



**NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS  
HOSPITAL**  
*inspiring strength, dignity and compassion*

# keeping you in touch WITH YOUR COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

## New high definition CT scanner installed at NHH – radiation exposure cut in half thanks to new technology

NHH's new CT (computed tomography) scanner was installed last month and patient service began with the new equipment on Monday, March 9. Shown with the new equipment are, from left to right, staff members Faye Andrews, Senior CT Technologist, Sharon LeRoux, CT Technologist, Ian Moffat, Director, Diagnostic Imaging and Dr. Frank Marrocco, NHH's Chief of Radiology.

A replacement for the scanner purchased when the hospital moved into the 1000 DePalma Drive location in October 2003, the new model brings with it a wealth of improvements that will have a direct impact on the health of local residents, including a dramatic reduction in radiation exposure. Doctors use CT to diagnose and screen for stroke, pulmonary embolism, most cancers, abdominal pain, and injuries resulting from serious trauma. CT is also used to diagnose coronary artery disease—the leading cause of death for Canadian men and women.

Together with the Magnetic Resonance (MR) imaging equipment installed in October 2007, payment for the new CT is a primary goal of the *Care Close to Home Diagnostic Imaging Equipment Campaign*. Launched in June 2008, the capital campaign is ongoing under the leadership of the NHH Foundation. In a recent update to the NHH Board on the status of the Care Close to Home Campaign, NHH Foundation Chair Julie Thompson announced that the campaign is only \$165,000 away from its goal of \$6 million!



## Visitor tips to minimize the spread of infections!

Visitors to health-care facilities play a very important role in protecting patient safety and minimizing the spread of infection. Hand washing remains the single most effective means of reducing the spread of infection both within the hospital and in the community.

### Sanitize hands before and after visiting.

Wash or sanitize your hands when entering and leaving the room of the person you are visiting to avoid bringing in and carrying out germs. Insist that health-care providers do the same before caring for your loved one. Clean your hands after sneezing, coughing, touching your eyes, nose, or mouth, after using the restroom and before and after eating and drinking. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve, and do not sit on patient beds or handle their equipment. Read and follow any instructions posted outside the patient's room.

### Refrain from visiting a patient if you are sick.

Do not visit the hospital if you are sick or have had any ill symptoms within the last three days

including nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever (or feeling feverish), uncontrolled cough or rash.

### Check first before you bring food, send flowers or take the kids

While flowers, young visitors and home-baked goodies spread cheer, they may not be allowed, so check with the nurse first. If you change the water in a vase of flowers, be sure to wash your hands afterward. Bringing food is risky because the patient may be on a special diet or the food could spoil and make the patient sick. Likewise, check with the health-care facility about the rules for children visiting. If you bring youngsters, don't let them play on the floor or bed and have them wash their hands as they enter and leave the room. Make sure the child is free from symptoms of infection (e.g., runny nose, sore throat, rash, cough, etc.)

### Special precautions

If the person you are visiting is on "Isolation Precautions," talk to the nurse before entering the room to find out what steps you will have to take, such as wearing a mask or other protective

clothing. Also ask for any educational materials that may be available.

### Don't contribute to the clutter

Limit the patient's personal items. Less clutter eases the critical job of cleaning hospital rooms. Keep patient items off the floor and away from waste containers.

### Visiting more than one

If you are visiting multiple patients (for instance, if you are a pastor), sanitize your hands before and after seeing each patient. Do not share the communion cup and lay the wafer on a paper towel (not directly on the patient's table.) Visit the person in isolation last and follow the precautions specified.

### Back at home

Keep the patient healthy back at home. Follow discharge instructions and eliminate germs from the patient's environment by using disinfectants, such as sprays and wipes, to clean hard surfaces often.

*Source: Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology ([www.apic.org](http://www.apic.org))*

## Henry J. Pankratz appointed to the NHH Board of Directors

The Directors of the Northumberland Hills Hospital Board recently passed a motion to appoint a replacement for long-time Board member Nick Hathway. Hathway passed away late last year, while a member of the NHH Board. Now joining the Board as a new representative of Ward 3 is Henry J. Pankratz of Hamilton Township.

Currently President of CavanCore Capital, a personal investment and corporate advisory company, Pankratz had a long and distinguished career with Ernst and Young prior to his retirement in

1999. In addition to his new role at NHH, Pankratz holds a number of board and advisory positions in the financial services sector.

An FCA (Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario) and an FCMC (Fellow of the Certified Management Consultants of Ontario), Pankratz also holds an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Wilfrid Laurier University. As per Board bylaws, his term will last until the next annual general meeting on June 18, at which time he intends to stand for election.

## Career opportunities

Pharmacists – full- and part-time opportunities available now

Medical Radiation Technologist, Mammography – part-time

*For more information and a full listing, go to the Careers section of the hospital Web site, [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca)*

## Save the date! Upcoming NHH Foundation events

Saturday, May 9 – Youth Cares Committee's Search Party: Scavenger Hunt for Health!

Tuesday, June 16 – Northumberland's Biggest Coffee Morning

*For information please contact the Foundation office at 905-372-6811, ext. 3065.*

## Upcoming Auxiliary events

Monday, June 29 – Wine Tasting in the Park, Victoria Park, Cobourg, 7:00 PM.

## UPCOMING hospital EVENTS

Thursday, April 30, 5:00 PM

Monthly meeting of the Northumberland Hills Hospital Board of Directors  
Board Room, NHH

## BUDGET UPDATE SHARED CHALLENGE, SHARED SOLUTION

Board Chair Sid Trevail  
& President and CEO Robert Biron

A series of CEO Budget Forums for staff, physicians and volunteers were held earlier this week at NHH to announce details of the 2009-2010 budget plan unanimously approved by the Board on March 26.

The forums shared the results of a budget-balancing exercise launched on December 12, 2008 to encourage all members of the hospital team to identify potential efficiencies and new revenue opportunities. The goal: address a \$2 million operating deficit without reducing quality or access to patient services. We are most impressed with the way this team has come together to address the operating deficit by finding additional ways to save money without negatively affecting patient care. As a result, a \$2 million operating deficit has been reduced to a \$600,000 operating deficit—a reduction of \$1.4 million.

Like many other hospitals, NHH faces considerable financial challenges, particularly in this tough economic climate. Using the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Prioritization Framework for Expenditure Control as a guide, the Shared Challenge, Shared Solution initiative required management to scrutinize all areas of hospital operations, including revenue generation, a department-by-department zero-based budgeting exercise, and a benchmarking performance review against peer hospitals in the province. Ideas were contributed from all levels of the organization, not just the management team, but also from front-line staff, physicians and volunteers. For example, through the hospital's Bright Ideas program, front-line staff identified cost-saving opportunities which alone surfaced more than \$40,000 in savings.

At the CEO Budget Forums and at departmental meetings held March 30, information was shared regarding the staffing implications of the budget plan. Seventy to seventy-five per cent of a hospital's budget is related to staff salaries, wages and benefits. Hence, when our hospital faced a \$2 million operating deficit, it was inevitable that there would be some impact on staff. Further details will be known by the end of April as the hospital works with its union partners to minimize the number of individuals affected through offers of early retirement, a review of existing vacancy opportunities for redeployment and, as appropriate, retraining.

With an annualized operating deficit of approximately \$600,000 still to be addressed, Phase 2 of NHH's budget-balancing strategy will now be launched. The second phase is to be completed by the fall of 2009 in preparation for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. It will include additional operational efficiencies and, if necessary, service reductions. In this regard, NHH is launching a community engagement program as a means to obtain public input into those budget decisions.

NHH's approach to community engagement will be proactive, meaning that public input will be sought at the beginning of the process rather than after decisions have been made by the hospital. The process will also be transparent, and it will be inclusive by obtaining as many perspectives as possible to reflect the diversity of the west Northumberland County community. The NHH Board, which is ultimately accountable for the budget decisions, will incorporate the outcome of the community engagement into its 2010-2011 budget deliberations.

To launch the community engagement program, the following activities are expected over the next month. First, we will be providing presentations to municipal councils, community service groups and other health service providers. The purpose of the presentations is twofold: to provide a brief update on NHH's financial challenges and budget status, and to provide information relating to its approach to community engagement.

The second initiative involves a mid- to late-April telephone survey of a representative portion of residents in the NHH catchment area. The objectives of the survey are to identify the primary sources of hospital information, but more importantly, to identify the public's preferred methods for being engaged in budget discussions relating to service options.

Community engagement needs to be proactive, transparent and inclusive. The NHH Board believes that, should service changes be required, discussions with our community must be held first. We want to take the time early in the process to ask how residents would like to participate in discussions of hospital services. These two-way channels are imperative for the Board to make informed decisions. Further details will follow.

## Feedback on our hospital communications?

Please email or call Jennifer Gillard, Director of Communications and Community Engagement, at: [jgillard@nhh.ca](mailto:jgillard@nhh.ca) or 905-377-7757