

Third dedicated COVID-19 testing service preparing to open in Northumberland with support from OHT-N partners and the Municipality of Port Hope

Local health and community care providers continue to work together through the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N) partnership to maximize Northumberland County's capacity for COVID-19 assessment and testing. Formed prior to the pandemic, the OHT-N has quickly mobilized community resources around this unprecedented public health challenge.

As announced October 9, the partners are taking a proactive, phased approach to care delivery by focusing health human resources where they are needed most while preparing to quickly increase additional testing capacity as local needs require and in step with provincial direction.

Up to now, COVID-19 assessment and testing services have been focused on two centres within Northumberland County:

- the NHH COVID-19 Assessment Centre at Northumberland Hills Hospital; and
- the Trent Hills COVID-19 Testing Centre in Campbellford.

Testing is also available on an emergency basis via the Emergency Departments at both Northumberland Hills Hospital and Campbellford Memorial Hospital, and in a 'pop-up' capacity through the Community Paramedicine team of Northumberland Paramedics. To date, pop-up support has responded to unique needs as they have arisen at a range of long-term care and retirement homes, Alderville First Nation and various congregate living settings, such as Transition House shelter.

Beginning Wednesday, November 4, a third dedicated COVID-19 testing site—this one focused primarily on service for individuals without symptoms—will be introduced in Northumberland County by the OHT-N partners. It will operate three days a week (Monday, Wednesday and Thursday), and be located at the **The Port Hope Community Hub** (formerly the Canton Municipal Hall) at 5325 County Road 10, just north of Canton.

"The specific aim of the Canton COVID-19 Testing Centre is to provide another local option for those without active symptoms, such as those who require a test because they wish to visit a loved one in an area long-term care home, or those who may have been exposed in a work or school setting," said Linda Davis, spokesperson for the OHT-N and President and CEO at Northumberland Hills Hospital. "This new service in Canton will provide another option for these people, thereby adding capacity at our existing sites to cater to those with COVID-19 or other respiratory-like symptoms. On behalf of the OHT-N members, I thank the Municipality of Port Hope for their support in this work."

"This initiative is a tremendous example of how community collaboration and shared resources can benefit residents throughout the County, and we are proud to participate in this proactive approach alongside OHT-N," adds Bob Sanderson, Warden of Northumberland County and Mayor of the Municipality of Port Hope. "This partnership streamlines the testing process, will allow more people to get tested, and will hopefully result in shorter wait times at the Centres. I commend the OHT-N and their team for the careful planning and delivery of these services amid the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Like the NHH COVID-19 Assessment Centre and the Trent Hills COVID-19 Testing Centre, the new Canton COVID-19 Testing Centre will see patients by appointment only. Appointments will be coordinated through the existing booking line at NHH: **905-377-7783**. This model will allow the OHT-N partners to prioritize those who most require assessment and testing—based on the latest provincial eligibility criteria—align booking with patient needs, including their geographic location, and better manage physical distancing requirements at all three sites.

Services will continue as previously communicated at the two pre-existing Centres. Patients needing to see a physician/nurse practitioner will continue to be booked for appointments at the NHH site.

The decision to focus the new service in Canton on the needs of those without symptoms is intended to better support the following:

- Pre-operative patients who require a negative COVID-19 test prior to receiving a surgical procedure
- Caregivers or visitors to long-term care residents
- Individuals with employment-related or public health-directed testing needs
- Other general testing that does not require the specific services of a full assessment centre

In an effort to free up much-needed space within the Northumberland Hills Hospital's Emergency Department, where the Centre is currently being operated, and minimize traffic in and out of the main hospital site, NHH will also transition its COVID-19 Assessment Centre this week to the new self-enclosed trailer that has been set up on the lawn immediately in front of the Emergency Department entrance. For further details, please see the OHT-N's media release at www.ohtnorthumberland.ca



NHH Auxiliary retail shop at NHH is back in business! If you have reason to be at NHH in the coming days, please stop in to show your support

Required to pause operations at the beginning of the global pandemic, a small number of Auxiliary volunteers are now returning to their duties, including the very dedicated team behind The Little Treasure Shop, the retail operation inside the main front entrance of Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) at 1000 DePalma Drive, Cobourg.

Now operating with a reduced schedule (**Monday to Friday, noon to 4PM**) and a smaller-than-usual team of volunteers, The Little Treasure Shop volunteers have worked closely with the team at NHH and taken careful steps to ensure appropriate infection prevention and control procedures are in place in the shop, including personal protective equipment, a limit on the total number of customers in the shop at any one time, physical distancing markers on the floor and more.

If you have reason to be at NHH in the coming days, please stop in to support this unique on-site retail service as you are able. The Shop is managed by the volunteers of the NHH Auxiliary and all proceeds support the hospital.

