



NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Four 2018 Gerontological Excellence Award recipients celebrated at NHH

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Monday, October 1, 2018—At the latest staff forum held Wednesday, September 26th, the winners of the hospital's sixth annual Gerontological Excellence Awards were announced.

A celebration of individual contributions to the delivery of exceptional patient care to those over the age of 65, the Award underscores the fact that gerontology is not a department or a unit at NHH, it is a specialty that involves every member of the hospital team.

Nominations for the Gerontological Excellence Award are open to all staff members and accepted throughout the month of June, which Ontario has designated as Seniors' Month. Of the 2018 nominees, four stood out for the care they take to support older patients at NHH.

At the September 27th presentation, NHH awarded its latest Gerontological Excellence Awards to a Registered Nurse, a Rehabilitation Assistant, an Occupational Therapist and a Registered Practical Nurse.

Provided below are highlights from the remarks made by President and CEO Linda Davis in her September 26th presentation.

Lorelei Kenny, Registered Nurse, Restorative Care

Nominated by peers for her work on Restorative Care, Registered Nurse Lorelei Kenny was described in her nomination as consistently demonstrating "a remarkable awareness of the challenging needs of our patients with dementia," while often balancing this with the demands of being a charge nurse for the floor.

Highlighted were Kenny's tireless efforts to secure and apply specialized Montessori equipment for patients who require activities to decrease the risk of responsive behaviours.

Described as "a strong leader and excellent collaborator," Kenny's nominators also highlighted the importance of her support to enable "the transfer of complex older patients from NHH's Emergency Department to the inpatient Assess and Restore intervention," for further assessment and, ideally, a safe return home.

Heather Brown, Rehabilitation Assistant, Restorative Care

Heather Brown, Rehabilitation Assistant, was nominated for "consistently demonstrating kindness, patience and humour with the older adult population and motivating her patients to achieve their goals through leading exercise classes, impromptu dance sessions, and getting to know each patient as individuals."

Brown's positive attitude, infectious laugh and dedicated work ethic are respected by her colleagues and patients alike.

Also highlighted by Linda Davis was Brown's work on the Interprofessional and Ethical Advisory Committee, a key forum to support quality and compassionate care for older adults at NHH.

Holly Thomas, Occupational Therapist, ACT Team, Community Mental Health

Holly Thomas, Occupational Therapist, was recognized for her work with NHH's [Community Mental Health program](#) and, specifically, that program's ACT team (which stands for Assertive Community Treatment). Though the majority of her clients are not 65, Thomas impressed her colleagues in the past year with the special care she provided to support the development of specialized treatment plans for several older individuals.

"Holly, your peers report that you adapted your approach and provided support to your clients and the extended community partner team involved to ensure appropriate continuity of care," said Davis. "You have gone above and beyond the usual expectation of your role to support those without the social resources many of us take for granted. Thank you."

Sara Gillespie, Registered Practical Nurse, Restorative Care

Sara Gillespie, Registered Practical Nurse, was the fourth recipient recognized. A member of the Restorative Care team, Gillespie was recognized by her peers as "an unsung hero on her unit," for her "gentle, kind approach with her patients," and a calming tone and demeanor that reassures and soothes.

Known for her sense of humour and humility, Gillespie's nominators pointed out that she has worked tirelessly with particularly complex patient situations in the past year and that she is "a natural at working closely with people affected by dementia and responsive behaviours."

Also recognized at the Award presentation was **Sarah Gibbens, a former Geriatric Emergency Management nurse** at NHH, and now the Knowledge to Practice Specialist with the Regional Geriatric Programs of Ontario. Gibbens was the founder of the annual recognition event and has played a key role in many hospital initiatives aimed at expanding staff awareness of the unique needs of geriatric patients. She will continue to liaise with NHH through her work with the Regional Geriatric Programs of Ontario and the [Seniors Care Network](#).

NHH congratulations all of the 2018 recipients and nominees and thanks every member of the team for the respect, compassion and care given to patients every day.

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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 more than 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).