



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

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NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hospital's medical laboratory professionals mark National Medical Laboratory Week, April 22 to 28, with display and campaign to draw attention to lab test instructions

Northumberland County, Thursday, April 19, 2007 – *Your results matter* is the theme for a national campaign being launched by the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) during National Medical Laboratory Week, April 22 to 28, 2007.

The campaign has some enthusiastic supporters in the laboratory at Northumberland Hills Hospital. Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs) at NHH are taking advantage of the week to urge residents of west Northumberland to ask for instructions before having a lab test, and to follow those instructions carefully.

"Medications, alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, food intake and even exercise can affect the accuracy of laboratory test results. That's why it is so important to make sure that you understand and follow instructions before you have a lab test," says Andrea Hamlin, MLT. "If there are specific instructions that you need to follow, a certified medical laboratory professional will be able to explain them to you," she adds.

To help people prepare for their next lab test, Ms. Hamlin and her colleagues at NHH are distributing a Lab Test Checklist. Developed by the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science, the checklist will be handed out to visitors of the Med Lab display adjacent to the hospital's Main Street Bistro the week of April 22. Copies are also available at www.csmls.org.

"Medical laboratory professionals are Canada's third largest group of health care professionals and yet many people don't know what we do," says Brenda Hylton, a colleague of Ms. Hamlin's and one of 12 Medical Lab Technologists and six Medical Lab Technicians on staff at NHH. "Accurate medical testing performed by qualified medical laboratory professionals is critical to the health and well-being of the people in this community. In fact, up to 85 per cent of decisions about diagnosis and treatment are based on laboratory test results."

In addition to the checklist, the hospital technologists will be distributing literature on what they do, and how one can enter the profession. Draws will be held throughout the week, with gift certificates and other prizes received from suppliers and other sponsors.

For further information, please contact Jennifer Gillard, Director, Corporate Communications, at 905-377-3357 or at 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.