



NHH TAKES STEPS TO PROTECT LOCAL ACCESS TO ACUTE CARE SERVICES.

WE WANT YOU TO KNOW THE FACTS.

Implementation of an innovative and comprehensive ALC strategy is under way at Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) following agreement on additional funding from the Central East Local Health Integration Network (CE LHIN) and approval of the strategy by the NHH Board on August 26th.

Alternative Level of Care (ALC) patients are those individuals who have completed their acute care treatment, but remain in hospital

waiting for placement in community-based services. Currently 25% of all acute patient days at NHH are attributed to ALC patients.

If left unaddressed, the ALC issue will reduce access to our Hospital's essential acute care services, and increase wait times. ALC patients occupy beds needed for Emergency Department patients waiting to be admitted or surgical patients who require hospital-based post-surgical care.

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR A COMPLEX PROBLEM

Much of the investment at NHH will focus on staffing changes that increase inpatient therapeutic supports essential to minimizing physical and cognitive declines associated with prolonged hospital stays. The following are the key components of the ALC strategy:

- **realignment of beds including the introduction of 16 restorative care beds and the closure of 23 ALC beds that will no longer be required;**
- **introduction of NHH's first Nurse Practitioner and Recreational Therapist to support the restorative and rehabilitation programs;**
- **additional coverage for allied health professional to provide services over weekends;**
- **Geriatric Emergency Mental (GEM) Health nurse in the Emergency Department;**
- **implementation of the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP), including a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Gerontology; and,**
- **implementation of Hospital to Home program for patients that require additional supports to return home safely.**

In addition to the NHH components of the ALC strategy, the CE LHIN is investing in new community-based support and services through the province's Aging at Home program. These include the establishment of the province-wide Home First initiative for additional home care services and better coordination of discharges from hospitals, and Geriatric Assessment and Intervention Network clinics to help direct individuals for support to community-based services.

A NEW STRATEGY FOR BETTER HEALTH OUTCOMES

When fully implemented, NHH's comprehensive ALC strategy will:

- enhance care given to elderly patients at NHH through the addition of therapeutic services needed to restore them to the highest possible level of function;
- refocus the model of care on the province's new Home First philosophy that takes advantage of new investments in community-based resources;
- protect access to acute care services; and
- meet NHH's obligation to reduce its ALC numbers, balance its budget and reduce its debt load.

To learn more, please visit the Hospital website at www.nhh.ca or contact Jennifer Gillard, Director, Communications and Community Engagement (905-377-7757 or jgillard@nhh.ca) or Robert Biron, President and CEO (905-377-7755 or rbiron@nhh.ca)