



# NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

*inspiring strength, dignity and compassion*

## **Northumberland Hills Hospital mammography service ranked among country's finest**

**Northumberland County, Wednesday, April 11, 2007** – Scheduled for a mammogram this year? Thinking that you should speak to your doctor about having one? If you're one of the 4,500 people expected to receive the test this year at the Northumberland Hills Hospital's Clay and Elaine Elliott Women's Health Centre, you should be encouraged to know that the equipment, and the medical professionals trained to deliver it and decipher its results, are among the country's best.

NHH's mammography services recently received an important endorsement from the professional body that evaluates services of this nature. The Canadian Association of Radiologists (CAR) Committee for Mammography Accreditation reviewed NHH in late winter. Staff qualifications, exam quality, report accuracy and quality control procedures were among the many criteria examined by the CAR Committee for comparison against nationally-recognized quality standards. News that NHH had been approved and accredited for a three-year period was received in late March.

"We are very proud of this accomplishment" says Dr. Paul Marrocco, radiologist at NHH. "Responsibility for the quality of mammography in Canada is shared among federal and provincial governments, the host organization (usually a hospital) and the medical professionals who perform the procedure and interpret the mammograms," he explains. "In 2006—thanks to support from our Auxiliary, the NHH Foundation and a provincial government Diagnostic and Medical Equipment grant—NHH moved from a film-based system to new digital radiography technology. While we were accredited by CAR in the past, accreditation of our new digital system was one of the goals we set for ourselves to confirm that we continue to meet the highest quality assurance standards in this new digital environment. CAR accreditation for mammography is the gold standard at the present time. Only 15 digital radiography units in all of Canada enjoy this status today. Naturally, we are very, very pleased to announce that NHH is one of them."

Joan Ross, President and CEO of the hospital, shares Dr. Marrocco's pleasure with the accreditation results. "NHH is making quite a case for the argument that a hospital does not have to be big to be a leader in patient care," Ms. Ross noted. "Dr. Marrocco, Ian Moffat—our Director of Diagnostic Imaging—and the other physicians and technologists who round out the diagnostic imaging team really exemplify a trait that I believe distinguishes NHH: be the best you can be, and then, keep looking for ways to be better. The family that gave its name to the department that houses the technology must also be recognized. Elaine Elliott and her family have been most generous over the years, helping us get the Centre up and running and, as time has gone by, improve it in many other ways."

Mammography is an imaging technique that uses low-dose X-rays to provide pictures of the internal structures of breasts. In the last twenty years, it has become an essential tool for the early detection of breast cancer. Mammograms can show abnormal growths or changes in breast tissue before they can be found by any other method, including breast self-examination. In a news release issued April 11, 2007, the Canadian Cancer Society [www.canadiancancersociety.org](http://www.canadiancancersociety.org) reported a significant decline in breast cancer deaths in this country, and an increased survival rate for those diagnosed with the disease. In addition to the development of more effective treatments, the improvement is attributed to better screening, and more of it.

For further information, or to arrange an opportunity to interview Dr. Marrocco and photograph the team and the mammography equipment, contact Jennifer Gillard at 905-377-7757 or [jgillard@nhh.ca](mailto:jgillard@nhh.ca).

*(NB: The CAR review of NHH's mammography services is distinct from the hospital-wide accreditation completed on March 14 by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA). The final result of the CCHSA review is expected in early summer.)*

**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](http://www.nhh.ca).