

Contact: Ruth Handelman Phone: (740) 345-6685
Marketing Director Fax: (740) 345-7712
Address: Licking County United Way Email: rhandelman@lcuw.net
68 W. Church St., Suite 203
P.O. Box 4490
Newark, OH 43058-4490

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For Immediate Release

UNITED WAY AWARDS FUNDING FOR ASSISTANCE WITH EMERGENCY DENTAL NEEDS

NEWARK - In June of this year, Pathways of Central Ohio was awarded \$7,500 from Licking County United Way (LCUW) to help adults with emergency dental needs. Funds are made available through a donation from the AEP Ohio's Partnership with Ohio Program. To date, 15 individuals have been helped with the cost of these services. The criteria for someone to access the funds are:

- Be a Licking County resident age 18 or older
- Be able to prove that they are AEP customers or live in an AEP household
- Be at or below 200% of the federal poverty level
- Have a dental emergency (swelling, bleeding, infection, tooth needs pulled, etc.)
- Be uninsured or underinsured

Pathways' decision to apply for these funds was made in conjunction with the Licking County Health Department's Patient Navigator committee which identified the tremendous unmet need for emergency dental care for uninsured and underinsured adults in Licking County. Both the Health Department and Pathways 2-1-1 Crisis/Hotline average 30 calls a month from adults in a dental emergency and there are no other funds available in the community to assist these individuals unless a local dentist donates his or her services.

"We know that we are improving the health and well-being of those participating in the program as well as reducing the number of adults that present at the emergency room with dental problems," stated Kristin McCloud, Director of Pathways.

If you or someone you know are in need of dental assistance and could qualify, call 2-1-1, 345-HELP (4357), or 1-800-544-1601 anytime day or night. The 2-1-1 Crisis/Hotline staff will verify eligibility and quickly connect eligible individuals to a pool of local dentists.

LCUW is dedicated to improving lives by concentrating on programs that enhance individuals and families in the areas of education, income, health and basic needs. United Way is at work year-round collaborating to identify community needs, gathering the dollars and resources to meet identified needs, directing dollars and resources to community partners to fund programs and services that meet needs, and evaluating outcomes of funded programs and services. For more information about LCUW, call 345-6685 or visit www.lcuw.net

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