



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

inspiring strength, dignity and compassion

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northumberland Hills Hospital Completes Process for Accreditation

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Wednesday, March 14, 2007 – Staff at Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) held a celebration this afternoon to mark the completion of the rigorous process for the hospital's accreditation by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA). Three external reviewers spent March 11 through March 14 at NHH, interviewing teams and gathering further detail on materials shared in advance for their review. The reviewers shared some of their feedback with hospital staff at 1:30 PM and the celebration followed in the Main Street Bistro.

The voluntary accreditation process is used by Canada's community hospitals and many other national and international health and social service organizations. The purpose of the exercise is to evaluate one's services against national standards of delivery and to continuously better the quality of patient care. Surveyors are peers from the administrative, nursing or physician arm of the health care sector and the process occurs at least once every three years.

The March 2007 accreditation review marked NHH's second in the new facility. Hospital services were evaluated on four quality dimensions (responsiveness, system competency, client/community focus, and work/life balance) and there was an overriding emphasis on safety. Twelve teams made up of staff members, physicians, patients and community partners were interviewed by the surveyors to assess the hospital's performance in a number of areas. Guided tours of all areas were also conducted.

NHH President and CEO Joan Ross spoke with staff at the Bistro gathering on Wednesday. “The team-based interview process,” Ms. Ross remarked, “lends itself very well to the culture we have here at NHH. We have a long history of working together in collaborative teams to seek out the best solutions for quality patient care and responsible management, and the benefit of that tradition certainly shone through in the past four days.”

In addition to benchmarking the hospital’s performance against national indicators, the exercise, says Ms. Ross, has a further benefit: “It enhances communication and collaboration across the organization and helps us to learn and improve while increasing our credibility with clients, communities, funders and partners.” In hosting the afternoon celebration, Ms. Ross extended her gratitude to all the NHH staff members who had contributed to the process, particularly Daphne Brine, Health Informatics and Processes Leader, who led the 2007 preparations.

NHH expects to hear the final word from the Council within the next three months, but the surveyors were very positive in their briefing to staff. “We have been particularly struck by the strength of your team,” remarked the team leader. “NHH is clearly a people-focused hospital, where everyone we met demonstrated a genuine pride in the work they do. This attitude is translating into some wonderful things in the areas of patient and staff safety, the documentation of best practices, communication and partnerships... you should be very proud.”

The surveyors paraphrased some of the feedback received from several patients in the course of their interviews. “There is a ‘different attitude in this hospital,’ we were told, and ‘they care.’” Another patient, said the lead surveyor, praised the accessibility. “The members of the administration are welcoming and go beyond the call of duty to advise the community. There is great support by the Foundation and Auxiliary, and the public is kept well informed.”

Said Sid Trevail, Chairman of the Northumberland Hills Hospital Board: “This was a very good day for our hospital. I believe that we can all look forward to accreditation and the report that will follow in a few months. As with any exercise of this depth and breadth, some recommendations can be expected. We will plan to use the feedback to make continuous improvements for patients and identify future opportunities for growth.”

For more information on Northumberland Hills Hospital, or to schedule an interview, contact Jennifer Gillard at 905-377-7757 or jgillard@nhh.ca.

About Northumberland Hills Hospital - The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) is located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto. The 137-bed hospital delivers a broad range of services, including medical/surgical care, complex/long term care, rehabilitation, palliative care, obstetrical care and intensive care. NHH also sponsors a Community Mental Health Centre and an Assertive Community Treatment Team. The hospital serves the catchment area of west Northumberland County. A mixed urban and rural population of approximately 60,000 residents, west Northumberland is comprised of the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs over 500 people and is an active member of the Central East LHIN. For more information, please visit www.nhh.ca.

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