

## NHH's Community Mental Health program celebrates 40 years of service to Northumberland residents

The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) Community Mental Health Services program is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> year of operation this year.

Rebranded close to a decade ago from its original name, Lakeshore Community Mental Health Services, NHH's Community Mental Health Services (NHCMHS) have steadily increased local offerings for individuals in need of mental health support through a series of expansions to long-standing services, new additions and collaborative partnerships.

The Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT)—a community-based team within NHH's Community Mental Health Services program—recently introduced a drop-in service operating two days per week in downtown Cobourg where clients can access skills groups and peer supports. The program has been named "The Living Room," a name selected by the clients it serves who also create and publish the calendar of monthly programs.

Thanks to an effective partnership with Northumberland County, NHH now offers specific programs for hoarding and homelessness. Collaborations with local police, such as the new HealthIM™ mental health crisis response system established with Cobourg Police Services this spring, are linking police cruisers with the NHH Emergency Department triage nurse in advance of arrival, communicating vital information and, where possible, averting trips to the hospital.

NHH has also expanded the number of group therapy programs available in the community, with current offerings including groups on mindfulness, anxiety, trauma, assertiveness, cognitive behaviour therapy, and specialized sessions addressing specific need, such as *Wellness Matters*, *Getting to Know Your Emotions* and *The Gifts of Imperfection*.

Within the NHH Emergency Department at 1000 DePalma Drive the NHCMHS team has a Crisis Clinician who provides assessment, supportive counseling, community referral and assistance with inpatient hospitalization for individuals experiencing mental health crisis.

Long-standing programs that continue to be offered from the Community Mental Health Services 1011 Elgin Street West offices in Cobourg include: counseling and treatment, case management, housing support, early psychosis intervention and psychiatry. Space is shared at the same location with the region's Fourcast Addictions service.



"Last year, the team at NHCMHS provided mental health supports to approximately 2,500 individuals," said Integrated Regional Program Director Scott Pepin. "This is a significant increase from the support we were able to offer a decade ago, but the need is increasing steadily."

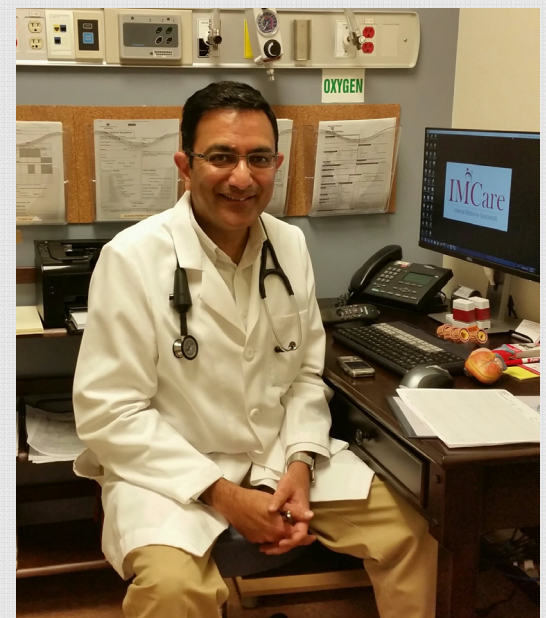
At a regional level, NHH is working to better meet these local needs through participation in a broadening network of mental health care within the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN). **Pepin** heads up NHH's mental health services, and carries regional leadership responsibilities as well. An employee of the regional mental health centre (Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences), Pepin also oversees the mental health programs at Peterborough Regional Health Centre and Campbellford Memorial Hospital, greatly enhancing the transfer of knowledge and care coordination within our region consistent with the aim of the Central East LHIN.

While need continues to rise in many mental health service areas, the NHH team members embrace their job every day to work against the stigma of mental illness and support their clients in the community to achieve and maintain wellness.

For further details on the support available through NHH's Community Mental Health Service, and contact information, please see the Services section of the hospital website at [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca). Information is also available by phone at 905-377-9891 or 1-888-294-7579.

The Central East LHIN recently commissioned a system review into mental health and addiction services and need in our region. For the results of that study, completed by Deloitte, and further context on current and planned mental health services, see the Central East LHIN website at <http://www.centraleastthin.on.ca/priorities/mentalhealthandaddictions.aspx>.

## Dr. Mukesh Bhargava, new Chief of Staff, appointed at NHH



The NHH Board of Directors is pleased to confirm that local physician **Dr. Mukesh Bhargava** has been appointed Chief of Staff (COS).

Effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Dr. Bhargava has taken over from Dr. David Broderick who served the hospital in the COS role for the past 13 years.

"We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Bhargava into this important position," said Elizabeth Selby, NHH Board Chair. "As the former Chief of Medicine for NHH and a practicing internal medicine specialist at NHH, Dr. Bhargava has a strong understanding of our role as a community hospital. A member of the Steering Committee that oversaw the development of NHH's new 2017/18 – 2020/21 Strategic Plan, and, before that, NHH's Hospital Improvement Plan Steering Committee, Dr. Bhargava is a strong supporter of our shared purpose—*Exceptional patient care. Every time*—and a respected advocate for continuous quality improvement."

As COS at NHH, Dr. Bhargava will provide medical leadership to the hospital's clinical programs. He will also provide administrative oversight, ensuring that physicians and physician learners are appropriately credentialed and in step with the necessary professional standards of practice, and that quality medical services are managed effectively, consistent with NHH's strategic and operational priorities and local/regional accountabilities.

Like NHH's President and CEO, Linda Davis, Dr. Bhargava reports to the hospital's volunteer Board. The COS role is a part-time position at NHH. Dr. Bhargava will continue his current internal medicine practice while committing two half-days to NHH administration.

For further details please see the related news release at [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca).