



NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NHH recognizing Canadian Patient Safety Week with reminder that “Not all meds get along” *Five questions promoted to minimize medication errors*

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Monday, October 29th, 2018—Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) is joining forces this year with the [Canadian Patient Safety Institute \(CPSI\)](#) to recognize Canadian Patient Safety Week 2018, taking place from October 29th to November 2nd.

The 2018 Canadian Patient Safety Week theme is *Not all meds get along*, a public awareness campaign designed to prompt patients and healthcare professionals alike to ask questions and, as required, initiate medication reviews, particularly for anyone on five or more medications.

Medication errors can result in severe harm, disability and even death. While multiple measures are in place to minimize the risk of medication errors in hospitals, for patients who require multiple medications, or who may be transitioning between treatments or treatment locations, safety is a heightened concern. Everyone – including patients themselves, their caregivers and the health providers who care for them – can play a role in ensuring medication safety.

To that end, CPSI has teamed up with the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada, Patients for Patient Safety Canada, the Canadian Pharmacists Association and the Canadian Society for Hospital Pharmacists to create a list of five simple questions to help patients and their caregivers have a conversation about medications with their healthcare provider.

The five questions are:

- 1) **CHANGES?** Have any medications been added, stopped or changed, and why?
- 2) **CONTINUE?** What medication do I need to keep taking, and why?
- 3) **PROPER USE?** How do I take my medications, and for how long?
- 4) **MONITOR?** How will I know if my medication is working, and what side effects do I watch for?
- 5) **FOLLOW-UP?** Do I need any tests and when do I book my next visit?

The CPSI recommends everyone use these five questions when:

- ☐ attending a doctor's appointment (e.g., family physician or specialist, dentist, optometrist);
- ☐ interacting with a community pharmacist;
- ☐ leaving the hospital to go home; or
- ☐ receiving a visit by home care services.

“NHH is proud to be one of the many organizations to endorse the **Five Questions to Ask About Your Medications**. As part of our ongoing commitment to high quality, safe care, we’re recommending that everyone learn these five questions, and help spread awareness by sharing them with their loved ones,” said NHH’s Director of Quality, Rohan Gonsalves.

Patients and their caregivers are further reminded to keep medication records both up to date and complete, including information on any drug allergies, as well as information on any non-prescription products including vitamins and minerals and herbal/natural products. A current list of any medications taken on a regular basis, or the medications themselves, and any other important medical information (e.g. allergies) should be taken to all NHH appointments, including (when possible) visits to the [Emergency Department](#).

For more information, including a downloadable copy of the 5 questions, go to www.safemedicationuse.ca

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About Northumberland Hills Hospital – Located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto, NHH delivers a broad range of acute, post-acute, outpatient and diagnostic services. Acute services include emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, obstetrical care and palliative care. Post-acute specialty services (PASS) include restorative care and rehabilitation. Mental health care, chemotherapy, dialysis and 16 other ambulatory care clinics are offered on an outpatient basis through partnerships with regional centres and nearby specialists. NHH offers a full range of diagnostic services, including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography (CT) and mammography. The hospital serves the catchment area of west Northumberland County. A mixed urban and rural population of approximately 60,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs approximately 600 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians and volunteers. NHH is an active member of the Central East Local Health Integration Network. For more information, please visit www.nhh.ca or follow us on Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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