions, which were conducted after regular business hours at the Pataskala Health Campus and Licking Memorial Pediatrics – Tamarack.



## Physician Spotlight

**Suba Pathmanathan, M.D.**, joined Licking Memorial Internal Medicine in July 2021. She earned her Medical Degree from Madras Medical College in Tamil Nadu, India, and completed an internal medicine residency at McLaren Flint Hospital in Flint, Michigan. She is board certified in internal medicine.

Dr. Pathmanathan is a member of the American College of Physicians and the American Medical Association.

### Ask a Doc – Weight Gain with Suba Pathmanathan, M.D.

#### Question: Is there a medical reason for weight gain or inability to lose weight?

**Answer:** Obesity, a complex disease involving an excessive amount of body fat, is a major health concern in Licking County. Obesity increases the risk of other diseases and health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and certain cancers. For some, weight loss can be difficult and cause discouragement when results are not evident by stepping on a scale. Typically, obesity results from inherited, physiological, and environmental factors, combined with poor diet and inactivity. Weight gain and fluctuations in weight may occur for a variety of reasons, including lack of sleep, age, or lifestyle choices; however, several medical conditions can also cause weight gain or hinder weight loss.

Hypothyroidism, also referred to as underactive thyroid disease, is a common disorder that occurs when the thyroid gland fails to produce thyroid hormones to meet the needs of the body. The thyroid gland is a small, butterfly-shaped gland located in the front, lower part of the neck. Hormones released by the gland travel through the bloodstream to control the body's use of energy from food and affect nearly every organ of the body, including the heart and brain. A lack of thyroid hormones causes body processes to slow down and metabolism to become sluggish. Symptoms of hypothyroidism include fatigue, joint pain, dry skin, or a slowed heart rate. These symptoms may go unnoticed or mimic other diseases. Obtaining a diagnosis requires blood testing and imaging.

Metabolic syndrome, also called insulin resistance or hyperinsulinemia, is a cluster of health conditions including high blood pressure and high cholesterol which leads the body to resist the hormone insulin, making it less effective. Insulin is produced by the pancreas and assists with storing blood sugar in muscle, fat, and liver cells to be used for energy. When a person becomes resistant to insulin, the cells do not easily absorb sugar, and more insulin is needed for the sugar to enter the cells. As long as the pancreas produces enough insulin to overcome the cells' weak response, blood sugar levels remain in the healthy range and no symptoms are apparent. When there is too much insulin, the liver and muscles are unable to store excess blood sugar and the body then sends the excess to be stored in fat cells. Generally, blood tests detect sugar, cholesterol, and triglyceride levels and may be used along with blood pressure readings to diagnose the disorder.

A less common hormonal disorder known as Cushing's Syndrome may also cause insulin resistance and high blood pressure. Cushing's syndrome occurs when the adrenal glands, located at the top of the kidneys, produce too much of the hormone cortisol. Cortisol assists the body to respond to stress, maintains blood pressure, regulates blood sugar, and reduces inflammation. Too much of the hormone leads to a buildup of fat in the face, upper back, and abdomen. Diagnosis is based on medical history, a physical exam, and laboratory tests.

The most common cause of Cushing's syndrome is the long-term, high-dose use of the cortisol-like glucocorticoids used to treat other medical conditions, such as asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, and lupus.

For women, hormonal changes during pregnancy or menopause can lead to an imbalance that causes weight gain. Laboratory testing can be performed to determine if a hormonal condition is present. In addition, an abnormally high level of testosterone, the male sex hormone, in women can cause polycystic ovary syndrome. Common symptoms are irregular menstrual bleeding, acne, excessive facial hair, thinning hair, difficulty getting pregnant, and weight gain that is not caused by excessive eating.

Lack of sleep due to sleep apnea or insomnia may contribute to problems with weight gain as well. Changes in sleep cycles can affect eating patterns and mood, causing overeating. Researchers have found that a person who is sleep-deprived tends to consume more carbohydrates than necessary to meet the body's energy requirements. Patients who suffer from chronic depression and stress also tend to overeat. Chemical substances produced by the body to combat stress can lead to the storing of fat which also contributes to weight gain.

Weight gain can be a side effect from certain medications used to treat seizures, diabetes, high blood pressure, and psychiatric disorders. Antipsychotic drugs,

for example, may increase appetite as well as lower the rate at which the body burns calories. Individuals should discuss all medication side effects with a healthcare provider. Similar medications may be available that will not cause weight gain.

Anyone who experiences rapid, unexplained weight gain and swelling should see a primary care physician, internist, or other healthcare provider to determine the underlying cause which could include serious health concerns such as kidney disease or heart failure. If the kidneys are not functioning correctly, or the heart is not pumping efficiently, the body may retain fluid, resulting in weight gain. Damaged kidneys are unable to properly remove waste and fluids from the body causing it to collect in the tissues. Reduced blood flow from heart failure affects the function of the other major organs. Swelling due to kidney or heart problems typically collects in the legs, ankles, or feet. Sudden changes in these areas should be investigated by a physician.

If weight loss is an issue, discuss concerns with a healthcare provider. Although it may be difficult to lose weight gained due to a medical condition or medication, adopting healthy eating habits and increasing exercise is still vital for overall health. A healthcare provider can assist in determining a treatment plan specific to the needs of a patient including referrals to a dietitian or behavioral counselor.



# Quality Reporting to the Community

Patient Story and Benchmarks for Pediatric Care

## Patient Story – Willow Crawford

symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic skin rash called erythema migrans. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

At the time, the test was inconclusive; however, Willow was prescribed an antibiotic. After a week, Bianca found a red ring covering Willow's entire back. She also noticed that Willow appeared to be experiencing hallucinations. "She would get out of bed and ask us to go get her Uncle Terry, who was not staying with us at the time." Bianca scheduled another appointment with Licking Memorial Pediatrics. Willow's blood was tested a second time, and Bianca was informed the results were positive for Lyme disease. Antibodies can take several weeks to develop, so patients may first test negative soon after infection.

"We were surprised when they told us the disease came from a tick," Bianca remembered. "We did not find a tick on Willow or the other children. I was told that is not unusual because the tick will feed, then fall off when it is full."

Also, most humans are infected through the bites of immature ticks called nymphs. Nymphs are tiny and difficult to see. They are typically more active during the spring and summer months. Adult ticks can also transmit Lyme disease bacteria, but they are much larger and more likely to be discovered and removed before transmitting the bacteria. Adult blacklegged ticks are most active during the cooler months of the year.

After Willow completed the course of antibiotics prescribed, Bianca hoped the symptoms would subside. Weeks later, Willow cut her foot and required stitches. During the follow-up visit to have the stitches removed, Dr. Gittens noticed the familiar bulls-eye rash on Willow's back.

"Dr. Gittens was so kind and went out of her way to connect us with a Lyme disease specialist at Nationwide Children's Hospital," Bianca shared. "She said she would call me as soon as she had the specialist's information, which was just minutes after we left the office."

The specialist explained that although most cases of Lyme disease can be cured with antibiotics, patients can sometimes have symptoms of pain, fatigue, or difficulty thinking that lasts for more than 6 months after completing treatment. The condition is referred to as Post-Treatment Lyme Disease Syndrome (PTLDS). Some experts believe that *Borrelia burgdorferi* can trigger an "auto-immune" response causing symptoms that last well after the infection itself is gone. Patients with PTLDS usually improve over time, but it may take months to feel completely well. It was recommended that Bianca closely monitor Willow's symptoms and be aware of pain in the tendons, muscles, joints, and bones.

"Willow did have some episodes of leg pain. She would hold her leg, or even scream because it hurt so bad," Bianca said.

Follow-up appointments with the physicians have been scheduled, but determining whether or not the disease has been cured can be difficult. Blood tests for Lyme disease could continue to return positive results because antibodies developed to fight the disease normally persist in the blood for months or even years after the infection is gone. Bianca continues to monitor Willow's health for flare-ups, but says Willow has, for the most part, returned to her happy, active self. She has also been more vigilant about checking her other children, Isabella and Zachariah Dailey, and Jordyen, Paisley, and Westyn Crawford, after they have been outside playing.

Lyme disease cases are increasing in Ohio as the range of blacklegged tick populations continues to expand in the state and human encounters occur more frequently, particularly in the insect's preferred forest habitats. Reported cases have increased from approximately 67 cases in 2012 to 582 cases in 2021, according to the Ohio Department of Health. Most cases go unreported. Anyone who spends time outdoors can be at risk for Lyme disease. The blacklegged tick is most often found in wooded, brushy areas, but can be found in tall grass and leaf litter around houses.

Reducing exposure to ticks is the best prevention for Lyme disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests using Environmental Protection Agency-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, essential oils including lemon or eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, or 2-undecanone. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that products with no more than 30 percent DEET be used on children two months of age and older. Permethrin kills ticks on contact, but should only be used to treat clothing. If using an aerosol spray on a child, ensure the child is holding their breath. Do not apply repellent directly onto a child's face. Instead, place the repellent in your hands and carefully apply avoiding the eyes and mouth.

Wearing long pants and shirts with long sleeves minimizes the amount of exposed skin. Also, it is easier to detect a tick on light-colored clothing. Shower as soon as possible after spending time outdoors, and check for ticks daily. Ticks can hide under the armpits, behind the knees, in the hair, and in the groin.

# LMHS Events Promote Youth Health and Wellness

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) offers several free community events and activities to promote health and well-being for youth in Licking County. Below are a few of the programs that parents and children can participate in throughout the year.

The Active•Fit program promotes healthy lifestyles for youth, ages 6 to 12, by introducing the benefits of exercise, healthy eating, and proper rest. The program consists of three periods that are four months long. During each period, youth select four "active" category goals and four "fit" goals and can log their progress on the ActiveFit.org website. When all goals have been accomplished for each period, participants are automatically entered into a drawing to win great prizes. Activities and events are held throughout the year to help them achieve their goals, including Active•Fit Junior Chef, Active•Fit & Active•Senior Bowling, Active•Fit Mini-triathlon, and Active•Fit Field Day. For more information about the program, visit ActiveFit.org.

Each spring, LMHS hosts an annual Sports Screening Program for Licking County students entering grades 7 through 12 who are involved in sports, marching band, and C-TEC's Criminal Justice, Fire, and Physical Therapy programs. The program offers comprehensive screenings at no cost to help youth safely participate in physically-challenging activities. The LMHS Sports Screening Program consists of three components: Heart to Play electrocardiogram and echocardiograms, ImPACT (Immediate Post-concussion

Assessment and Cognitive Testing) baseline concussion testing, and state-required pre-participation physical examinations. It is important to note that the Sports Screening Program only includes a small portion of what is covered at a child's annual well check and is not intended to replace it. For more information about the program, visit LMHealth.org/SportsScreenings.

LMHS also offers two one-day summer camps for youth, ages 7 to 12. Each event features fun and educational activities and allows participants to interact with other kids who share their condition. Camp Feelin' Fine helps children with asthma learn how to manage their symptoms. Children who have diabetes can attend Camp A1C to learn more about their disease. Both camps are free of charge, but registration is required.

Be Wise...Immunize is a free flu vaccination clinic for Licking County Youth that is held in the fall at two LMHS facilities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that children, ages 6 months and older, receive an annual flu vaccine, ideally before the height of influenza activity, which begins in October and continues through May. Be Wise...Immunize invites infants and youth up to age 18 to receive a free flu vaccine at this special event. Scrubs, the LMHS mascot, makes an appearance to provide encouragement and ease anxiety. Refreshments and prizes are also provided.



# Pediatric 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.

- Immunizations are one of the safest and most effective methods to protect children from potentially serious childhood diseases. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) monitor the percentage of children, aged 19 months to 35 months, who receive the individual and complete set of recommended immunizations. The series is frequently referred to as the 4:3:1:3:3:1 series. It consists of the following vaccines:
  - 4 doses of diphtheria, tetanus (lockjaw), and pertussis (whooping cough)
  - 3 doses of polio
  - 1 dose of measles, mumps, and rubella
  - 3 doses of Haemophilus influenzae B (influenza type B)
  - 3 doses of hepatitis B
  - 1 dose of varicella (chicken pox)

	LMHP 2019	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	National
Childhood immunization rate (4:3:1:3:3:1 series)	82%	82%	77%*	70% <sup>(1)</sup>
Children, aged 6 months to 18 years, receiving the influenza vaccination	33%	30%	32%	63% <sup>(2)</sup>

\*In 2021, concerns stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic led to a decrease in well-child visits and vaccinations.

- LMHP providers follow Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended vaccinations to prevent cervical cancer, varicella (chicken pox), and meningitis among adolescents. (In 2019, the parameters for the HPV vaccination series were changed from females, aged 13 to 17, to persons, aged 11 through 26. The vaccine can be administered to both females and males starting at age 9, and those who have not been adequately vaccinated may still receive the vaccination series until age 26.)

	LMHP 2019	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	National
Persons aged 11 through 26 completing HPV vaccination series	53%	54%	61%	54% <sup>(3)</sup>
Adolescent children receiving varicella vaccination	95%	96%	91%	90% <sup>(3)</sup>
Adolescent children receiving meningococcal vaccination	90%	89%	83%	87% <sup>(3)</sup>

- Pharyngitis (sore throat) is a common illness in children. Most children's sore throats are caused by viral illnesses. While antibiotics are needed to treat bacterial pharyngitis, such are not useful in treating viral pharyngitis. Before antibiotics are prescribed, a simple diagnostic test needs to be performed to confirm the presence of a bacterial infection. Inappropriate use of antibiotics for viral pharyngitis is costly, ineffective, and contributes to the development of drug-resistant bacterial strains. LMHP monitors and reports how many children with sore throats, aged 2 to 18 years of age, received a Group A streptococcus test before they were given a prescription for antibiotics.

	LMHP 2019	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	National
Children with pharyngitis receiving test before antibiotics	97%	93%	87%	84% <sup>(2)</sup>

- Kids' Place is an accredited child advocacy center that provides a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary evaluation of children who are suspected victims of sexual and/or physical abuse and/or neglect. Services are provided in a comfortable and confidential environment. Case management and victim advocate services are also available.

	LMH 2019	LMH 2020	LMH 2021	LMH Goal
Total number of children served	187	179	178	N/A

**Data Footnotes:**

(1) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Immunization Survey, Vaccination Coverage Among Children Aged 19-35 Months – United States, 2017.  
 (2) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Immunization Survey, "Flu Vaccination Coverage, United States, 2018-2019 Influenza Season," updated September 26, 2019.  
 (3) Estimated Vaccination Coverage with Selected Vaccines and Doses Among Adolescents Aged 13-17, by age at interview; National Immunization Survey-Teen (NIS-Teen), United States, 2018.

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



# Talking to Teens about Substance Use

Adolescence can be a difficult time for both children and parents. It is a time for teens to establish their identities and test the limits of parental control. Some of those limits can be risky, such as experimenting with drug and alcohol use. Research suggests that individuals who begin using substances at a younger age are more likely to develop substance use disorders later in life. Parents can help prevent teen drug abuse by having conversations about the consequences of using drugs and the importance of making safe/sound choices.

Common risk factors that may place children at risk for developing substance use problems include a lack of parental supervision and monitoring, family history of substance abuse, a lack of communication and interaction between parents and children, poorly defined rules and expectations about substance use, and family conflict. Mental or behavioral health conditions, such as depression and anxiety, are also risk factors for substance use.

The COVID-19 pandemic raised concerns about the mental health and social well-being of adolescents, including the potential for increased substance use. When the pandemic began, many states initiated rules and guidelines in attempts to curb the spread of the disease. Mitigation efforts included lockdowns, limiting social gatherings, school shutdowns, remote learning, and restricted access to entertainment venues and restaurants. Youth faced limited opportunities to interact with friends resulting in increased feelings of loneliness due to prolonged social isolation.

Clinical depression, suicidal ideation, and anxiety, which also had the potential to be contributing factors in increased substance use behavior among children and teens, were unintended consequences of the mitigation efforts used to reduce the spread of COVID-19. While studies show that overall drug use remained stable during the first six months of the pandemic for children ages 10 to 14, substance use was higher among teens whose families experienced a loss of income, marital hardships, or other stressors due to the pandemic.

Parents are the biggest influence in their children's lives. Although teens tend to pull away from their parents and desire to experience their own independence, they still want and need their parents to be involved in their lives. Initiating a conversation about substance use can be challenging for parents; however, providing a firm foundation and clear message about the damage that drug use can cause is critical to preventing teen substance abuse.

While abstinence from substance use is the best decision for teen health, parents should set clear rules and expectations about substance use to help give teens the structure they need to stay safe. It is important for adolescents to understand that the rules and expectations their parents set regarding drug use are done out of love and concern for the child's well-being.

Parents who stay involved in their children's activities are more likely to develop a strong relationship with

their teens. Sharing quality time together, asking questions about their day, and interacting with teens' friends and parents are helpful ways to remain aware of what is happening in their teen's life. It is important for parents to provide support and guidance for their children and let them know that they can talk to their parents about drugs and alcohol without judgment or blame.

Knowing the signs and symptoms of addiction can help parents identify problematic behavior and seek help for their child. Some types of behaviors that could indicate teen drug abuse include avoiding eye contact, acting irresponsibly, frequently asking for money, stealing, isolating from others, decline in academics, and losing interest in hobbies or activities. Physical indicators of possible substance use include poor hygiene, glazed or bloodshot eyes, changes in mood or attitude, frequent nosebleeds, difficulty focusing, small track marks on arms or legs, and rapid weight gain or loss.

Treatment is recommended for teens who are already experiencing problems with substance use. Parents who suspect their child could have a substance use problem should contact their healthcare provider. Pathways of Central Ohio provides many mental health and addiction service resources in Licking County that can assist with finding a treatment program that is appropriate for adolescents. Parents can visit [pathwaysofcentralohio.com](http://pathwaysofcentralohio.com) for more information.



### Patient Story – Gabriel Denman

Eight-year-old Gabriel (Gabe) Denman enjoys playing outdoors and being a big brother to 4-year-old Laynne. His parents, Caleb and Ashlee, are proud of his strength and positive attitude as he manages his type 1 diabetes – a diagnosis he has lived with since he was 3 years old. In the months before his diagnosis, his parents had noticed he was often thirsty and was not gaining weight as he should. Caleb and Ashlee were employed as Emergency Department (ED) nurses at the time and were aware that Gabe might be experiencing a medical issue. As they monitored his health, Ashlee suspected Gabe was having trouble with his blood sugar levels.

“I had been giving him juice. He would finish a cup and then immediately ask for another. After giving him what seemed like the hundredth cup of juice, he was weak and appeared sickly,” Ashlee remembered. “My mother-in-law monitors her blood sugar, so we took Gabe to her house and used her glucose meter. His blood sugar was extremely high, so we immediately went to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) ED.”

After staff members stabilized Gabe with intravenous fluids, he was transferred to Nationwide Children’s Hospital for further stabilization and care. The couple was told he did indeed have type 1 diabetes – an autoimmune disease where the pancreas stops producing insulin – a hormone created by the pancreas that controls the amount of glucose in the bloodstream at any given moment. The onset of type 1 diabetes is not connected to diet or lifestyle, and the exact cause is unknown. However, researchers have found that in most people with type 1 diabetes, the body’s immune system – which normally fights harmful bacteria and viruses – mistakenly destroys islet cells that produce insulin in the pancreas. Once the islet cells of

the pancreas are destroyed, the body produces little or no insulin.

Insulin moves sugar (glucose) from the bloodstream to the body’s cells for energy. Sugar enters the bloodstream when food is digested. Without enough insulin, sugar builds up in the bloodstream and can cause life-threatening complications if left untreated. Right now, no cure exists, but type 1 diabetes can be managed. Advances in blood sugar monitoring and insulin delivery have improved blood sugar management and quality of life for children with the disease.

“At first it was overwhelming. We thought about Gabe’s future. For his entire life, he will always have to count carbohydrates, monitor his blood sugar, and take insulin,” Ashlee shared. “He quickly adapted though and has learned when to eat or drink something to level out his blood sugar. Also, new technologies have really been beneficial for his care.”

With a continuous glucose monitor and tracking application, Caleb and Ashlee receive alerts on their phones when Gabe is experiencing a high or low that requires attention. The family also shared the app with staff members at the elementary school that Gabe attends in order for the teachers to be aware of his needs. The technology has made it simple to assist Gabe in battling the sugar highs and lows that he often experiences.

Until the summer of 2022, Gabe felt like he was the only child who had to manage type 1 diabetes. He had never met another child with the disease. Gabe’s grandmother, Traci Lautenschleger, is employed at Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) as a registration specialist. She told Ashlee about LMHS’ Camp A1C – a free, one-

day event for children, ages 7 to 12, who have diabetes.

During the camp, held at Infirmary Mound Park, children participate in a number of physical activities including kickball, relay races, volleyball, an inflatable obstacle course, a scavenger hunt, and water games. The children are also encouraged to make a craft, learn more about diet and exercise, and spend time with other children who also monitor and manage their blood sugar. LMH Community Case Management staff members including nurses and dietitians, lead the camp and closely monitor and care for the children during the activities.

“Gabe enjoyed the dinosaur theme. He made his own fossil and was so proud to show us his creation,” Ashlee said. “However, he most enjoyed meeting the other children. He was happy to spend time with children facing the same challenges he faces, and finding out – he is not the only child ever with type 1 diabetes.”

Signs of type 1 diabetes can begin to appear early; however, it may take time to recognize the symptoms. It is important to pay close attention to the signs in children. Experiencing frequent urination may be a sign that the kidneys are trying to expel excess sugar from the blood. The resulting dehydration may then cause extreme thirst, and the lack of available fluids may also cause dry mouth and itchy skin. If your child experiences increased hunger or unexpected weight loss, they might not be receiving adequate energy from the food they consume.

“Do not be afraid to check your child’s blood sugar levels. Be suspicious of extreme thirst and the other signs of diabetes,” Ashlee warns. “A type 1 diagnosis is not as scary or

overwhelming as it seems. Diabetes is manageable and children adapt well once they understand what they need to do.”

LMHS hosts Camp A1C annually in July. The event is free and open to children ages, 7 to 12, who are under a physician’s care for diabetes. To find out more about the Camp, visit [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org).



### Important Health Exams for Diabetes Care

Diabetes is a chronic health condition that affects how a person’s body uses glucose – an important source of energy for cells in the body. Too much sugar in a person’s blood can lead to other serious health conditions, such as heart, kidney, and eye disease. It is important for people with diabetes to maintain regular health checks to ensure their blood sugar, cholesterol, and blood pressure levels are within a healthy range, and to detect any potential complications. Important exams and tests include:

**A1C test** – a blood test that measures the average blood sugar levels over a period of two to three months and shows how well a person’s blood sugar is controlled. For most patients, an A1C result that is at or below 7 percent is good. Patients can have this tested as often as every three months.

**Albumin-to-creatinine ratio (ACR)** – this test measures the amount of albumin – a type of protein – in the urine. Too much of this protein can be a sign of kidney damage. The ACR test should be performed annually to prevent or slow the progression of kidney disease.

**Blood pressure** – a person with diabetes has a higher risk of high blood pressure, which can increase the risk of a heart attack or stroke. Blood pressure should be checked regularly.

**Ankle-brachial index** – patients who have symptoms of peripheral artery disease (PAD) will have a blood pressure

reading taken at their ankle. The results are compared with their regular blood pressure reading to screen for PAD.

**Cholesterol** – having diabetes increases a person’s risk of heart disease. Patients should check their cholesterol levels at least once a year as part of their wellness exam.

**Foot exam** – according to the American Podiatric Medical Association, half of people with diabetes will lose feeling in their feet and lower extremities. A complete foot exam includes a check for reflexes, calluses, infections, sores, and loss of feeling. This exam should be performed at every office visit.

**Eye exam** – an ophthalmologist will dilate the eyes to check for damage of the blood vessels in the eyes. The exam should also include a check for early signs of glaucoma, cataracts, and diabetic retinopathy.

Many of these exams can be performed by a primary care physician; however, it is important for patients with diabetes to build a healthcare team, which may include a certified diabetes care and education specialist, pharmacist, dietitian, ophthalmologist, dentist, and podiatrist. Other specialists, such as a nephrologist for kidney care, and dermatologist, may also be a part of the healthcare team.



# Diabetes 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. Much of the care that patients with diabetes receive takes place in the outpatient or physician office setting. The physician offices of Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) measure the most critical indicators for diabetes care.

	LMHP 2019	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	National
LMHP patients with diabetes having HbA1C test	95%	91%*	86%*	88% <sup>(1)</sup>
LMHP patients with diabetes receiving eye exam	74%	63%*	41%*	58% <sup>(1)</sup>
LMHP patients with diabetes having foot exam	86%	73%*	47%*	80% <sup>(2)</sup>
				<b>LMHP Goal</b>
LMHP patients with diabetes having lipid profile	90%	85%*	84%*	<b>90%</b>
LMHP patients with diabetes having microalbuminuria test	86%	79%*	64%*	<b>85%</b>

2. The hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C) test is a simple lab test that shows the average amount of sugar (also called glucose) that has been in a person's blood over an extended period of time. While having the testing done is important, the test results (or outcomes) indicate how well the physician, in collaboration with the patient, is managing the diabetes. While the goal for most people with diabetes is 7% or less, anything less than 8% is considered a good degree of control of blood sugar levels.

	LMHP 2019	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	National <sup>(1)</sup>
LMHP patients with diabetes with HbA1C less than or equal to 7%	55%	47%*	43%*	<b>38%</b>
LMHP patients with diabetes with HbA1C less than or equal to 8%	76%	69%*	63%*	<b>59%</b>

3. People with diabetes are at high risk for heart disease. An elevated LDL ("bad") cholesterol test reveals if an individual has unhealthy fat levels, which increase the risk for heart disease – a very serious complication of diabetes. An LDL level of 100 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or less is considered best for heart health.

	LMHP 2019	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	National <sup>(1)</sup>
LMHP patients with diabetes with LDL less than or equal to 100 mg/dL	75%	74%*	71%*	<b>48%</b>

4. The Community Case Management (CCM) program at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) provides services to people with diabetes in the community including the Diabetes Self-Management Education & Support program. The American Diabetes Association recommends that a person with diabetes should have an HbA1C blood test at least every six months to monitor glucose levels. LMH staff members work closely with patients and their physicians to ensure that this test is performed as recommended in order to manage each patient's condition better.

	LMH 2019	LMH 2020	LMH 2021	LMH Goal
Diabetes Self-management Education & Support participants who obtained an HbA1C test	100%	100%	100%	<b>Greater than 85%</b>

5. A1C is the standard for measuring blood sugar management in people with diabetes. Studies show higher A1C levels to be associated with the risk of certain diabetes complications (eye, kidney, and nerve disease). For every one percent decrease in A1C, there is significant protection against those complications.

	LMH 2019	LMH 2020	LMH 2021	LMH Goal
Diabetes Self-management Education & Support participants with a decrease HbA1C or within normal limits	84%	79%	78%	<b>greater than 80%</b>

\*Due to COVID-19 restrictions throughout 2020 and 2021, some patients were unable to obtain regular testing or attend in-person appointments.

#### Data Footnotes:

(1) Average of reported Commercial, Medicare and Medicaid/HEDIS measures.

(2) National Committee for Quality Assurance – NCQA Diabetic Recognition Program

# Continuous Glucose Monitoring

Blood glucose testing is an important part of diabetes care because it helps individuals with diabetes manage their condition and prevent complications. Blood glucose testing provides useful information that can help identify high or low blood sugar levels, determine the effectiveness of any prescribed medication, and track progress in reaching overall treatment goals. Advances in technology have greatly improved blood glucose monitoring for patients with type 1 and type 2 diabetes. The continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) system provides more personalized care and gives patients a better understanding of how their blood sugar levels are impacted in their daily living.

Blood sugar monitoring tests have been around for nearly 100 years and have evolved considerably through medical technology advances. The finger-stick device is the most well-known type of glucose monitoring test for individuals with diabetes. It requires a person to stick their finger with a sharp needle to extract blood and place it on a paper testing strip. While this type of testing device provides the greatest accuracy for blood sugar levels at that precise moment, there are factors that can affect a person's reading, such as damaged test strips, an insufficient blood sample, and the amount of red blood cells in the blood.

The continuous glucose monitoring system was designed to help people with diabetes measure their blood glucose levels more often with fewer finger sticks. The CGM works through a tiny sensor inserted under the skin, usually on the abdomen or arm. The sensor measures a person's glucose level through the fluid in their skin every few minutes, and a transmitter wirelessly sends the information to a monitor, which records glucose levels 24 hours a day. The device will emit an alarm if glucose levels are too low or too high. Patients can also view their glucose level anytime, allowing them to observe how their glucose changes over periods of time to recognize trends and help them to make informed decisions throughout the day about balancing food, physical activity, and medicine.

CGMs provide many benefits for diabetes management. Studies show that these devices are among the best options for outpatient blood sugar management and reducing A1C, which is considered the gold standard test for blood glucose management. CGMs also help to increase a patient's overall percentage of time spent in a healthy glucose range.

There are currently four CGM systems on the market that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration. Each stand-alone system uses a wireless transmitter to send glucose readings to a

monitor for immediate results. The monitor may also be connected to a patient's smart phone if they desire. A prescription is required for a CGM system. The cost and operation for each device varies, and most major insurance companies require a prior authorization for coverage. Patients should consult with their physician about which CGM would be best for them and check with their insurance carrier to determine coverage.



# LMHS Purchases Hartford Fair Market Steer Grand Champion

At the 164th Hartford Fair, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) purchased the Market Steer Grand Champion for \$4,400. Owned by Cody Foor, the steer weighed in at 1,467 pounds. Cody is involved in the Boots N Buckles 4H Club in Pataskala. LMHS also purchased a steer from Cody's sister and plans to donate the beef from both to the Salvation Army of Licking County.



# 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 were recently recognized for pledging their financial support.

## The Caduceus Society

The Caduceus Society was created in 1990 by the LMH Development Council to give special recognition to Licking Memorial Honorary and Active Medical Staff who support Licking Memorial Health Systems' (LMHS) mission to improve the health of the community by pledging a minimum of \$10,000 over a period of 10 years. This group of physician leaders continues the tradition of healthcare excellence by providing funds for the latest medical technology.

### Dr. Howard and Sara Reeves

LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese (right) presented a glass recognition piece to Howard Reeves, D.O., his wife, Sara, and their son, Brackyn, in appreciation of their financial commitment to the Caduceus Society. Dr. Reeves, who has been a member of the LMH Active Medical Staff since 1999, joined Licking Memorial Vascular Surgery in May 2022.

Dr. Reeves is a board certified general surgeon and vascular surgeon. He earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Ohio University in Athens and completed an internship, general surgical residency, and vascular surgery fellowship at Doctors Hospital in Columbus. Dr. Reeves is a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons and sits on the Vascular Surgery Board of Examiners. He is also a member of the American Osteopathic Association, the Ohio

Osteopathic Association, the Licking County Medical Society, and the Central Ohio Vascular Society.

Since 2010, Sara has been employed as a professor at Columbus State Community College, where she teaches a variety of human anatomy and physiology courses. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in sports science and a master's degree in human physiology from Ohio University in Athens. Sara is a member of the American College of Sports Medicine and the Ohio Academy of Sciences. In her free time, she enjoys snow and water skiing, mountain biking, participating in triathlons, and running 5K and 10K races.



## The William Schaffner Society

Created in memory of William Schaffner, who dedicated his life to assure the availability of quality healthcare services to our community, The William Schaffner Society is comprised of community members and LMHS employees who have pledged a minimum of \$10,000 to LMHF over a period of 10 years. William Schaffner was the first Chair of the Licking County Hospital Commission in 1961 and was instrumental in the passage of the county bond issue that financed the current location of LMH.

### Amber Knerr

Amber Knerr accepted a glass recognition piece from LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese (left) and Vice President Development & Public Relations Veronica Patton (right) to commemorate her pledge to The William Schaffner Society. A lifelong resident of Licking County, Amber joined the LMH Emergency Department as a Point of Care Technician in March 2021.

Amber received her Bachelor of Arts degree from The Ohio State University and currently is pursuing her Bachelor of

Science in Nursing at Chamberlain University (CU). She is a member of the Student Nurses Association and CU's Oncology Nursing Students Organization.

Amber is active in the community as the 4th District Trustee for the Ohio Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and past President of the FOP Associates in Newark. She formerly coached high school swimming at Newark and Heath and enjoys teaching swimming to individuals with physical or mental disabilities.



# 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

Goodwill Industries  
TWIGS 6  
TWIGS 8

## General

Anonymous  
John & Doris Carlson

## Community Cornerstone Club

Tony & Rita Adams  
APS Medical Billing  
Julie Ketner Barrett  
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Birkmeyer  
Mr. & Mrs. Scott Carnal  
Larry E. & Diann Caudill  
Mike & Shannon Chiacchira  
Jon & Marcia Downes  
First Impressions Concrete & Design  
Pam & Dave Froelich  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard L. Gummer  
Judge Michael Higgins  
Patricia Huddle  
Marsha & Jerry Hurt  
John P. Lazar, M.D.  
Dave & Jill Litle  
Thelma McCurdy  
Mr. & Mrs. Bill McInturf  
Jim & Polly (D) Mitchen  
Judith Mitchell  
Mr. & Mrs. James Morehead  
Judy & Fred O'Dell  
Wanda Patterson  
Mr. & Mrs. Travis Schwab  
Dave & Tickie Shull  
Doris Ann Spriggs  
Joseph & Mary Tebben  
Trevor & Becky Thomas  
Carol E. Wollenburg

## Foundations

Kroger Community Rewards

## Memorial

In memory of Kay Bailey  
By: Robert & Patricia McLaughy  
  
In memory of George Budinski  
By: Karl H. Budinski  
  
In memory of George J. Budinski  
By: Karl H. Budinski  
  
In memory of Martha M. E. Budinski  
By: Karl H. Budinski  
  
In memory of B.J. Householder  
By: Donna Peters  
  
In memory of Idabelle Koontz  
By: Monday Talks

## William Schaffner Society

Christa Jungling  
Ken Quick  
(D) Deceased

## Cradle Roll

In honor of Emma Elizabeth Davis  
By: Licking Memorial Health Systems  
  
In honor of Jaxon Frew  
By: Licking Memorial Health Systems  
  
In honor of Mason Frew  
By: Licking Memorial Health Systems  
  
In honor of Joseph Thomas Patellos  
By: Licking Memorial Health Systems  
  
In honor of Nora Tyler Strickradt  
By: Licking Memorial Health Systems

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.

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

Over 1,200 participants gathered at The Dawes Arboretum for the fourteenth annual Licking Memorial Health Systems “For Your Health” 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk in July. This year’s event offered the first in-person participation since the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was cancelled in 2020 and held virtually in 2021 with competitors scheduling time to traverse the course at the Arboretum. Brian Mortellaro, his wife, Janine, and their children, Emma, Abby, and Sarah, 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 ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to present many challenges, but we were pleased to see hundreds of area residents gather for an event that promotes healthy lifestyles. The ‘For Your Health’ 5K Run/Walk & 1-mile Fun Walk is one of our primary community events to encourage physical activity each year,” LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese said. “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 opportunities for exercise.”

The overall male and female winners of the 5K Run included: first place – J. Newman (16:55) and Brittany Barchalk (20:37); second place – Brandon Orend (17:15) and Camryn Baker (21:07); and third place – Zach Gavi (17:32) and Kaylee Linger (21:14). 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: Micro (1 to 10 employees) – McLain, Hill, Rugg & Associates, Inc.; Small (11 to 20 employees) – Unipac, Inc.; Medium (21 to 99 employees) – Center For Sight; and Large (100 or more employees) – The Energy Cooperative.

## 5K Run First Place Winners



J. Newman



Brittany Barchalk



## 2022 5K Run Medalists

Group	Top Female	Top Male
14 & Under	Camryn Baker Kaylee Linger Meredith Pyle	Alec Lackey Carson Pound Holden Quinif
15 to 19	Addison Pound Aziah McGuire Calliope Warren	Jonathon Holbrook Hayden Quinif Aidan Bowman
20 to 24	Sarah Mortellaro Abby Mortellaro Anna Huntsbarger	Brandon Orend Zach Gavi Michael Houser
25 to 29	Brittany Barchalk Madison Carpenter Leeah Mahon	J. Newman Patrick Williams Nate Barchalk
30 to 34	Kristen Jones Nicolyn Pisch Allison Reuscher	Derek Williams Micha White Zach Reuscher
35 to 39	Danielle Koehler Amanda Filler Rebecca Hutchinson	Josh Fulton Allen Fisch Joshua Filler
40 to 44	Molly Orsini Stephanie Pound Kayla Brewer	James Keene Josh Wilson Joe Chianese
45 to 49	Lorrie Gardner Tricia Phelps Amy Bowman	Chris Morrison Joe Risner Todd Surrarrer
50 to 54	Beth Yasko-Herring Netti Nau Jennifer Wilkinson	Thomas Engleheart John DuBois Timothy Hannahs
55 to 59	Jane Cox Mary Eisele Kate Bettis	Ron Herring Robert Flowers Kent Scarrett
60 to 64	Linda Castle Patty Miller Leslie Waugh	Bob Castle Joseph Fondriest, M.D. Bob Moon
65 to 69	Judy McNeish	Tom Sturtz Frank Doss Jim Matesich
70 to 74	Nancy Stamp Marsha Schafer	Carl Lahman
75 to 79		Jim Tawney Robert Thornton Thomas Mullady
80 & Over	Dottie Crump	Mike Hendershot



# Volunteer Spotlight

**Ruth Coen** became a Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) volunteer in 2010 and has accrued over 1,000 hours of volunteer service. She also is a Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) retiree who spent 40 years with the organization as a nurse and patient educator. Ruth retired in 2005 and was asked to join the Volunteer Department



in 2010 due to her experience and perspective as a former nurse.

“The Volunteer Manager at the time said that several of us retired nurses would be great volunteers because of our time as nurses and the compassion we have for patients and visitors in the Hospital,” Ruth explained. “As a nurse, it was a great privilege to care for others, and I have always loved listening to other people’s stories – it was one of my favorite parts of being a nurse. Everyone has a story to tell, and I’m always happy to listen to them during my volunteer shifts.”

Ruth volunteers in the Betsy Eaton O’Neill Health Resource Center, which provides a welcoming place for patients, their families, and friends to learn more about the medical conditions they face, and also contains a computer for medical research, and books on health-related topics. She helps patients in researching a health topic on the computer or in the library.

“The Health Resource Center is a great asset for patients and visitors at LMH to help educate themselves about their health conditions in a quiet, relaxing environment,” said Ruth. “It is staffed by volunteers who have clinical backgrounds and can answer questions, and I always hope to help someone feel better about their condition, or provide the right tools for someone to learn more about their ailment.”

Before her 40-year nursing career, Ruth attended Grant Hospital School of Nursing. She was hired as a nurse at Newark Hospital before it later became LMH. She considers herself blessed to have spent her career at LMH and watch it grow into a community hospital with over 2,200 employees. Ruth enjoys traveling in her spare time and mentioned that Hawaii and Alaska have been her favorite places to visit thus far. She also enjoys reading and spending time with friends and family, including her husband, John; two daughters, Polly and Debbie; Debbie’s husband, Kevin; and granddaughter, Alyssa.

# Retiree Spotlight

**RR Evans, M.D.**, began working as an anesthesiologist at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) in August 2003. The practice where he was employed was closing, and a friend told him that LMH was seeking an anesthesiologist. After investigating the job opportunity and learning about the Hospital, Dr. Evans interviewed for the position and was hired to work in the LMH Anesthesiology Department.

Dr. Evans received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, and proceeded to earn his Doctor of Medicine degree from New York Medical College in Valhalla, New York. Following graduation, he obtained a rotating internship at Staten Island University Hospital in Staten Island, New York. He also completed one year of a psychiatry residency at The Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, New York, an internal medicine residency at Staten Island University Hospital in Staten Island, New York, and an anesthesiology residency where he became Chief Resident in Anesthesiology at SUNY, Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York.

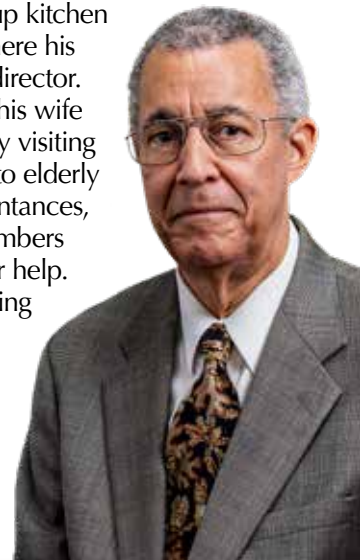
Following college, Dr. Evans served in the United States military. Before receiving his medical degree, he was involved in two summer externships with the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the William Beaumont Army Hospital. After his internship, Dr. Evans served a tour of duty in Korea near the demilitarized zone as officer-in-charge of a dispensary for the artillery troops of the 2nd Infantry Division.

“Both my medical and military training and experience during the Vietnam War timeframe gave me a great appreciation of being part of an organization characterized by good leadership, excellent procedures and protocols, and devotion to the mission,” explained Dr. Evans. “I was immediately drawn to the Licking Memorial Health Systems mission of improving the health of the community. Medical staff and employees were expected to continue to grow and improve and were assisted in doing so. I felt blessed to have worked under such a talented management team.”

Dr. Evans enjoyed performing his share of the daily work in the Department, and

he was proud of the fact that he helped to assure and comfort the numerous patients and families that he cared for during his career. It was a gratifying feeling when patients who returned to the Hospital for subsequent surgeries would request Dr. Evans as their anesthesiologist.

Dr. Evans retired from LMH in 2013. He and his wife spend much of their time on St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands. He assisted with hurricane repair work and has recently been helping transport and unload truckloads of food to the soup kitchen at a church where his brother is the director. Dr. Evans and his wife keep quite busy visiting and attending to elderly friends, acquaintances, and family members who need their help. When not staying in St. Croix, they live in Columbus with their three cats.



# LMH Hosts Granville Area Chamber of Commerce

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosted the Granville Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon outdoors at 36 McMillen Drive in August. Chamber members attended the meeting and enjoyed a catered lunch by LMHS Culinary Services. Brian Fargus, Vice President Sales and Marketing at MedBen offered a presentation about LM Direct.

LMHS and MedBen partnered to create LM Direct, a health plan specifically designed to help employers control their current and future healthcare costs. Members of the plan receive the best care and low out-of-pocket costs when obtaining treatment from LMHS providers. As a result, members build lasting relationships with community providers that lead to long-term cost savings for both members and employers.

The LM Direct plan includes a worksite wellness program that promotes prevention and early detection of chronic conditions, emphasizing the importance of receiving annual wellness exams and screenings from a plan member’s primary care physician. Focusing on better health in the present helps companies reduce future health risks of their employees. To learn more about the LM Direct Health Plan, please contact the MedBen Marketing Department at (888) 627-8683.



# New Appointments



**Toyin V. Aduloju-Odunaiya, D.N.P., APRN-CNP,** joined Licking Memorial Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine



**Noman M. Ahmed, M.D.,** joined Licking Memorial Neurology



**Zuhair M. Irfan, D.P.M.,** of Foot and Ankle Specialists of Central Ohio, joined the LMH Medical Staff



**Mohammad K. Islam, M.D.,** joined Licking Memorial Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine



**Kevin A. Oshiopekhai, D.P.M.,** of Foot and Ankle Specialists of Central Ohio, joined the LMH Medical Staff



**Sarah E. Robinson, APRN-CNP,** joined Licking Memorial Family Practice – Licking Valley





# Active•Senior Summer Programs Promote Healthy Lifestyle Habits

During the summer, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosted three Active•Senior events for Licking County residents ages 60 and older. The Active•Senior program was designed to offer seniors the opportunity to exercise, socialize, and learn more about healthy lifestyle habits.

Throughout the year, participants earn points for tracking and completing health goals in four categories: physical, nutritional, mental, and social. To mark the conclusion of the 2021-2022 Active•Senior program, individuals who met their goals for the year were invited to attend the Active•Senior Celebration on June 23. Sixty-six attendees participated in the event at Bryn Du Mansion Field House and enjoyed a delicious barbecue meal, fun activities, and prize drawings with LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese as emcee.

Active•Senior Yoga was offered in partnership with Second Presbyterian Church in Newark. Two different types of yoga classes were held in the church's gymnasium from June to August. Certified instructors taught the importance of movement and stretching during the classes held on Mondays and Fridays. Over 40 people

registered for the standard yoga classes held on Mondays. Nearly 60 registrants participated in chair yoga on Fridays and learned modified yoga poses that could be performed while seated and using the chair to maintain balance. Yoga provides a number of health-related benefits, including improved balance, strength, and circulation, as well as stress relief.

The Active•Senior Brunch Walk was held on August 23. Participants enjoyed a walk that began at the Rotary Park Pavilion on Sharon Valley Road in Newark and a healthy brunch. During the walk, Donald Fairbanks, M.D., of Licking Memorial Family Practice – North Newark, discussed chronic illness and disease.

Chronic illnesses are conditions that last one year or more, require ongoing medical attention, and may limit daily activity. Heart disease, cancer, and diabetes are considered chronic diseases and are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States. Risk factors include tobacco use, poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and excessive alcohol use. To prevent chronic diseases, individuals are encouraged to eat healthy, engage in

regular physical activity, quit smoking, and limit drinking alcohol.

The Active•Senior program, designed to promote healthy lifestyles for adults ages 60 and older, focuses on the following goals:

- Encourage adults to stay physically fit and maintain a healthy diet
- Motivate adults to challenge themselves intellectually and stay connected with friends and family
- Help adults maintain a lifelong commitment to personal health and wellness

For more information or to register for the Active•Senior program, please visit [LMHSActiveSenior.org](http://LMHSActiveSenior.org). Registration on the website allows participants to document their goal progress on an ongoing basis for the opportunity to win great prizes. Participants also may track their progress in an Active•Senior booklet, then transfer the information to the Active•Senior website prior to the end of each program year in April. For additional questions about the Active•Senior program or to obtain a booklet, please contact the LMHS Public Relations Department at (220) 564-1560.

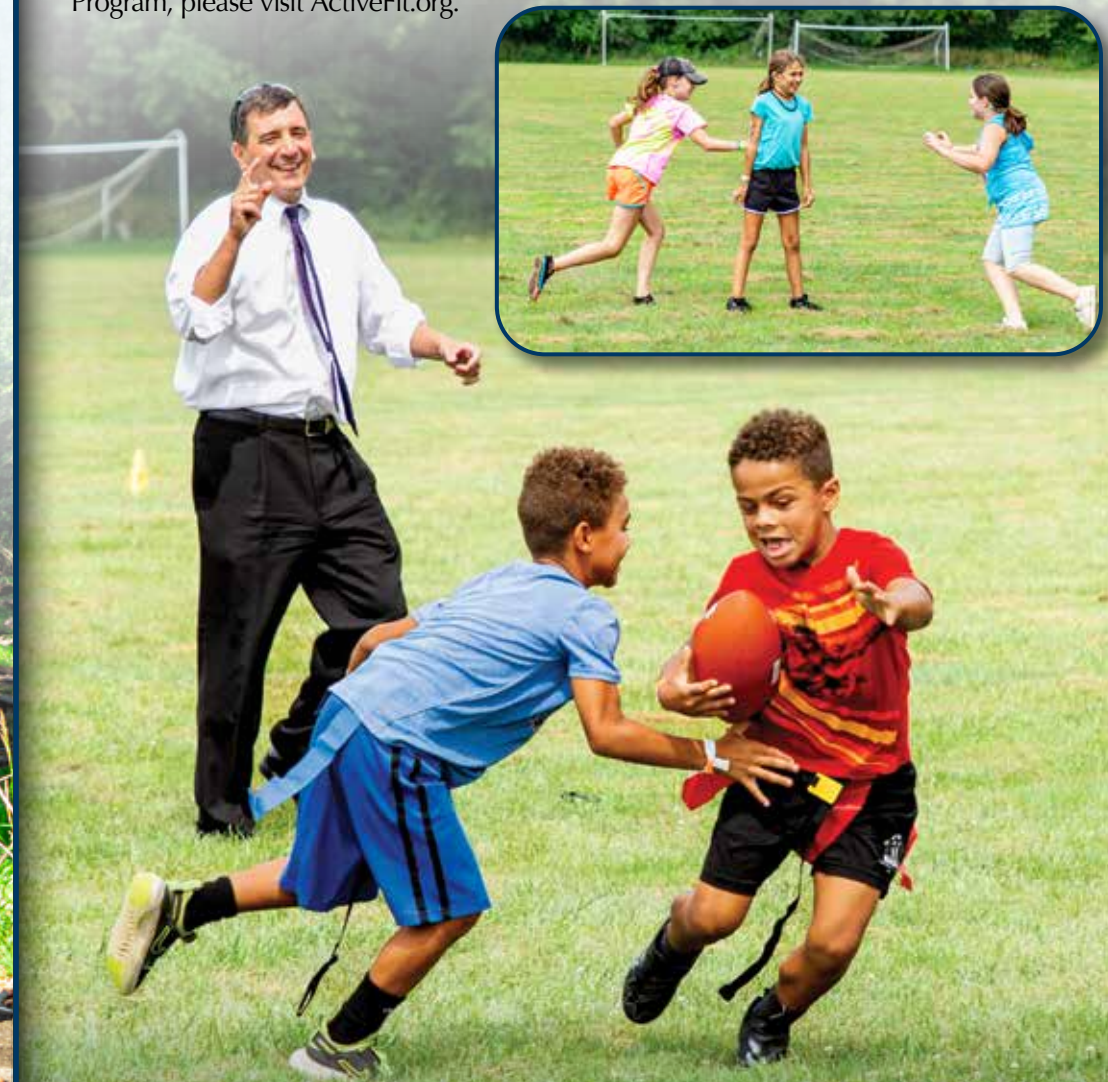


# Active•Fit Field Day Provides Summer Fun for Youth

Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) hosted the Active•Fit Field Day event on August 11 at Alford-Reese Park (NASA Fields) in Newark. During the event, children ages 6 to 12, participated in games including flag football, kickball, freeze tag, and soccer. To conclude the event, the children played water games to cool off from the summer heat. Healthy snacks and beverages were provided for the participants.

“We are happy to provide an afternoon of enjoyable outdoor fun for Licking County youth,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese. “The Active•Fit program is a great opportunity to exercise and develop healthy habits, and LMHS is pleased to offer the Field Day event.”

Participation in the event counted toward the Active•Fit Program Period 3 goals. The current period, complete with new goals, began September 1. All program participants have an opportunity to choose and complete new wellness goals by December 31 to qualify for the next incentive prize drawing. Since 2012, the Active•Fit Program has registered more than 9,000 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 Wellness Program, please visit [ActiveFit.org](http://ActiveFit.org).



# Retired Physicians Honored at Luncheon

Members of the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Honorary Medical Staff enjoyed a time of socialization at a special luncheon in August. LMH began hosting the event in 2007 as a gesture of enduring gratitude for the many years of service that the physicians provided to the community.

“The care you provided to Licking County residents is the foundation for all that we do to improve the health of the community,” said Licking Memorial

Health Systems President & CEO Rob Montagnese (pictured far right). “Because you dedicated your careers to our family members, friends, and neighbors, we have the ability to adopt state-of-the-art technologies, expand services, and maintain excellent facilities. I am incredibly thankful for all that you have done to allow LMH to offer exceptional care close to home.”

The LMH Honorary Medical Staff currently is comprised of 50 physicians

who retired after longtime service on the LMH Active Medical Staff and have maintained an outstanding reputation in the community. Physicians who attended this year’s event included (left to right): Pattye Whisman, M.D.; Zdravko Nikolovski, M.D.; Gerald Ehrsam, M.D.; Larry Pasley, M.D.; RR Evans, M.D.; John Joseph Winsch, M.D.; John Quimjian, M.D.; John Adams, M.D.; Donald Harris, D.O.; and Harold Kelch, M.D.



# LMHS Supports Riders for Cancer Research

During the first weekend of August, nearly 7,000 bicycle riders participated in Pelotonia, an annual three-day cycling fundraiser that supports life-saving cancer research. The ride offers a variety of cycling routes throughout Central Ohio including parts of Licking County. To show support for the cause, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) staff along with Scrubs, the LMHS mascot, cheered for riders as they passed on West Broadway in Downtown Granville. Since 2008, Pelotonia has raised over \$236 million for cancer research at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center – James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute, including the Pelotonia Institute for Immuno-oncology.

In addition, several members of the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Active Medical Staff participated in the event. The three local physicians included (from left to right): Donald DeShetler, M.D., of Cherry Westgate Family Practice, Karen Smith-Silone, D.O., of Licking Memorial Gynecology, and Elliot Davidoff, M.D., of Center For Sight.

Dr. DeShetler has been involved with Pelotonia for 14 years and rides for team COPC – Central Ohio Primary Care Physicians. For his 13th year in Pelotonia, Dr. Davidoff rode with team Granville Spokesmen – a newly combined team created to honor Brett Jump’s successful battle with breast cancer, and David Schnaidt who passed

in 2013 from Peripheral Nerve Sheath Tumors. Dr. Smith-Silone returned for a seventh year at the event and was part of Stefanie’s Team of Hope – a team founded in honor of Stefanie Spielman who passed away in November 2009. Individuals interested in supporting the physicians’ fundraising efforts may make an online contribution at Pelotonia.org through Sunday, October 31.



# LMHS Participates in Pataskala Street Fair and Parade

In August, Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) staff members joined the fun of the city of Pataskala’s annual festivities. During the Street Fair, a community tradition, LMHS employees provided an informational booth that highlighted the services available at the Pataskala Health Campus. Located at One Healthy Place, off State Route 16, the Pataskala Health Campus includes Licking Memorial Urgent Care, Licking Memorial Pediatrics, Licking Memorial Women’s Health, Licking Memorial Family Practice, Vascular Surgery, Licking Memorial Dermatology, Licking Memorial Ultrasound Services, and Licking Memorial Hospital Laboratory Services.

On the final day of the festival, Keri Hershberger, M.D., of Licking Memorial Family Practice – Pataskala, and Laurie Schaeffer, D.O., of Licking Memorial Dermatology participated in the Pataskala Street Fair Parade with Scrubs, the LMHS mascot, and other LMHS staff.



# walk WITH a DOC

In July, Licking Memorial Health Systems hosted a Walk with a Doc event at Karr Park in Pataskala. Cynthia Kearse, D.O., of Licking Memorial Women’s Health – Granville, discussed the importance of routine women’s health.

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 a variety of locations in Licking County. For more information on upcoming Walk with a Doc events, visit [LMHealth.org/Calendar](http://LMHealth.org/Calendar).





## Licking Memorial Health Systems

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# Community Events

### Walk with a Doc

Shelley Gittens, M.D., of Licking Memorial Pediatrics – Tamarack, will discuss the topic of diabetes. Registration is now open.

Saturday, November 5, 9:00 a.m.  
Buckeye Lake Bike Path, beginning  
at the North Shore Boat Ramp,  
off State Route 79

Garth Bennington, M.D., of Licking Family Practice – West Main, will discuss hypertension. Registration opens Monday, October 3.

Walk with a Doc events are free of charge; however, registration is required. Each walk lasts approximately 40 minutes. Healthy snacks and blood pressure screenings will be provided. To register, please call Licking Memorial Public Relations at (220) 564-1560.

### Active•Senior Dance

Tuesday, November 15, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Bryn Du Field House  
537 Jones Road NE, Granville

Guests, ages 60 and up, are invited to attend this free, fun event, which will feature upbeat music, dance instruction, and prizes for the best dance participants. Dance partners are not required to attend. Beverages and hors d'oeuvres will be provided. Registration opens Monday, October 17, and may be completed by calling Licking Memorial Public Relations at (220) 564-1560.

### First Impressions – Maternal Child Classes

- Boot Camp for New Dads
- Breastfeeding Class
- Childbirth Education Classes
- Grandparenting
- Mother-baby Basics Class

For more information or to register, visit [LMHealth.org/Calendar](http://LMHealth.org/Calendar) or call (220) 564-3388.

### Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (a four-week series class)

Every Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon  
(Wednesday evening classes are offered in October from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.)

Licking Memorial Diabetes Learning Center  
1865 Tamarack Road in Newark

Registrations and physician referral are required. To register for classes, please 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'll once again see why Licking Memorial Health Systems is measurably different ... for your health! **Visit us at [LMHealth.org](http://LMHealth.org).**

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

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