

Three new doctors welcomed at NHH

The medical team at Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) has grown by three this summer, with the addition of two new internists and one general surgeon.

Dr. Mukesh Bhargava: New general internist specialized in cardiology, cholesterol disorders and stroke prevention

NHH presented the right combination of qualities to **Dr. Mukesh Bhargava** when Health Force Ontario drew it to his attention last year. After a site visit and tour he was quickly convinced that the hospital and the community had just what he was looking for. His wife and business partner Dr. Anuja Sharma (profiled below) agreed, and the couple have since relocated to the area and opened the door to their new venture, IM Care, at the hospital's 1000 DePalma Drive location in Cobourg.

"We had practiced in a community this size for 11 years, and though we were relocating to be closer to aging parents it was important for us to find something very similar," Dr. Bhargava said. "We want to practice medicine in an interdisciplinary environment in which the patient is treated as a person, not simply the next case. As physicians, our motto has always been: we will take care of you, or get you taken care of. We found the same patient care philosophy here at NHH."

Dr. Bhargava earned his medical degree in India and completed his residency in New York state before settling in Sanford, Maine, outside Boston, Massachusetts. A general internist, his clinical specialties include cardiology, cholesterol disorders and stroke prevention.

"I offer an adult patient what a pediatrician offers to a child. Adults experience the effects of chronic conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, breathing problems... but they also have acute situations, such as strokes or heart attacks, which bring them to their hospital. There is an excellent team of medical professionals here at NHH, and state-of-the-art equipment. I work with the team in the NHH Emergency Department and on the hospital's medical floors to apply my training and experience to the unique circumstances of each patient. Prevention is also an important area of interest for me, particularly stroke prevention."



Shown from left to right are: Dr. Kaes Al-Ali, Dr. Anuja Sharma, and Dr. Mukesh Bhargava. All three of NHH's new specialists are now accepting referrals from family doctors in the area.

Dr. Anuja Sharma: New general internist specialized in dermatology and endocrinology

Like her husband, **Dr. Anuja Sharma** found everything she was looking for in west Northumberland: a welcoming environment, a philosophy of patient care that mirrored her own and proximity to family.

Also an internist, Dr. Sharma's clinical specialties complement those of her husband and lifelong medical practice partner, Dr. Bhargava. She too received her medical degree in India before moving to the U.S.

"The primary focus of my practice is dermatology, including assessment and treatment of skin cancer, chronic diseases of the skin (such as psoriasis, eczema and acne) and lesions that do not heal. I offer biopsies on an outpatient basis and, for more extensive investigations, I will collaborate with the wider network of general and plastic surgeons in our area."

A secondary area of specialization for Dr. Sharma is endocrinology, specifically thyroid diseases (glandular disorders) and osteoporosis (diseases of the bones). Assessment and investigation of rheumatology (joint) complaints, such as rheumatoid arthritis, is the third focus for her work, including the administration of corticosteroid injections on an outpatient basis.

Dr. Kaes Al-Ali: New general surgeon

The third new addition to NHH's medical team is **Dr. Kaes Al-Ali**. One of three general surgeons operating out of the local hospital, his practice is based from the same Port Hope office as his new colleagues, general surgeons Drs. Andrew Stratford and Haig Basmajian.

Dr. Al-Ali obtained his medical degree in Iraq, where he was also involved in extensive humanitarian work during the Gulf War. He went on to post-graduate education and work in Ireland and Qatar. He completed a second residency in general surgery in Canada at the University of Toronto where he was most recently a breast surgery fellow and clinical associate affiliated with St. Michael's Hospital. Dr. Al-Ali has been recognized with awards for both academic excellence as well as patient care. He is also committed to teaching, and looks forward to working with medical students and nurses at NHH.

Like Drs. Sharma and Bhargava, Dr. Al-Ali was attracted to Northumberland by the friendliness of the community. Speaking of his initial tour of Northumberland, he noted: "I've lived in cities most of my life and I've never been to a place where people greet each other so warmly. It's wonderful."

The quality of the amenities available to patients and medical staff alike at NHH was another draw for Dr. Al-Ali. "I was extremely impressed by how well equipped this hospital is for its size. The operating rooms are spacious and very well set up. The building really distinguished NHH from other communities we were considering."

NHH Laboratory earns equivalent of an A+ during recent Ontario Laboratory Accreditation assessment



Members of the NHH Laboratory team, following their accreditation assessment last month. Shown from left to right are: Debbie Maki (Laboratory Manager), Myonne Allan (Director of Quality and Safety), Brenda Hylton (Laboratory Technologist), Anna Carreau (Laboratory Technologist), Connie Gray (Laboratory Assistant), Melanie Tweedie (Laboratory Technologist) and Chris Toope (Laboratory Technologist)

Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) met 97 per cent of the required standards set out in a recent Ontario Laboratory Accreditation (OLA) assessment, improving even further on the 90 per cent achievement earned by the Lab in its last assessment in September 2007.

Mandated by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and operated by the Ontario Medical Association, OLA accreditation assessment is required for all licensed medical laboratories in Ontario. Now conducted on a four-year cycle, the accreditation requirements, as defined on the OLA website, "are based on ISO 15189 and are augmented with international standards for safety and point-of-care testing, national standards for blood safety, government regulation and generally accepted principles of good practice."

Over the course of a three-day visit to NHH last month, a four-person team of quality system and technical experts scrutinized operations and systems in place at the local Lab to ensure its ability to perform the tests for which it is licensed.

"The mandatory requirements we are required to meet are really extensive," said Myonne Allan, NHH's Director of Quality and Safety, who also serves as an OLA assessor for other labs in the province. "For our Lab here at NHH, these were grouped into 11 categories, with a combined total of 497 required standards. They looked at everything that we do, and we were very pleased to see how well our work stood up against recognized best practices."

Upcoming Foundation Events

Bob Smoke Memorial Golf Tournament
Saturday, August 25th, 2012. All proceeds go towards the Speechley Palliative Care Unit at NHH. \$80/person.

5th Annual Chris Mansey Memorial Golf Tournament
Sunday, August 26th, 2012.

Chris Mansey Memorial Fund Raffle
Offered in conjunction with the Chris Mansey Golf Tournament above, this not-to-be-missed raffle will give the lucky winner a return trip for TWO to ANY WestJet destination! Tickets are \$5 each and available at the Foundation Office prior to the draw on August 26th, 2012.

For more information please visit the Foundation section at nhh.ca or call the Foundation office at 905-372-6811, ext. 3068.

Upcoming NHH Auxiliary events

Author! Author!
Wednesday, October 3rd, 6:30 PM, Capital Theatre. NHH's Auxiliary volunteers have teamed up with Furby House Books to bring three Random House authors to our community: Linden MacIntyre (*Why Men Lie*), Emily Shultz (*The Blondes*) and Shauna Singh Baldwin (*The Selector of Souls*). Tickets are \$60 and include a light supper, a glass of wine and a signed copy of the book of your choice.

Tickets available September 1st at Furby House Books in Port Hope and The Little Treasure Shop at NHH.