



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

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NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Magnet delivered for MR – hospital's new service scheduled to open this fall

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Thursday, September 20, 2007 – Progress is moving swiftly toward the opening this fall of the new Magnetic Resonance (MR) imaging service at Northumberland Hills Hospital. Earlier today the hospital took delivery of the heart of the new MR system—the magnet.

Weighing 16,000 pounds (or 7,273 kilograms), the magnet, manufactured by GE Healthcare, arrived from South Carolina on September 20 after a short delay in the early morning hours due to a problem with the truck carrying the unit. On arrival at the hospital the driver of the delivery truck, the crew completing construction of the hospital's new MR suite and the hospital's Director of Diagnostic Imaging Ian Moffat began the delicate four-step manoeuvre from truck to building.

Step one required the lifting of the magnet from the truck to the lawn while step two brought it from the lawn to the temporary doorway created on the south side of the hospital to permit its entry. The final stages of the process brought the magnet into the new MR suite and, finally, into place on the 12-inch (or 30-centimetre) thick concrete pad specially prepared for its arrival.

“This is a very exciting day for our hospital and the community we serve,” said Joan Ross, the hospital's President and CEO. “With renovations almost complete and the magnet now on-site, we just need a few weeks for the technical installation by GE Healthcare and the tests to be run by our radiologists and technologists. The requisition forms are already coming in and staff are scheduling the first scans for late October or early November, right on schedule.”

Magnetic Resonance imaging is a non-invasive diagnostic tool that captures detailed images of the body's internal organs and tissues. Medical professionals consider it an invaluable tool in the diagnosis of complex diseases, including strokes, brain tumours, breast cancer, MS, knee injuries and joint and back pain.

The introduction of the new service means that NHH will be able to perform scans which previously required patients to travel as far away as Kingston or Toronto. In addition to placing an added stress on the patient, this process demanded costly transportation and the logistical challenges of ambulance and nursing support.

“The approval and additional operating funding received by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care last December was key to getting us this far,” continued Ms. Ross, “and fortunately we were successful in our efforts to recruit the people with the expertise necessary to operate the device. The next challenge, once the service is up-and-running, is paying for scanner.”

While funds are provided by the provincial government to build and operate a hospital, the acquisition of capital equipment—the tools that are fundamental to patient care—is increasingly the responsibility of the community in which the facility is located.

At NHH, as in most communities throughout the province, the primary responsibility for capital equipment fund-raising rests with the hospital’s Foundation.

“The Northumberland Hills Hospital Foundation has accepted responsibility to raise the necessary funds for the MR and campaign planning is underway with the chair of our campaign, Jan Boycott, announced earlier this month,” said Julie Thompson, Foundation Chair. “Visits with the hospital’s closest supporters are underway and everyone will be invited to make a contribution soon.”

The hospital negotiated a combined purchase price of \$4.75 million for the MR and an upgrade to the existing CT scanner with GE Healthcare.

For more information on the new MR service, or to arrange an interview, please 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.