

CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL MEETINGS NOW UNDER WAY Public Roundtable Session Set for November 14

Twenty-eight residents of west Northumberland County have committed five of their Saturdays from October to December to bring the community's perspective to potential choices related to services provided at NHH.

The Panel is the public extension of the Hospital's collaborative budget strategy, *Shared Challenge, Shared Solution*. While \$1.4 M in operating efficiencies have been identified with input from internal stakeholders (staff, physicians and volunteers), NHH continues to forecast a deficit. Operating costs continue to rise, the demand for services continues to grow and revenues are not keeping pace with inflation.

The decision to proceed with the creation of an advisory panel was unanimously approved by the Board of Directors in August. The resulting plan was shaped by a collaborative of four parties:

- the Hospital Board, providing governance oversight;
- external consultants from MASS LBP with expertise in public engagement;
- researchers from Queen's School of Business with expertise in resource allocation decision-making and program evaluation; and
- funding partner, the Northumberland Community Futures Development Corporation.

Similar to the method used for selecting a jury for a court of law, members in the Panel were selected using a random civic lottery



process. 5,000 local households received invitations to participate in the process earlier this fall. No specialized knowledge about the Hospital or the health care system was required, but recent experience with the Hospital was deemed necessary for a minimum of 50 per cent of the final participants.

Applicants were required to be 18 years of age or older, and be available to commit to participation on the full five Saturdays required. Current staff, volunteers and physicians with privileges at the Hospital were not eligible to participate in the Citizens' Advisory Panel.

MASS LBP drew the names of the 28 Advisory Panel members through a random draw. Working with the applications received, all efforts possible were made to balance the group by age, geographic representation and sex.

The participants of NHH's first Citizens' Advisory Panel, listed alphabetically by each of the three regions or wards that make up the Hospital's catchment area, were announced as follows on Friday, October 23:

Ward 1: Robert Berry, David Bradshaw, Becky Brown, Don McKenzie, Heather McKeown, Sue Speirs, Phil Taylor, Barb von Boetticher, Teresa Williams and Elaine West.

Ward 2: Kathleen Boulter, Matthew Dwyer, Randal Hunt, Mohammad Kundan, Ron Linton, Yatinkumar Patel, David Patterson*, Madge Pedersen, Pat Stanley and Wendy Tomlinson.

Ward 3: Kathy Anderson, Margo Harnden, David Hickey, Andrew Holt, Frank Mastinsek, Richard O'Toole, Tom Parks and Herman Van der Veen.

Ward 1 = Municipality of Port Hope;

Ward 2 = Town of Cobourg;

Ward 3 = Townships of Hamilton, Alnwick/Haldimand and Cramahe

**Withdrawn due to illness in the family.*

The Panelists met for the first time on Saturday, October 24. Meetings continue through to December 5, with an opportunity for public participation in a **Public Roundtable meeting at 1:00 p.m. on November 14** at the Port Hope High School. To read more about the Panel process and its progress, please go to the Hospital's website at www.nhh.ca

John Hudson, Board Chair
Robert Biron, President and CEO

More Bright Ideas Recognized



NHH President and CEO Robert Biron with two of the Hospital's latest Bright Ideas Award recipients, Merle Venne and Brenda Eakins.

NHH's Bright Ideas Program celebrates creative and progressive ideas brought forward by staff to help the Hospital better serve its patients, employees and community. In recent months the Program has provided a direct channel for staff members to share their thoughts on potential operating efficiencies.

Four more staff members were recognized this week for a variety of great ideas, summarized below.

Brenda Eakins – A Registered Nurse in the Maternal Child Care area of the hospital, Brenda's idea (to stop the automatic printing of lab reports and reduce excess stock of selected items) was accepted and implemented as part of an ongoing supply chain improvement program at the Hospital.

Linda Hastings – A clerk in NHH's Admitting area, Linda brought forward a suggestion to reduce printing and paper costs. Her idea, related to the documentation of patients' religious preference, is saving money and time.

Dawn Hills – An RN, Dawn brought forward a suggestion to save energy and help the environment. Dawn recommended adjusting the Hospital's standard heat and air conditioning settings by one degree. In addition, she suggested improvements to cut back on electrical costs related to lighting.

Merle Venne – A Ward Clerk in Complex Care, Merle brought forward an idea for disinfection of charts belonging to discharged patients. As the flu season is now upon us, her recognition for this idea is timely.

Feedback on our hospital communications?

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

H1N1 AND NHH

H1N1 influenza has been confirmed in our community. While the number of patients being seen in the NHH Emergency Department and Fast Track with coughs, colds and Influenza-like Illness (ILI) is on the rise, the number of admissions is not.

NHH's response to the second wave of the H1N1 virus is being guided by our Hospital's Pandemic Plan and provincial health authorities. In the event that H1N1 escalates, our Hospital is prepared.

At this stage, enhanced precautions to prevent the spread of H1N1 are as follows:

- self-screening at all entrances/in the Emergency Department, and stockpiling of personal protective equipment (masks, gowns, gloves)
- fit-testing of all hospital staff to ensure everyone knows the mask that best fits their face to ensure maximum protection
- daily meetings of a flu-focused, multidisciplinary committee to anticipate and respond to new developments
- administration of the H1N1 vaccine to Hospital staff members working in areas identified as "high contact" for flu-like illnesses (Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit)

Visitors to NHH are asked to postpone their visit if they are experiencing any flu-like symptoms.

In the Emergency Department/Fast Track triage area, Admitting and ambulatory care areas, patients are asked the following questions:

1. Do you have a new/worse cough or shortness of breath?
2. Do you have a fever or have you had the shakes, chills in the last 24 hours?

If yes to both, the patient is asked to perform hand hygiene and don a mask. As per the provincial guidelines, patients with suspected cases of H1N1 influenza, where the patient's symptoms do not require admission, are being advised to rest and drink lots of fluids. As well, patients with suspected cases are educated on the appropriate hand hygiene techniques and cough etiquette and advised to not go to work/school until 7 days after the onset of the illness OR 24 hours after their symptoms have resolved.

Those experiencing flu-like symptoms are encouraged to first contact their family physicians or Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000. Further information on H1N1 is available from the Service Ontario INFOline at 1-800-476-9708.

The best steps we can all take to minimize the spread of the any flu is to follow these simple steps:

- wash your hands frequently;
- don't go out in the public if you are sick;
- cough or sneeze into your sleeve and wash your hands after;
- keep your hands away from your face.