

For immediate release
August 27, 2007

Contact: Carol Hutchison
Public Relations
(740) 348-1564
chutchison@LMHealth.org

LMHS Donates Land for Social Services Building

A land donation by Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) will allow a new social services building to be constructed in Newark, making many services more readily accessible to Licking County residents. Currently, the United Way of Licking County, the American Red Cross of Licking County, and Mental Health America of Licking County each operate in separate facilities around the city. The new building will allow the individual agencies to share resources, and will also save clients time from having to travel from location to location.

The three social service organizations banded together as the Community Agency Partnership in 2005 for the purpose of securing land and constructing the building, but the project came to a standstill when the group was unable to find an affordable location. LMHS' donation of 2.3 acres on Messimer Drive now allows the Community Agency Partnership to achieve its goal.

Donna Carpenter, Executive Director of the United Way of Licking County, said the land donation was a huge boost to the project. "This is a significant contribution for an important community project," she said. "This building and other planned sharing of resources will allow all of us to more efficiently and effectively serve our community."

"By sharing resources, such as a receptionist and phone lines, we'll increase our operational efficiency," explained Rod Cook, Executive Director of the American Red Cross of Licking County. "For our clients, we're happy that we'll eventually be able to offer a 'one-stop shopping,' so that they don't have to go all over town for their services."

LMHS President and Chief Executive Officer Rob Montagnese said the Health Systems considers the land donation to be an extension of its mission. "Our mission states very clearly 'Licking Memorial Health Systems exists to improve the health of the community.' We had the land sitting vacant, and the organizations involved approached us with this exciting project. This community project fits so closely with our mission, we consider it a privilege to do whatever we can to help," he explained.

Mental Health America of Licking County Executive Director Paddy Kutz pointed out that the land donation was more than a financial boost to the agencies – it was also a message of strong support. "This proves faith in the collaborative efforts in Licking County," she said. "We're so appreciative of this incredible gift.

The new social services building is currently under the conceptual design phase. In addition to housing the United Way of Licking County, the American Red Cross of

Licking County, and Mental Health America of Licking County, there is also a possibility of other social service organizations locating there.

Licking Memorial Hospital has served the medical needs of Licking County residents since it was founded in 1898. The 227-bed facility utilizes nearly 150 staff physicians and more than 1,200 additional clinical and support staff to meet the health care needs of the community. Licking Memorial Hospital is proud to have been named one of the nation's Top 100 Hospitals for an eighth year. For more information, visit www.LMHealth.org.

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