



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

Senior Management Report to the Board April 2021

Quality and Safety

3,600 vaccines distributed at Cobourg Community Centre as of March 24, thanks to true “Team Northumberland” kick-off effort

As our MPP David Piccini put it when he welcomed Premier Doug Ford for a site visit, “good things happen when we come together as a community” and that was certainly demonstrated at the Mass Vaccination Site kick-off last month at the Cobourg Community Centre where spirits were high and feedback from the seniors receiving the vaccine was extremely positive.

In an effort to get vaccine into the arms of local residents aged 80 and older as quickly as possible, area partners and volunteers worked diligently to set up and open the area’s first Mass Vaccination Site in the Cobourg Community Centre (CCC).

Between March 16 and March 24 over 3,600 souls were vaccinated—a significant kick-start to the local public health goal to offer vaccine to everyone in step with the province’s evolving prioritization plan.

As shared in the [March edition of our *In Touch* community newsletter](#), the community team, listed below, has now handed over operation of the CCC Clinic to the local [Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#). The partners and volunteers will continue to support efforts moving forward, as required. The Health Unit expects that COVID-19 vaccine will be distributed by the CCC site and the other area clinics that are now coming online across the region for the coming months. As the broader regional effort unfolds, we were pleased to celebrate a very successful Team Northumberland launch together with all the partners below:

CCC Mass Vaccination Site Launch Team – Ontario Health Team of Northumberland and partners

- Northumberland Family Health Team
- Lakeview Family Health Team
- Trent Hills Family Health Team
- Northumberland Hills Hospital
- Community Care Northumberland
- Community Health Centres of Northumberland
- Northumberland County
- Northumberland Paramedics
- Ganaraska Family Health Organization
- Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPRDHU)
- Vaccination team (area pharmacists, nurses, doctors and paramedics, drawn from partners listed above)
- Town of Cobourg
- Cobourg Police Services
- Rotary Club of Cobourg and citizen volunteers

Trying to schedule a COVID-19 vaccine?

People born in 1946 or earlier may now book an appointment to receive the COVID-19 vaccine through the Ontario-wide booking system, which launched on Monday, March 15.

Booking may be done online at www.ontario.ca/bookvaccine or by phone at **1-888-999-6488**.

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit cautions that “not all of the vaccination clinics planned across Ontario, including HKPRDHU, have been loaded into the system.” New appointments are being opened up gradually, as vaccine becomes available.

If you are trying to book for yourself or a loved one, and local availability is not yet showing in the system, please try again in the future. The vaccine will be available to all residents in due course over the coming months and clinics will continue until everyone who wants a vaccine has received it.

Eligibility for the vaccine is changing rapidly. For HKPRDHU’s updates on the latest eligibility criteria, visit: <https://www.hkpr.on.ca/2021/03/26/are-you-eligible-for-covid-19-vaccine/>

For the latest information on local clinic availability, visit: <https://www.hkpr.on.ca/2021/03/12/vaccination-clinics/>
REMINDER: new appointments, including appointments at the CCC Mass Vaccination Clinic in Cobourg, are being opened up as vaccine becomes available. We encourage people to check back often for availability.

NHH COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic

In last month’s report, we shared an update on the efforts under way at the hospital in preparation for the opening of NHH’s COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic. Many members of the team stepped up to support that effort, which was held in the Education Centre on the second floor of the hospital. In addition to NHH’s participation in the CCC Mass Vaccination site for community members 80 and up, NHH staff and physicians also distributed vaccine to over 2,112 area health care workers from NHH’s Education Centre location, as well as other area hospitals within the HKPRDHU, including peers from Campbellford Memorial Hospital, Ross Memorial and Haliburton Highlands. The effort—which called on nursing staff, physicians, Pharmacy, IT team, Infection Prevention and Control, Decision Support, Housekeeping, Food Services, Registration, Environmental Services and Administration to support—also brought the first dose of the COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine to many area first responders, including Northumberland Paramedics, police and fire, as well as external health care providers.

With Ontario’s shift to a 16-week interval between dose 1 and 2 to allow a broader distribution of dose 1 throughout the community, NHH has delayed dose 2 appointments at the NHH COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic. Direction is pending from HKPRDHU, but the hospital’s recommendation is that we be permitted to allow a May start date for the dose 2 process to begin—a process that could take approximately 6 weeks to complete. NHH’s aim is to stagger dose 2 bookings of front-line care providers to a maximum of 20 per cent of any one department at a time to minimize the risk of any side-effects disrupting our teams’ ability to deliver patient care.

Patient, provider stories of COVID-19 highlighted in recent podcast series

Seeking to highlight the patient and provider experience of COVID-19, from a local lens, local reporter, radio show host and blogger Rob Washburn invited NHH’s participation in a multi-part series of interviews originally aired on local 89.7FM and available in podcast form at www.consider-this.ca, under the “Recent Podcasts” section. Dr. Mukesh Bhargava is among those interviewed, as are two local patients who reflect on their journey through COVID, and the impact it is continuing to have months later. As we all reflect on the past year, the series is a powerful local reminder of the importance of the basic public health measures we must all continue to take to minimize our risk of contracting or spreading this potentially deadly virus.

Virtual Visiting continues to be a touchstone for families kept apart due to COVID

Trialed in the early days of the pandemic and expanded in May 2020 through a collaborative effort of IT, local donors (secured through the NHH Foundation) and NHH Recreation Therapy, NHH’s virtual visiting program is a pandemic-inspired innovation that has brought comfort to patients and families with over 1,000 connections now made. Virtual visits may be requested weekdays by either patients or by their family members or friends. Phone

appointments are also available. For details, please see the Visiting section of our website, www.nhh.ca/Patients/VisitingGuidelines. Visiting remains restricted to 'essential visitors' at this time.

Great Place to Work and Volunteer

NHH recognizes Pharmacy Appreciation Month

March was Pharmacy Appreciation Month, and NHH took the opportunity to send up an especially big shoutout this year to NHH's dedicated pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. In March alone, in addition to all their regular duties, this team has been key in supporting our COVID-19 vaccination efforts, drawing up and measuring 1000s of doses of the precious Pfizer vaccine and supporting the efficient vaccination of staff, physicians, patients and 80+ community members alike. Please see our social media feeds for images of the team, and join us in thanking the pharmacists and pharmacy technicians for their continuing commitment to all the patients we serve.

National Day of Observance recognized, March 11

NHH recognized the National Day of Observance on March 11. Designated by the Government of Canada, the day remembers the many lives lost as a result of COVID-19 and acknowledges the profound impact the pandemic has, and continues to have, on our lives.

Our Canada flag flew at half-mast through the day, which also marked the one-year anniversary of the World Health Organization's declaration of the pandemic.

REMINDER - Call for Interest - NHH Patient Family and Advisory Council volunteers

With some exceptions, on-site volunteer activity has been paused at NHH for much of the pandemic, as a safety precaution and—in Wave 1—as a means of preserving precious personal protective equipment.

It goes without saying that volunteers are sorely missed throughout the hospital and the team looks forward to the day when the NHH Auxiliary, Board and other committee volunteers with the NHH Foundation and Hospital Board, spiritual care volunteers, St John Therapy Dog volunteers and Patient and Family Advisors can be welcomed back on site, in person.

Until then, remote opportunities are being leveraged as much as possible. Among those was the latest quarterly meeting of the NHH Patient and Family Advisory Council, held via Zoom on January 13.

At this meeting the team discussed the ongoing need to fill a vacancy in the medical program. More recently, a new PFAC vacancy has emerged, in the Intensive Care Unit. PFAC volunteers assigned to other programs will continue to work to fill these gaps where time permits, but new recruits are most welcome to support ongoing need for patient and caregiver experience in the areas of medical/surgical care, intensive care, and maternal child care.

If you or someone you know has experience with NHH as a patient or caregiver in one or more of these areas, and has an interest in joining the team (virtually, for now) as a Patient and Family Advisor, please find additional background on the role of PFAC on the NHH website, including role description, term of reference and Expression of Interest form, or reach out directly to the team care of Jennifer Gillard, Senior Director, Public Affairs and Strategic Partnerships, jgillard@nhh.ca or 905-377-7757.

Collaborative Community Partnerships

NHH joins MPP's telephone town hall to discuss vaccine rollout

President and CEO Linda Davis joined her counterpart from Campbellford Memorial Hospital, Varouj Eskedjian, as well as Adrienne Bell-Smith (Executive Director, Northumberland Family Health Team) and Dr. Ian Gemmill (interim Medical Officer of Health, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit) on March 23 for an telephone town hall on local vaccine rollout.

Organized and hosted by Northumberland Quinte-West MPP David Piccini, the evening event—which was live-streamed on the MPP's Facebook page—attracted a large audience and addressed a broad range of questions from community members interested in learning more about Ontario's vaccine rollout and local accessibility.

Ontario Hospital Association “Stop the Spread” campaign continues

Stopping the spread of COVID-19 is not easy, but it is possible. Hope is on the horizon with COVID-19 vaccines, but we must remember that our everyday choices matter and make a big difference in how quickly we can help #StopTheSpread.

The Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) is doing its part to help Ontario residents get answers to some common questions about COVID-19 and share what they've learned with others. Remember, your choices matter and the more you know, the better choices you can make.

Visit www.ontariocovidpledge.ca to learn more and, as the OHA urges, “Take the Pledge to #StopTheSpread.”

Together with other local COVID news, NHH will be sharing the OHA videos on our NHH social media channels with the hashtag #StoptheSpread. We encourage you to share, together with your family and friends.

Northumberland PACE talks continue monthly in virtual form with high participation

The Northumberland PACE Talk series continues virtually for the 2021 season, with the latest session, held Wednesday, March 17, drawing an audience of over 80 for a very informative discussion on navigating the medical system in Northumberland at end life with guest speaker Dr. Kate Everdell and moderator Dr. Mukesh Bhargava. Dr. Everdell's presentation and a recording of the talk are available for download. Find this at www.pacetalks.com

Held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 5:30 PM, Northumberland PACE talks last an hour in length, and typically include a 30-minute talk (or panel discussion), a 20-minute question-and-answer period and a 10-minute moderator summary.

Details for the next session coming up on Wednesday, April 21st are being finalized. Watch for the topic and the registration link on www.pacetalks.com and on the NHH and PACE partner social media channels.

Ontario Health Team of Northumberland set to open Rural Outreach Clinic in collaboration with Cramahe Township

Health care providers affiliated with the [Ontario Health Team of Northumberland \(OHT-N\)](#) are preparing to open the region's first [Rural Outreach Clinic](#) on **Tuesday, April 6** at 34 Victoria Street, Colborne, thanks to a unique collaboration with Cramahe Township.

“One of three priority projects undertaken by our partnership of local providers, patients and caregivers, the aim of the OHT-N's Rural Outreach Clinic (ROC) effort is to bring services to rural community locations in Northumberland, and help reduce barriers to care experienced by patients in small, rural areas, such as access, transportation and outreach challenges,” said Linda Davis, spokesperson for the OHT-N, in a recent OHT-N media release.

When the Colborne Rural Outreach Clinic opens next month, Cramahe Township residents will gain access to a suite of services which, today, often require a 20- to 30-minute trip, by car, to access. Available by appointment only, these services include:

- Mental health counselling (adult and youth);
- Primary care for patients not currently rostered with a local primary care provider or those who may need a specific temporary support closer to home;
- Diabetes education;
- Foot care/chiropractic;
- Smoking cessation; and
- Seniors wellness supports.

When public health restrictions permit, small group programs will also be considered at the site. Walk-in support will not be available at the clinic at this time.

“This is a very exciting project to be a part of,” said Carol Beauchamp, Executive Director, Rebound Child and Youth Services, and a member of the OHT-N working group responsible for coordinating the launch. “We are very grateful to Cramahe Township for answering the OHT-N’s call for available space, and their readiness to assist with some of the critical logistics.”

Services planned for the April launch reflect input on the priority needs identified by community residents through a recent OHT-N/Cramahe Township survey. Other key factors that helped drive planning around which services would be available at launch were the availability of local health care resources to support the clinic and the appropriateness of those services for the physical location of the ROC site.

“This is the realization of a dream for Cramahe Township – extended health services right here to serve our residents,” said Cramahe Township Mayor Mandy Martin. “Our council, our dedicated municipal staff and our citizens appreciate the cooperation and collaborative opportunity this project represents. When we work together as partners, much can be—and is—achieved. Thank you to all involved. It’s an exciting day!”

“To begin, we will be scheduling appointments for specific services on set days—for example, we are planning to rotate the youth mental health clinic day with adult mental health services so each can be offered one day per week,” explained Beauchamp. “The Rural Outreach Clinic is essentially a rural extension of services each of the OHT-N partners provide already at different locations. We plan to remain as flexible as possible as we learn more about community needs and provider availability. We have the opportunity to expand in the future but we are looking forward to starting with these priority clinics, on a rotating basis, and growing and adjusting together, as a team, with the community, as we move forward, here in Colborne and in other areas throughout Northumberland.”

“In December 2019, the Government of Ontario announced Northumberland as one of the first 24 Ontario Health Teams in the province,” said Member of Provincial Parliament for Northumberland-Peterborough South David Piccini. “In less than a year, the Ontario Health Team-Northumberland (OHT-N) is delivering on a priority year-one initiative to establish a Rural Outreach Clinic. This clinic proves what good things can happen when we mobilize community resources to create accessible health and community care for our rural communities. The opening of this clinic is a testament to the strong existing collaborative partnerships that exist in Northumberland and is part of our Government’s commitment to ending hallway healthcare. The Rural Outreach Clinic will help provide a more equitable and seamless continuum of care to the residents of Northumberland, improving population health as well as individual patient, caregiver and provider experience. I would like to thank all the health care providers and organizations that helped plan the clinic with the OHT-N. You have helped transform the health care landscape in Northumberland-Peterborough South.”

How to access care at the Colborne Rural Outreach Clinic

Beginning **Tuesday, April 6**, residents of the Colborne area are invited to call the clinic directly at **289-265-0505** if they, or someone they care for, requires the services listed above. Services are available by appointment (no

walk-in option is available) on a first-come, first-served basis. The clinic is located at 34 Victoria Street in Colborne. Construction is now being completed on accessibility enhancements, including a ramped entry. Parking is available.

Looking for information about the OHT-N?

Please visit the OHT-N website, www.ohtnorthumberland.ca, email the team care of info@ohtnorthumberland.ca or reach out by phone care of the contacts below.

Operational Excellence

Regional collaboration to support inpatient capacity as Wave 3 arrives

With Wave 3 now confirmed, variants accounting for almost 70% of all new COVID cases in the province, and cases increasing steadily, critical care occupancy levels are rising at Ontario hospitals, including our own region in the Central East. See the latest statement on critical care capacity from the [Ontario Hospital Association President and CEO Anthony Dale here](#).

Earlier this week, NHH was asked, through Ontario Health's regional Incident Management System, to support the transfer of medical patients from the Greater Toronto Area. Though our capacity to assist is less than our larger peers in the Central East, NHH does have a limited amount of critical care capacity (a total bed capacity for 10 patients today, including the 4 additional funded beds announced for the NHH ICU by MPP David Piccini on December 9) and accepted the request. As of March 31, NHH had received a small number of these transfers (less than 5).

As shared in our February Board Report, while our first priority will always be to provide access to care to the best of our ability at the local level, we are also prepared to step up to meet requests like this from the broader provincial system. As a community hospital, NHH regularly transfers patients to larger centres when specialized care is required that we do not offer here in Northumberland and, likewise, we are also being called upon to accept patient transfers from other areas, if appropriate. As directed by the province, we have plans in place to surge up—if required—but recognize that this would also require additional staff and physicians to support the patients in these beds, and this is expected to be a challenge.

Health Professions Scholarships to be presented next month

Applications for the annual Health Professions Scholarship awards were due by February 15th and NHH wishes to thank all who put forward applications.

Introduced by the hospital in 2003, the purpose of the Scholarship Program is to provide financial assistance to students from west Northumberland who are pursuing a career in the health care sector. Applicants are evaluated on the basis of their academic achievements, extra-curricular activities, a testimonial explaining their interest in a health-care field and written references. We look forward to announcing the winners at the May Board meeting!