

## COVID-19 and NHH

### *An update from Linda Davis, President and CEO at April 20, 2021*

NHH is monitoring the concerning increase in local and provincial Northumberland COVID-19 activity – community spread is clearly occurring and until vaccine are more broadly distributed, we must all be hyper-vigilant with the key public health measures to help bend the curve:

- physical distance from those outside our own households;
- wear a mask;
- stay home/get tested if ill;
- wash hands, often; and
- get your vaccine as soon as you are eligible and it is available!

It will take all of us working together to get through this wave.

As was the case in previous waves, the number of COVID-positive patients currently admitted to NHH remains low (less than 5). That said, our medical/surgical inpatient capacity is very high at 115% today with high non-COVID acuity, as often seen this time of year, in addition to continued high volumes of non-acute Alternate Level of Care patients (+30%). We continue to work with Home and Community Support Services to arrange discharge to long-term care for these ALC patients but isolation requirements are making that challenging.

In recent weeks NHH has been called on to accept transfers from GTA hospitals in overcapacity situations. To date the total number of patients transferred to NHH remains small (less than 10 to date). We do have bed capacity within our Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and with the ramp-down of non-urgent procedures last week, including elective surgeries, we have taken proactive steps to be able to create further critical care capacity should it be needed within the system.

Health human resource capacity is perhaps our most significant challenge, as every member of our team is, quite understandably, feeling the burden of this prolonged situation, the pressures of juggling home and work responsibilities and, in some instances, high-risk contact exposures in the community or in their households resulting in a need to quarantine.

We are extremely grateful for the resilience of all members of our team, the collaboration of our community partners, and the continued commitment to the patients we serve.

While COVID is placing an immense strain on hospitals, I cannot emphasize strongly enough: we stand ready to serve those who are ill, COVID or otherwise. Our team wants all community members to know that NHH is open and ready to safely care for all who need us – please do not delay coming to hospital should you need to be seen.

## NHH supporting Ontario ramp-down of elective surgeries and non-emergent / non-urgent acute care activities

Effective **Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup>**, Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) once again began the difficult process of postponing selected non-urgent procedures, including: elective surgeries, non-urgent Diagnostic Imaging procedures and non-urgent Ambulatory Care activities.

“The goal is to work together as a province to do all in our power to preserve our system’s overall critical care and human resource capacity in the face of rising COVID-19 case counts and community transmission,” said Linda Davis, NHH President and CEO.

The NHH Emergency Department continues to operate as normal, including the NHH COVID-19 Assessment Centre, and all urgent care continues to be provided. There is no impact to patients currently admitted to hospital.

NHH staff continue to place calls to elective/non-urgent patients and families impacted by the ramp-down. If you do not receive a call, please assume your procedure or service will continue as planned.

NHH is not taking these steps alone but rather with all hospitals across the province on direction received April 8<sup>th</sup> from the provincial government.

“Thank you, as always, for your continued patience as we move forward together in these challenging times,” added Linda Davis in the April 9<sup>th</sup> media release explaining the changes. “Thank you, too, to our dedicated staff, physicians and midwives who continue to do their utmost to provide exceptional patient care.”

A return to regular services will be planned as soon as safely possible. For further details please see the related news release on [nhh.ca](http://nhh.ca).

## Thank you to our incredible volunteers

Volunteers are a force to be reckoned with in Northumberland. This hospital would not exist without the passion, support and creativity of the many dedicated volunteers who have contributed to NHH and our legacy organizations through the years.

We are incredibly thankful for this sustained commitment. This National Volunteer Week—our second under the COVID cloud—we are sending a shoutout of recognition and thanks to every one of NHH’s outstanding volunteers for the positive impact they continue to make, regardless of the challenges COVID has caused.

**The value of one, the power of many** is the theme of National Volunteer Week in Canada this year, and it could not be a more fitting statement to describe the many souls who continue to step up and step out to make a significant difference in this community.

Thank you to all the NHH volunteers for your positive impact again this year. We do hope that in 2022 we can celebrate you in person!

## Role of Nurse Practitioners continues to expand at Northumberland Hills Hospital to meet evolving needs of patients and their families

Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) recently announced an expansion to the scope of practice provided by Nurse Practitioners (NPs) within Post-Acute Specialty Services (PASS), specifically Inpatient Rehabilitation and Restorative Care.

With steady and targeted recruitment, NPs have increasingly demonstrated their value to NHH patients, families and day-to-day hospital operations.

Today, there are ten NPs on staff at NHH, key professionals within the interdisciplinary teams of the Emergency Department, Mental Health, Medical/Surgical Unit and Post-Acute Specialty Services.

Learn more about the work NPs like Karen Truter (left) and Rachel Klompmaker are doing at NHH today, and the benefits to the patients and families we serve, on our website, [nhh.ca](http://nhh.ca), and our social media feeds.

