

## Cough, Cold and COVID Assessment Centre winding down on March 31, 2023

With the volume of COVID-19 cases and respiratory-focused illnesses decreasing in the community, the Cough, Cold and COVID-19 Assessment Centre at Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) is preparing to wind down its services, effective March 31, 2023.

The symbolism of the closure is not lost on the large team of NHH staff, physicians and Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N) partners who came together just over three years ago to open the service. The final day of operation, when it comes later this month, marks a turning point in the local response to COVID-19 and an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the collaborative spirit between NHH and its community partners to sustain and adapt the service for over three years.

The Centre opened its doors to the public on March 14, 2020, less than 24-hours after the first positive case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Northumberland County and three days after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

Initially, the Centre offered COVID-19 assessment and testing only and was housed within the hospital proper, inside a cordoned off area within NHH's Ambulatory Care Clinic, before moving to a trailer located outside of the hospital's Emergency Department as regular services within the Ambulatory Care Clinic resumed.

With support from Northumberland Paramedics and the Municipality of Port Hope a satellite location was temporarily added at the Port Hope Community Hub in the village of Canton, before [winding down in June 2021](#). When COVID-19 treatment options became available this service was added as well, first through an initial partnership between NHH and the COVID-19 team at Lakeridge Health before the Centre assumed the ability to administer treatment independently with support from the NHH Pharmacy and area primary care physicians.

In December 2022, the Centre, by then consolidated to only one location at NHH, rebranded to the Cough, Cold, and COVID Assessment Centre. On the urging of area care providers and the NHH Emergency Department the Centre expanded services once again to provide testing, assessment, and treatment options for both COVID-19 and respiratory-focused illnesses, preserving capacity for local Emergency Departments and primary care providers alike.

To date, through the course of the pandemic, the Centre has logged more than 55,000 visits, including individual visits to the Centres at NHH, the satellite site in Canton and the outreach testing deployed by the team in collaboration with OHT-N partners and the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit to area retirement and other congregate settings.

"The COVID-19 pandemic had an immense impact on the health care landscape. Our teams were called on to reimagine how we could deliver safe, efficient care while sustaining and protecting our existing resources for the community's most vulnerable populations," said NHH President and CEO Susan Walsh. "The Cough, Cold and COVID Assessment Centre is a very powerful example of the strength and value of community partnerships and teamwork. During a time of uncertainty, we were able to join together and create a one-stop shop to support individuals experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and respiratory-focused illnesses who were in need of fast, effective care. There were many hands involved in this work. Please join us in thanking every member of the Assessment Centre team, including the critical teams such as the Pharmacy, Laboratory, Health Records, IT and Environmental Services staff who supported the Centre's operations, area primary care partners who devoted countless hours and all of the many partners involved who stepped up during very difficult circumstances to serve their community for over three years through the many challenges presented by this pandemic."

Please see [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca) and the websites of area partners for options for future care after March 31.



## Interested in learning more about local health care? Consider joining the NHH Board as a Community Member

### Second Virtual Board Volunteer Open House coming up Tuesday, May 9

If you're interested in local health care delivery, and you have experience as a patient or caregiver, this unique and rewarding volunteer opportunity may be something to consider.

#### About the Northumberland Hills Hospital Board

The Board of Directors is composed of volunteers from around west Northumberland County (the area served by NHH). Each volunteer brings a unique mix of skills and work/life experiences which help enable the Board to meet the responsibilities expected of it in the Province of Ontario. These responsibilities include: providing strategic direction to the Hospital's management team; selecting the Chief Executive Officer and Chief of Staff and evaluating performance; providing oversight to the physician credentialing process; and monitoring the operational and financial performance of the hospital.

#### About the unique Community Member role

As a key part of its commitment to providing meaningful opportunities for public input into the NHH Board's decision-making processes, and as a method of succession planning for the Board, the NHH Board of Directors regularly recruits Community Members to serve on the following Board Committees—Quality and Safety, Finance and Audit, Governance and Facilities and Campus Development—in addition to participation in full Board discussions.

For additional information, including login details for the Virtual Board Volunteer Open House, please see the related news release on [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca).

## One week left to apply for NHH's \$1500 Health Professions Scholarship!

Applications for NHH's annual Health Professions Scholarship awards are due by 4:00 PM on Friday, March 31.

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. All applicants must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a full-time study program.

For full details on the Health Profession Scholarship program, including a downloadable Application Form, please visit the Careers tab of [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca).