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Spring 2008

registered nurse

director of support services

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technologist*

mammography

computed tomography

*magnetic resonance
imaging charge
technologist*

occupational therapist

administrative assistant

speech-language pathologist

*registered respiratory
therapist*

rehabilitation assistant

*inpatient accounts
receivable clerk*

registered dietitian

physiotherapist



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Northumberland Hills Hospital

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NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

inspiring strength, dignity and compassion

OUR VISION

To excel as a community hospital.

OUR MISSION

The Northumberland Hills Hospital delivers effective and patient-focused care in partnership with community and regional health care providers for residents of west Northumberland County in an environment that promotes the dignity and well-being of everyone.

OUR VALUES

- *We are a patient-focused care organization.*
- *We provide care with dignity and compassion.*
- *We conduct ourselves with integrity and confidentiality.*
- *We trust and respect each other.*
- *We focus on high achievement and contribution.*
- *We achieve our goals through teamwork.*
- *We encourage flexibility and innovation.*
- *We encourage open communication.*
- *We practice business and fiscal responsibility.*

VISITING HOURS

Northumberland Hills Hospital
visiting hours are from
2:00 to 8:00 pm daily.

NO SMOKING

Smoking is strictly prohibited at Northumberland Hills Hospital — this includes the facility and ALL hospital grounds.

Comments or suggestions about our hospital communications? Please email or call our Director of Corporate Communications, Jennifer Gillard at: jgillard@nhh.ca or 905-377-7757.

In Touch is designed, printed and distributed at minimal cost to the Northumberland Hills Hospital thanks to the advertising support of the west Northumberland community and the efforts of the Northumberland News to solicit that support. NHH gratefully acknowledges all advertisers for their ongoing support but reminds readers that an advertisement in this publication should not be interpreted as the hospital's endorsement of a vendor's product or service.

Message from Sid Trevail, Chair of the Board, and Joan Ross, President and CEO

Much attention has been paid in recent months to the shortage of health professionals in Canada. Most of us are aware that physicians are in short supply and, as we explain in *Nurses Wanted* (below), new recruitment strategies are also being introduced for registered nurses given the growing demand and shrinking workforce in that field as well.

What is less publicized is the broad range of opportunities in health care today, and the rewarding careers (personally and financially) these offer, right here in our own backyard.

This issue of *In Touch*, Northumberland Hills Hospital's community newsletter, aims to highlight the many areas in which one might choose to build a career in health care today.

In addition to the variety of work available, and the excellent prospects

for employment, there are other considerations we hope readers will consider. First, is the great degree of personal satisfaction a career in health care can bring as one's hours of education and work are turned into a benefit for others. As RN Janna Burchart notes on page 4, one of the most satisfying parts of her job is "improving a patient's health outcome."

Also of note are the competitive salaries health professionals command today, and the benefits with which they are often accompanied, in the form of flex-work time opportunities, part-time opportunities at times in one's life when full-time work is not possible or desired, access to continuous, life-long learning and (later in life) financial security thanks to pensions that are the envy of many sectors, public and private alike.

Finally, hospitals offer employment opportunities for those from outside the health professions as well. From

administration to maintenance, talented individuals who share the values listed on the cover of this newsletter are always in demand.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and encourage you to share it with those in your household who may be planning their future career or, perhaps, looking for a change. If there is one message we hope readers take away from this issue, it is this: opportunities abound in health care today, and many can be found right here in our own west Northumberland back yard. For more information on current career opportunities at Northumberland Hills Hospital please visit the Careers section of our Web site at www.nhh.ca.

As always, we welcome your feedback.

— Sid Trevail and Joan Ross

Nurses wanted!

Hospital employees offered chance to win \$1,000 in new RN referral campaign

It's no secret that health care professionals in a range of disciplines are in short supply these days. As Northumberland Hills Hospital knows only too well, Registered Nurses (RNs) are in particular demand.

Working on the assumption that the best recruiters are those who know the hospital through their own experience, NHH has launched a new campaign offering employees the chance to have their name entered into a draw to receive \$1,000 as part of an innovative new referral campaign targeting RNs.

Here's how it works.

Any current NHH employee who knows an RN with the right skill and dedication to patient care needed at the hospital directs the RN to submit his/her resume to the Human Resources Department.

The employee referring the RN then completes a referral form prior to the RN's interview. If the candidate in question is successful in the interview process, and receives and accepts a job offer, the referring employee will have their name placed in a draw for \$1,000, cash.

Staff referrals are welcomed for RNs applying for both full- or part-time positions. Upon hire, the RN must remain with the hospital for a minimum of three months and meet a regular part-time commitment.

Special recognition for new hires!

The part-time and full-time RNs recruited to NHH during the five-month campaign will receive a \$1,500 allowance for educational purposes payable at the end of one year of continuous service. RNs returning to the hospital after an absence of less than six months are ineligible.

"Province-wide personnel shortages in the health care sector call for new approaches to ensure we continue to attract the best candidates possible to deliver the exceptional level of care our patients have come to expect," says Elizabeth Vosburgh, Northumberland Hills Hospital Director of Human Resources. "Launched in February and running until the end of June, the campaign has, as of March 2008, already led to the hiring of four RNs and a number of offers for employment are awaiting acceptance. We've set ourselves an ambitious target of 20 new full- or part-time RNs through this five-month campaign, and I believe we can do it."

The winner of the draw will be announced on September 30, 2008. ■

Message from Mary Anne Shill, Vice President, Patient Services

Earlier this year I announced my plans to retire following eight years at NHH. The date of my retirement is fast approaching, and as my working days here wind down, I find myself thinking often about the privilege I've had to work in the health care field, as a Registered Nurse and a hospital administrator.

To those considering a career in health care, I would offer four general observations taken purely from my own experience.

You will have a direct impact on people

The potential for change for the better can be as broad or as narrow as you wish, but it is truly a "people" business. As a health care professional, you have the opportunity to help bring a life into the world, or prevent one from leaving before its time. You can impact an entire community, or focus on specific individuals or diseases.

You will have many opportunities for career growth

I've had the opportunity, as a nurse, to partake in one of the fastest growing health care professions. Nurses and virtually every other health care professional can find work today in any town, province or country, anywhere in the world. There is a broad variety of positions available, and

one can specialize in any clinical area in which you have a personal interest. You can shift between full time to part time work and back again, as your personal demands require, and you can choose your hours of work to suit your lifestyle.

You will have earning potential

There is a high demand for health care professionals today, and this translates into high wages. The more you specialize, the greater your employment opportunities.

Your day (or night) will never be dull

Health care is exciting, always changing and very fast-paced. Dealing with life and death situations, no one day is ever like the other.

To succeed in health care, one must have the motivation to continually learn new things as new technologies and new methods of treatment emerge. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills are also required, coupled with a strong work ethic and a comfort level with responsibility. Health care, like any field, is not without its challenges, but I have found that the energy I have invested has been returned to me many times over.

— Mary Anne Shill
Vice President, Patient Services

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Registered Nurse



Janna Burchart, Registered Nurse

Ask what inspired her to pursue a career in nursing and Janna Burchart's response is quick: "I always had an interest in health. My grandmother was an RN. I thought I'd enjoy it too so I applied, went to school and... the rest is history!"

A graduate of Loyalist College's Diploma in Nursing with additional training in advanced cardiac life support and coronary care, Janna is a full-time RN with NHH's 2A Medical/Surgical Unit. With NHH for four years, Burchart pursued her studies in the field straight from high school and hasn't looked back since.

"I really enjoy the opportunity nursing gives me to meet new people, both as patients and as colleagues," she notes. "No two days are ever the same. Nursing offers a very unique set of opportunities and experiences, from assisting patients with the activities of daily living, to teaching good health practices, administering medications, changing dressings and fulfilling other interventions and treatments. The focus is on improving a patient's health outcome, and that's very satisfying."

Those with the initials RN after their name have been enjoying a sustained surge in career opportunities in the past five years, with no sign of the market shifting into a slower gear any time soon. "The average age of RNs is younger than it has been for some time (42 at NHH in 2008), and many of our more experienced nurses are preparing for retirement. This is occurring at a time when demand for nurses (RNs and RPNs) is moving steadily upward as baby boomers grow older," says Mary Anne Skill, NHH's Vice President, Patient Services and an RN herself who

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Registered Practical Nurse

With an expanding scope of practice, the role of the Registered Practical Nurse is considered integral to the health care system and an excellent option for one considering their first career option out of high school or those making a change later in life.

A two-year community college program, the profession offers direct patient contact in a broad range of clinical areas. Employment opportunities range from acute care hospitals to community health agencies, long-term care facilities, industry and clinics or doctor's offices.

Minimum admission requirements include an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent with demonstrated strengths in English

and Science (Biology, Chemistry and/or Physics). Mature students regularly enter the profession from other fields with good success.

“The role of the Registered Practical Nurse is considered integral to the health care system”

Course work introduces the RPN student to nursing practices and interventions in specific health situations, as well as such subject as anatomy, physiology,

communication, psychology and human growth and development. Upon completion of the academic portion of the requirements, and on-the-job clinical experience, students are eligible to write the provincial examinations with the College of Nurses and become registered to practice in Ontario as a Registered Practical Nurse.



Paula Burke, Registered Practical Nurse

continued from page 4

continued her own university studies in the area of health administration.

From Burchart's perspective, nursing attracted her for similar reasons: the ability to work in a variety of settings (hospitals, home care, health unit, public health, doctor's office, private business, education, administration and research, to name a few) and “the ability to work anywhere in the world.”

“The opportunity for improvement through extra education and daily experiences on the job” is among the rewards Burchart lists for those pursuing the profession. Another draw: “Knowing you've made a difference in somebody's life or stay at the hospital,” she adds.

Speaking about the specific charm of a smaller acute care facility like NHH, Burchart points to “friendly staff, a small community feel and a new, clean environment” as perks. Also attractive, she adds, is the opportunity to work and train in different units of the hospital.

“If you're a good listener, with strong time management and organizational skills, and if you like working on a team where you're valued for quick, critical thinking—consider nursing,” says Burchart. With 20 full- and part-time opportunities available at NHH today, Elizabeth Vosburgh is hoping many in the community agree.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Nursing Graduate Guarantee, launched in February 2007 and now going into its second year, will certainly help.

A new program designed by the Ministry of Health to give Ontario's nurses on-the-job experience following graduation, the Nursing Graduate Guarantee is the largest program of its kind in the world. Over 2,660 Ontario nursing grads took advantage of a job opportunity through the program in the last year. They received a guaranteed seven-and-a-half months of paid work placements. Eighty-six per cent of new nursing grads who completed the program have landed full-time work in the province.

We can all help...

attract physicians to west Northumberland.

Do you know a physician interested in moving to our area or trying us out in a temporary “locum” opportunity in our Emergency Department?

Mary-Jo Bathe, west Northumberland's Community Physician Recruitment Coordinator, wants to hear from you! Contact Mary-Jo today with any leads at: mjbathe@nhh.ca or 905-377-7797.

Funded by the community, for the community, the mandate of the Committee Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee (CPRRC) Mary-Jo represents is to show family physicians (recent grads or those looking for a new opportunity in a great community) all our area has to offer and be sure those who care for us now know just how much we appreciate them!

For more information on the CPRRC, go to www.northumberlanddocs.ca or contact Mary-Jo at the number above.

Administrative Assistant

As a patient or visitor to Northumberland Hills Hospital you might never meet someone like Maureen Canfield. She is not a nurse, doctor or any one of the multitude of direct professionals who provide patient care.

However, in reality, Canfield's expertise is essential for the entire system to run smoothly and efficiently.

"Maureen represents the very values of NHH as an institution. We are blessed to have her knowledge, skills and experience. I often wonder what I would do without her," says Mary Anne Shill, Vice President of Patient Services.

Canfield's official title of Executive Assistant, Clinical/Medical Affairs, does not adequately describe the responsibilities she holds within the hospital. Some of her current duties include coordination and maintenance

of office procedures; record retention for various medical staff committees, databases and other relevant documents; maintenance of corporate policies, procedures and forms; and medical staff scheduling, credentialing and record retention.

"I think the thing I like best about working at NHH is the knowledge that I make a difference; that I can contribute positively in so many ways."

"I like the everyday challenges of the job and the fact that I get to contribute to positive change throughout the hospital," says Canfield, who began her career in the health care field as a high school student in Nutrition Services at the local community hospital in

Whitby, Ontario. After graduation, she began her career in a Switchboard/Admitting position and from there moved into the position she occupies today. She is especially proud of the fact that she was able to play a key role in the development of NHH into a regional centre serving the people of Northumberland County.



Maureen Canfield, Executive Assistant, Clinical/Medical Affairs

"I was hired foremost as the administrative support person/liaison for the building of our new community hospital. I saw our vision in designs prior to the cement being poured. I experienced the excitement of moving

day – and almost five years later, I've never been prouder!"

According to Elizabeth Vosburg, Director of the hospital's Human Resources department, anyone interested in embarking on a career as an Administrative Assistant in the

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continued from page 5

health care field should have today, at minimum, a Medical Office Assistant or Secretary diploma from a community college and a strong knowledge of medical terminology coupled with excellent computer skills. Previous experience in an office setting is also beneficial, preferably in the area of health care.

“On the clerical side, we see a growing trend in opportunities for Ward Clerks, both part-time and full-time” says Vosburgh.

Canfield says growing up working in the family restaurant business taught her some valuable skills that have served her well in her current profession.

“I learned the importance of good customer service and tolerance (in that order). These two lessons learned young have helped to carve who I am today – professionally and personally. No matter what role or professional designation you hold within the health care field, I think it is important to treat all people in a caring and compassionate manner.”

When asked what she likes best about working at NHH, Canfield says one of the things that stands out in her mind is the fact that she is respected as a professional and a member of the team.

“I think the thing I like best about working at NHH is the knowledge that I make a difference; that I can contribute positively in so many ways.” ■

Know a student considering a career in health care?

NHH offers a number of options for gaining in-hospital experience

NHH offers a wide range of clinical and practical learning experiences to high school students interested in pursuing a career in health care, as well as college and university students on the way to achieving their goal.

Programs for post-secondary students

One of the largest programs is the Practicum Program where students from colleges and universities who are studying in diploma, undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programs from a wide range of disciplines come to NHH to complete a supervised practicum as part of their academic requirements. Opportunities are available for Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Therapy, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Social Work as well as many other clinical and non-clinical areas.

The VIP Program is a shadowing program offered to students enrolled in a post-secondary program who meet specific criteria and demonstrate a strong interest in pursuing a health care career.

Programs for high school students

At the high school level, local students can also apply to the hospital to obtain their 40 hours of community involvement through the NHH Auxiliary volunteers. Applications may be picked up at the Inquiry Desk of the hospital or by contacting Mary Ryan at 905 372 6811 extension 4630.

Another common entry point for local high school students into a health care or hospital career is through a high school co-op program. Many students gain valuable on-the-job experience at NHH as their time at the hospital provides exposure to and experience with a variety of health care professionals to help determine their future career choice. To learn more about co-op opportunities at NHH and register for the fall and/or winter terms, students are encouraged to contact the guidance counselor or co-op teacher at their school.

CDCI West, in partnership with NHH, offers a special Med Tech credit program through which students, as part of their academic curriculum, visit various departments of the hospital and have the opportunity for experiential learning. Students at the West should contact their guidance office for details.

Health Professions Scholarship

NHH also offers financial assistance to students from west Northumberland who are pursuing a career in the health sector. In addition to being enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a full-time program, applicants are evaluated on a combination of criteria, including academic achievements, extra-curricular activities, a letter explaining their interest in the field and two written references. For more information, including the annual deadlines for applications, go to the Careers section of the hospital Web site at www.nhh.ca and look for Student Scholarship. ■



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Registered Dietitian

Christine McCleary first became interested in working in the health care field at the age of 13 when her father developed diabetes.

“I became captivated with the way our diet changed as a family and the impact it had on my dad’s health. I was able to attend the diabetes education program with him and the dietitian running the program became my mentor,” says McCleary.

McCleary, who holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Nutrition with Honours from the University of Guelph and a Bachelor of Health Sciences from the University of Waterloo is a Registered Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Educator. She says her current role as a Clinical Dietitian serving inpatients at Northumberland Hills Hospital is both exciting and challenging.

“As a Clinical Dietitian, every day is unique and different. Little changes in diet can have a significant impact on health outcomes,” says McCleary.

Some of the many diverse tasks McCleary performs in her role include educating and advising patients on practical ways to improve their health by adopting healthy eating habits and lifestyle behaviours; acting as a resource to other staff on nutrition related topics and consulting with the Food Service Department on special dietary needs and

“Little changes in diet can have a significant impact on health outcomes.”

quality assurance issues related to food risk management and food safety. She also is involved with calculating patients’ nutritional requirements using standard equations based on assessments of blood chemistry, temperature, stress, mobility and other relevant factors and working as part of a multidisciplinary team in hospitals to gain patients’ cooperation in following recommended dietary treatments.

McCleary says the strong emphasis at NHH on healthy living and work-life balance are major reasons she was attracted to her current position.

“I love the fact that I can walk to work



Christine McCleary, Registered Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Educator

with my husband and dog every day. A lot of the staff embrace healthy lifestyles – running, swimming, cycling. It inspires others to do more with their own lives,” says McCleary.

Her future goals include completing a Post-Graduate Degree in Food Security and International Nutrition. According to McCleary there are many rewards to being a Clinical Dietitian including the ability to learn new things every day and

the chance to work with a diverse set of patients.

“A Registered Dietitian is a career with a lot of diversity and flexibility and allows you to work with people across the lifespan. You can work in areas of research, the food industry, in government promoting public health policy, private practice, hospital, the general community in addition to public health. The possibilities are practically endless,” remarks McCleary. ■

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Physiotherapist



Physiotherapist Piotr Koscielniak in the NHH inpatient rehab gym

Piotr Koscielniak met his first Physiotherapist in high school, following a sports injury (his own!). "I decided I might want to become a Physiotherapist myself after being treated several times for various injuries as a high school athlete. Though I initially wanted to go into sports physiotherapy, I changed my mind when I was exposed to the hospital environment as a student."

Attracted by the variety of patients and the opportunity to help someone with a health challenge, Koscielniak had held odd jobs as a student, but didn't work in the field until he graduated. As he explains, the route to physiotherapy can begin with almost any undergraduate degree, providing one takes the necessary pre-requisites (eg. anatomy, physiology, biology) for the two-year Master's that must follow. In his case, he obtained an Honours degree from the University of Ottawa in Human Kinetics and his Master's (MScPT) from the University of Toronto.

Now a full-time Physiotherapist in the Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit at Northumberland Hills Hospital, Koscielniak has plenty of opportunity to help others.

"I work an 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM shift, Monday through Friday," he explains. "I may start my day attending rounds, to discuss patient progress with the rest of the team, or I might go over patient charts to see how they did the previous evening or over night. I may also do some charting, plan my new assessments, and organize my treatment plans for scheduled patients." Approximately five hours of his day are spent in the therapy gym or in the unit, working directly with patients.

A career in physiotherapy attracted Koscielniak with the opportunity to "make a real difference in people's lives," and it's lived up to the promise. "We work on

strengthening, conditioning, and specific exercises to address [the patients'] unique needs. We also work on their mobility, including walking with or without mobility equipment, on level ground, stairs, curbs, outside, getting into cars, etc."

The educational component of his job is also rewarding. "I educate patients about their condition, and teach them how to improve things and prevent future problems."

In addition to the expected interest in subjects such as anatomy, physiology and biomechanics, the character traits he identifies as "most important" for a Physiotherapist include people skills. "An ability to work with people of all ages and backgrounds is critical, as is the ability to problem solve."

"Compassion, empathy and patience are also essential," he adds, "as is the ability to take responsibility for planning your own work day in coordination with the rest of the health care team."

What are the three things Koscielniak enjoys most about his profession? "First, it feels good to help people," he notes. "It's also a field with a lot of clinical diversity to keep your career interesting. In addition to the main categories of physiotherapy

(cardio-respiratory, neuromuscular and orthopedic) there are specialties, like amputee rehab, burns, wound healing and pediatrics. One can choose a range of work environments, including hospitals, private outpatient clinics, nursing homes, athletic organizations, insurance companies, the military, clinical and academic research, etc., etc. Finally, it's a respected profession

"It's a family atmosphere... friendly, welcoming people work here."

Physiotherapist Assistant

Another member of the rehabilitation support team at NHH is Heather Brimacombe. A Physiotherapist Assistant, Heather is a graduate of Sir Sandford Fleming's Rehabilitation Assistant program. An intensive one-year program when she completed her studies, the program is now a two-year college program titled Occupational Therapist Assistant or Physiotherapist Assistant.

Drawn to the field by her interest in working with people in a health care capacity, Heather entered college with nursing in mind before physiotherapy caught her eye.

"I pretty much knew from the age of 15 that I was going to work in health care," she notes. "Today, I really enjoy working with new people every day. I also appreciate the quick pace and the variety that comes from working in three different units."

A bigger centre might not offer the same variety, Brimacombe notes, adding that the variety she sees

splitting her time between outpatient rehabilitation, acute care and complex care/long-term care is one of the opportunities she likes most about life at NHH.

A typical day is divided between all three, with the largest block of her time generally falling in the long-term care area. "On each unit, my main responsibility is to follow the treatment program set by the hospital's Rehabilitation Therapists, including Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists. My tasks may include: walking with patients, working with them on basic mobility (getting into and out of bed), and setting up and maintaining the training equipment."

From a personal perspective, Brimacombe likes the variety her position gives her, and the ability to directly help people achieve their goals. ■

"I really enjoy working with new people every day."



Heather Brimacombe, Physiotherapist Assistant

which pays well and is highly portable."

The benefits far outweigh the challenges, but for those seeking a career in the field, he cautions that they pursue physiotherapy (and health care in general) with the knowledge that education can never formally stop. "We have to constantly stay on top of the latest research and information in order to stay current and be able to give our patients the best care available." Another caution:

"Accepting that, although you may do everything in your power, not everyone is going to get better."

For Koscielniak, NHH stands out for many of the same reasons identified by his colleagues in other professions: "It's a family atmosphere... friendly, welcoming people work here." Also attractive is "the modern facility and equipment" and "the charming community of Cobourg."

As for the field of physiotherapy, Koscielniak says the numbers speak for themselves. "It's a booming field that's going to be even more in demand as the percentage of the population that is older and more active continues to increase." ■

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Inpatient Accounts Receivable Clerk

The last thing a patient or family wants to deal with at the hospital is worrying about how to pay the bills. That's where Pam Oakman comes in.

As Inpatient Accounts Receivable Clerk for Northumberland Hills Hospital, Oakman is the "go to" person for all of those details that can often get lost in the shuffle of a hospital stay.

"Dealing with insurance companies can often be difficult for many families already dealing with the sickness of a loved one. One of the rewards of this job is knowing that I am helping people, often when they need that help the most," remarks Oakman.

Some of her varied duties at the hospital today include: billing and collecting all inpatient and non-

patient related accounts (i.e. preferred accommodation, ambulance, cafeteria, parking, catering and rentals); dealing with insurance companies on behalf of patients; obtaining required signatures from inpatients; reconciling Workers' Safety Insurance Board, insurance and all other inpatient accounts; processing internal and external mail and processing Emergency physician payments.

"One of the rewards of this job is knowing that I am helping people, often when they need that help the most"

Beyond basic community college-level training in accounting, and computer literacy, Oakman says to excel in a career in a hospital accounts receivable office today, one should enjoy working with patients and their families, be able to manage multiple priorities and be able to work collaboratively as part of a team.



Pam Oakman, Inpatient Accounts Receivable Clerk

Oakman says she enjoys the people, patients and fast pace of the job. "I think one of the best things about NHH in comparison to other places I have worked in the past are

the people and the ability I have to help others. The flexibility of work hours here also allows you to enjoy more time with your family," says Oakman. ■



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Medical Radiation Technologist

When Wendy Scott began her career, the field of medical radiation technology was still in its infancy.

“I really had no idea what I was getting into – I was completely clueless. I was lucky enough to stumble upon my chosen career – lured by the fact that it was basically free.”

The eldest of six children, Scott says that for many young people her age growing up in a small town outside of Windsor, Ontario in the early 1970s, a strong societal emphasis was placed on getting a good paying job in a well respected profession. At that time, as it is today, the burgeoning field of diagnostic imaging was just such a profession.

“I was one of the last students of my generation who was actually paid for my studies. I received a stipend of \$140 a month. My tuition was \$115. I also needed to purchase a white uniform and a watch with a second hand. This was in September of 1971.”

After graduating from the Toronto Institute of Medical Technology (now known as the Michener Institute), Scott completed a clinical placement with St. Michael’s Hospital in Toronto.

“I chose St. Michael’s because our family doctor had been an intern there.”

Now a Registered Medical Radiation Technologist at Northumberland Hills Hospital, Scott is one of many dedicated professionals who have benefited from one of the fastest growing fields in health care today.

Starting her career as a general radiographer, with several years of training and experience, she is currently a specialist in the area of mammography in the hospital’s Diagnostic Imaging Unit.

“(Diagnostic Imaging Medical Director) Dr. Frank Marrocco wanted a ‘champion’ in each area of our Unit. I have become the quality assurance person for the mammography area.”

Some of her current duties include helping to organize bookings; performing various medical procedures such as mammograms and other breast screening tests; and organizing the department’s Breast Clinic which is a diagnostic study aimed at following up on any abnormalities found in current patient records. In addition, she is responsible for the Unit’s accreditation program through the Canadian Association of Radiologists. Scott notes that the Diagnostic Imaging Unit at NHH was one of the few across Canada to become accredited in the area of digital imaging technology.

Scott’s love for her work is echoed by her colleague, Sharon Leroux. Also a Medical Radiation Technologist, Sharon works mostly in the Computed Tomography (CT) area of the Diagnostic Imaging department at NHH.

Leroux has always enjoyed working with people. “I worked in retail through high school and university and that helped to develop my people skills,” says Leroux.

After completing her Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Western Ontario, going the MRT route seemed to be a perfect fit.

“When I finished my degree, I wasn’t sure what I was qualified to do. I looked into many options and chose to continue my education by taking the Medical Radiation Technology Diploma Program from Fanshawe College. I’m not sorry I did,” remarks Leroux.

She says while the days are busy scanning between 30 and 40 patients per day, there is the opportunity to interact with a diverse group of people, from



Wendy Scott, Medical Radiation Technologist

patients, to other technologists to physicians.

“As techs we keep busy getting IVs started, explaining and acquiring consent from patients, helping patients on and off the table, performing the scans and preparing the scanning room between each patient. I enjoy the challenge. Especially the difficult cases,” says Leroux.

According to Leroux, one of the most interesting aspects of the job is the ever-advancing technology in the field. She says that not only does it challenge her to keep learning on the job, but it also helps improve overall patient care.

“It’s good to work in a field and a hospital with state-of-the-art equipment. It’s amazing when you think about what the equipment we have is capable of doing and rewarding to know that you are helping to diagnose problems early enough to permit successful treatment,” says Leroux.

Leroux says aside from the proper educational credentials, a good MRT must work well with others, be able to multi-task, adapt easily to change and have good organizational skills. She believes that, for the person with the right mix of skills and abilities, Medical Radiation Technology could be the perfect career. She says the culture at NHH was a major decision for her to accept her current position. “I am lucky to work with such a great group of people!”

“This has been a great job for me,” agrees Wendy Scott. “I have been able to work in a variety of facilities over the years and have met hundreds of great people. There are many career opportunities in hospitals and clinics, areas of research, radiation safety, administration, sales and teaching. There are few limits to where you can go with an MRT designation.” ■

*“This has been a great job for me,
I have been able to work in a variety
of facilities over the years and have met
hundreds of great people.”*

Magnetic Resonance Imaging Charge Technologist

Pamela Knott is testament to the claim that today's generation will have many different careers.

"I have held several different positions throughout my career at several different hospitals. Outside of health care I have additional experience in TV installation, retail and the food service industry," says Knott. As a Magnetic Resonance Imaging Charge Technologist at Northumberland Hills Hospital, Knott's primary responsibilities include overseeing the safe and efficient operation of the hospital's new Magnetic Resonance (MR) imaging suite. Her daily duties involve everything from patient scanning and scheduling to safety, education and training to protocol development surrounding MR procedures performed at the hospital.

"This is a dynamic and evolving position at NHH. I find I am always learning something new," remarks Knott.

Knott began her career journey towards the field of Medical Radiation Technology by completing a program through the Eastern Ontario School of X-ray Technology in Kingston. She has also taken numerous courses through the Michener Institute in Toronto. In order to pursue post-graduate training in MR, candidates are required to first complete training in Radiography, Nuclear Medicine or Radiography Therapy. Knott chose Radiography. She is currently a member of the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists and the College of Medical Radiation Technologists of Ontario.

Knott says overall she enjoys the fact that there are numerous opportunities available in her field. "There are great job opportunities in MR from clinical, to research, to education to management," says Knott.


"This is a dynamic and evolving position at Northumberland Hills Hospital. I find I am always learning something new"




Pam Knott, Magnetic Resonance Imaging Charge Technologist, at her desk in the new MR suite at NHH

When asked to describe some of the benefits of working at NHH, she says the hospital's new equipment and facilities coupled with the strong bond among many current staff members. "We are all extremely fortunate to

have such a beautiful facility to come to work at each day. I believe it shows through the positive attitude of the people I am fortunate to work alongside. I feel a very strong collaborative dynamic here among staff members." ■










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Director of Support Services

Bev Adamson first became interested in the health care field as a teenager volunteering with an organization that provided food and nutrition counseling to low income pregnant women. "It was very inspiring. After that I was hooked on working in health care, says Adamson."

As Director of Support Services at Northumberland Hills Hospital, Adamson has found a niche where she can combine that spirit of caring with a unique set of nutrition and people management expertise.

Among her current responsibilities at NHH is management of the Food Services, Housekeeping, Materials Management and Central Service Reprocessing departments. Within these areas, she oversees a broad range of services including cleaning and laundry service to food services for patients and visitors, supply management and equipment sterilization.

"One of the aspects of my job that I like the most is that there really isn't a typical day!" laughs Adamson.

A Registered Dietitian, Adamson is a graduate of the University of Guelph, where she completed a Bachelor of Applied Science in Human Nutrition. She also fulfilled a one-year graduate

dietetic internship program with Kingston General Hospital.

Adamson says to be a successful leader in the health field today one must be committed to lifelong learning and professional development. "I have taken a number of additional courses to improve my management skills. I am currently taking an Infection Prevention and Control course to gain more current knowledge applicable to my present role."

Aside from the appropriate educational credentials and several years of experience, it is essential to have a customer service focus when working in the support services field. "I always try to focus on how we can make a positive contribution to the experience of our patients and, in the case of the Main Street Bistro, our customers. The ability to communicate clearly and work positively with a wide range of co-workers and clients is essential. Technical skills are important too, to make sure we are implementing best practices in all areas of the hospital, including support services."

According to Adamson, she did not initially envision herself in a management role. However, she has found her career journey to be exciting and rewarding.



Bev Adamson,
Director, Support Services

"I love the fact that the profession has enabled me to grow into different roles. The provision of support services in health care is a constantly changing field and I enjoy the opportunity to be involved in making changes that move our departments at NHH forward."

Despite the challenges associated with balancing a high caliber of service with fiscal restraint, she says the hospital has provided her with the opportunity to be creative in working toward solutions to meet all the needs.

"As a relative newcomer, I find that NHH is a fast-paced organization that welcomes change, yet manages to keep the feel of a close-knit family."

Adamson says there are many exciting career opportunities open to those who wish to pursue a career in health care support services. "I think the opportunities are endless – there are many transferable skills in the nutrition and food service management field that enable dietitians to work in a variety of roles, and in increasingly responsible positions." ■



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Health care and hospital-related careers at a glance

OCCUPATION	EDUCATION REQUIRED	SALARY EXPECTATIONS <i>excluding overtime and premiums, April 2008</i>
Dietitian	University degree in Nutritional Sciences (generally a five-year program, including a one year internship) Membership with the College of Dietitians of Ontario	\$56,000 - \$71,500
Health Records Technician	Community college, Health Records Technician program (two-year program) Membership with the Canadian Health Information Management Association	\$45,800 - \$49,000
Medical Lab Technologist	College diploma, Medical Science (three-year program or four-year degree) Certification with the Canadian Medical Laboratory Technologists	\$52,700 - \$70,700
Medical Radiation Technologist <small>**Further specialties are optional in computed tomography (CT), mammography, magnetic resonance imaging (MR), ultrasound and nuclear medicine</small>	Bachelor of Science degree in Radiation Science with a diploma in Radiological Technology Registration with the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists	\$52,700 - \$70,700
Medical Transcriptionist	Community college, Medical Administration/Secretary diploma – one-year and two-year programs	\$38,600 - \$41,000
Occupational Therapist	Graduate from an approved School of Occupational Therapy from an accredited University (four-year program) Eligible for registration with the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (C.A.O.T.) Member of the College of Occupational Therapy	\$55,600 - \$77,000
Pharmacist	University degree, Bachelor of Science in Pharmacology (approximately five years) Registration with the Ontario College of Pharmacists	\$69,000 - \$90,800
Pharmacy Technician	Pharmacy Technician Program from a community college (generally a 2-year program) Certification with the Ontario College of Pharmacists	\$43,700 - \$50,300
Physiotherapist	Entry-level physiotherapy education in Canada now takes place in one of 14 university programs. The minimum requirement is a Bachelor's degree but all entry-level programs in Canada will be at the Master's level by 2010, with many programs already requiring the Master's. Registration with the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario	\$55,600 - \$77,000
Rehabilitation Assistant <small>(Occupational Therapy Assistant, Physiotherapy Assistant)</small>	Rehabilitation Assistant Certification from a community college (two-year program)	\$42,000 - \$47,700
Registered Nurse (RN)	University degree (generally a four-year program) Registration with the College of Nurses	\$54,000 - \$78,000
Registered Practical Nurse (RPN)	College diploma, (generally a two-year program) Registration with the College of Nurses	\$44,000 - \$47,000
Respiratory Therapist (RT)	Diploma in Health Science (generally a three- to four-year program) through college/ university	\$52,800 - \$72,800
Speech Language Pathologist	Undergraduate university degree plus a Master's in Speech Language Pathology (generally six to seven years of post-secondary education) Certification with the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language and Pathologists of Ontario	\$64,000 - \$81,500

Occupational Therapist

An interest in interacting with people and a desire for constant challenge led NHH Occupational Therapist (OT) Jessica Martell to her chosen field.

"I completed my undergraduate degree in science at McMaster University, with a major in Biology and a minor in Psychology. From there, I was accepted into a Bachelor's program in Health Sciences in Occupational Therapy (BHScOT). I'd volunteered as a counselor at a sexual health and education centre, and gained a real interest in communicating with peers about health-related concerns. I always knew I wanted to work in the health care field, but I wasn't sure about the particular profession until the last year of my undergrad degree."

Today, Martell fills her days with assessing and treating patients having difficulty performing everyday activities. "Our goal as OTs," she explains, "is to help people to be as independent as possible in the activities they need or

want to be able to do. These activities can range from self-care tasks (bathing or dressing); productivity tasks (those things related to paid or unpaid work); or leisure tasks, such as hobbies.

In a hospital setting, an OT tends to focus more on self-care tasks, as these are usually determining factors in a person's ability to be discharged from hospital. An OT also provides assessment and treatment of the underlying problems that are creating the difficulties doing everyday activities.

In addition to the academic qualifications, Martell recommends excellent communication skills (verbal and written), for interviewing and interacting with clients and writing reports and chart notes. "Excellent interpersonal skills are also required as an OT," she notes, "as the OT works as part of a broader health care team." Finally, critical thinking and a dedication to life-

"Our goal as OTs is to help people to be as independent as possible"



Jessica Martell,
Occupational Therapist

long learning are also necessary traits.

Voicing a sentiment shared by many of her peers, in and outside her department, Martell points to the great satisfaction of helping others. "As an OT, you will require constant learning and education which includes a commitment to taking

courses, taking on students and reading literature. The benefits, of course, are the ability to help people every day with meaningful and important activities that they may be struggling with."

Would she recommend it to others? "Definitely!" ■

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Pharmacist

NHH Pharmacist and Pharmacy Manager Pam Garratt chose a career that is in high demand these days, with no sign that the opportunities are likely to decline.

A Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy graduate of the University of Toronto, Garratt says that she always wanted to be a hospital pharmacist. By chance she discovered that she also had an affinity for the administrative side of her role as well, and at NHH she has managed to find herself a position that combines the two strengths.

“This is a dynamic and evolving position at Northumberland Hills Hospital. I find I am always learning something new”

with endless variety so there is never a chance to get bored, and no day is ever the same.”

The education background required includes a Bachelor of Science degree in Pharmacy (or equivalent) and registration with the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada. Pharmacists are licensed by the Ontario College of Pharmacists and, in Garratt’s view, an MBA is also useful for those pursuing a management role.

The reward for the years of study and continuing professional development is, in Garratt’s words “excellent.”

“The ability to provide physicians and paramedical staff, including nurses, with treatment options to improve patient outcomes is very rewarding,” says Garratt. “Those who pursue a career in pharmacy can expect to go home at the end of the day knowing that they have really made a difference to a patient. It’s very gratifying. Working in a hospital like NHH provides me

“Pharmacists today enjoy excellent job security, excellent income, excellent job satisfaction and the ability to move from staff positions into management.” Career opportunities range from positions within the community, government- and research-based positions, academic roles or positions at pharmaceutical companies. There

are a number of areas for specialization, including dialysis or oncology.

“As a Pharmacist at NHH I have the privilege of working with an exceptional team consisting of highly qualified pharmacists with very different experiences from my own. This allows me to continue to learn

and grow in my own profession. The role of the Pharmacy Technicians on our team can also not be understated. Our department couldn’t accomplish its goals without their support dispensing medications to patients here at the hospital.” ■



Pam Garratt, Pharmacy Manager

Pharmacy Technician

Soon to be a regulated profession, the role of Pharmacy Technician is a growing position in hospitals and health care organizations across the province. Pharmacy Technicians assist Registered Pharmacists in community and hospital pharmacies. Specialties include sterile manufacturing of intravenous solutions, software specialists and medication reconciliation technicians (individuals focused on the review of at-home medications against those ordered on hospital admission).

A two-year community college program, students typically enter with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma

or equivalent, or mature student status. Strengths in high school English and Math are recommended, as is Biology and Chemistry.

During the course of their college training, Pharmacy Technicians can expect to study such areas as legislation, physiology, customer care, health-care ethics, inventory management, hospital practice and infection control.

Regulation of the Pharmacy Technician profession is expected to occur by 2010, yielding added responsibilities, new job opportunities and licensing. ■

“The role of Pharmacy Technician is a growing position in hospitals and health care organizations across the province.”

What’s an “Allied Health Professional”?

The term “allied health professional” (or “para-medical health professional”) describes a broad range of clinical (medical) health professions responsible for delivering essential diagnostic, clinical, rehabilitation, pharmacy and other services in hospitals today.

Examples of positions considered under the “allied health” category are: occupational therapists, speech therapists, speech pathologists, physiotherapists, therapeutic and administrative dietitians, registered and non-registered pathological technologists, radiological technologists, nuclear medicine technologists, registered and non-registered respiratory technologists, ultrasound technologists, laboratory technologists and assistants, psychometrists, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, psychologists, social workers and nutritionists.

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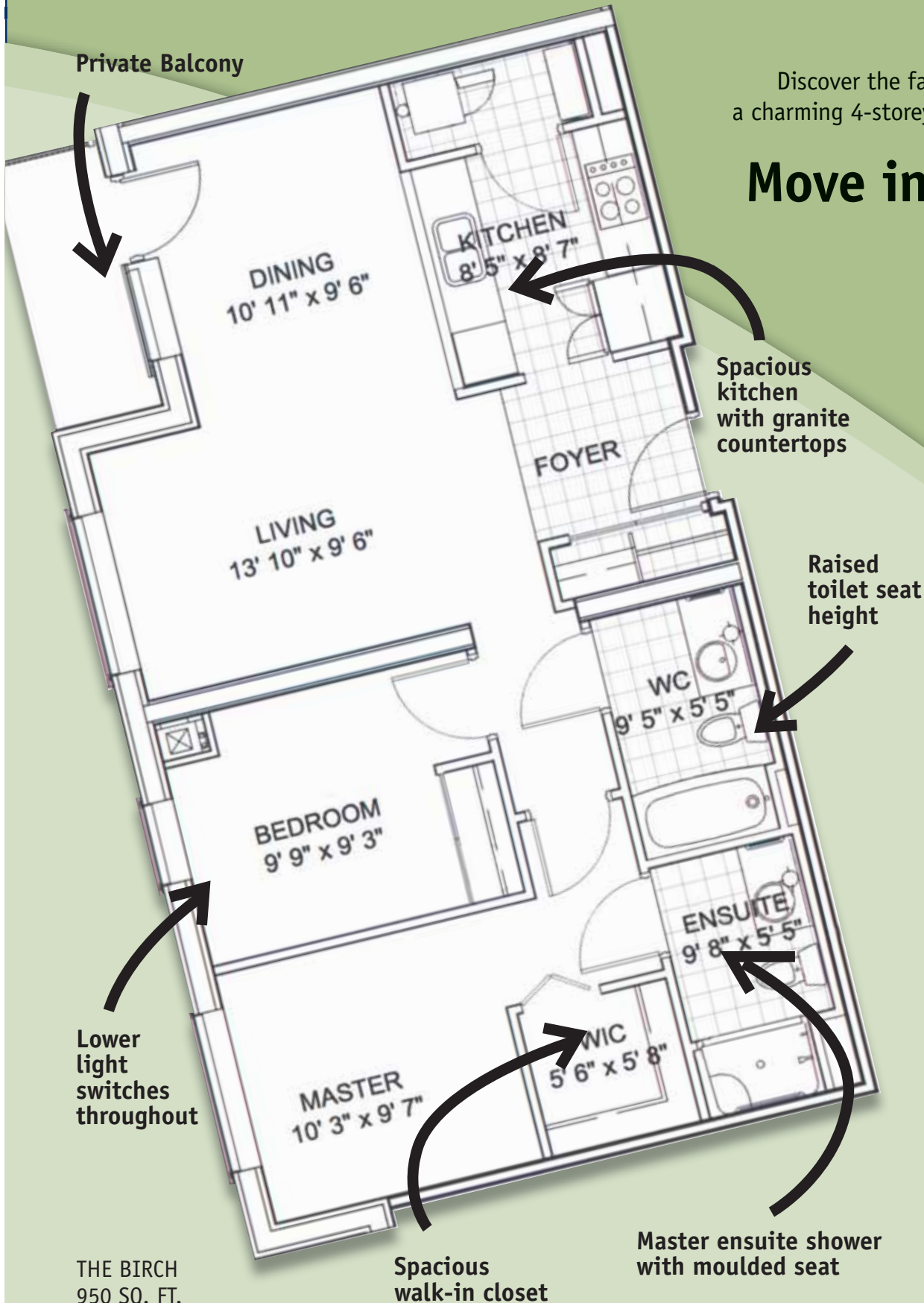
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Speech-Language Pathologist

Many of us take the fact that we can communicate with others for granted. However, for some, Speech-Language Pathologists like Katie Beitle provide much needed support to help recover the ability to communicate when it's impaired due to brain injury, stroke or degenerative disease.

A full-time member of the NHH team, Beitle holds an Honours B.A. from Brock University in Linguistics and Communication Disorders and a Master's in Clinical Science in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Western Ontario. She set out to be a teacher but "I took one communication disorders course in my first year of university taught by a Speech-Language Pathologist and I was hooked!"

The academic qualifications required to work in her field are considerable, but the rewards and the opportunities, Beitle explains, are great. A key player in a multi-disciplinary team of caregivers, her day involves picking up new referrals, reviewing the medical histories of new patients and consulting with medical professionals, the patient and their family members to develop her assessment. The goals she works toward with each patient can involve everything from functional therapy to address communication or swallowing challenges (reading a newspaper, having a conversation, making a phone call, eating a meal) to client and family counseling. In many cases, Beitle says she finds herself serving as

"The satisfaction of helping someone communicate with their family and friends, or helping someone regain the ability to swallow – an act that's essential to daily life – that's pretty powerful"



Katie Beitle, Speech-Language Pathologist

an important link between the patient and other community resources and health professionals.

"The satisfaction of helping someone communicate with their family and friends, or helping someone regain the ability to swallow—an act that's essential to daily life—that's pretty powerful."

Beitle recommends that those interested in pursuing a career in the field have a combination of interests in scientific/analytical work, and creative/artistic linguistic work. Communication skills are essential, as are organizational skills and the ability to be at once assertive and flexible. Most of all, she laughs, "you need to love to talk!" ■

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Registered Respiratory Therapist

While his role is not as well-known as a nurse or a doctor, the work he does as a Respiratory Therapist at Northumberland Hills Hospital can mean the difference between life and death for patients with respiratory ailments.

"The ability to stay calm and think clearly in critical emergencies are two of the most important qualities that jump out in my mind as far as being a good RT (Respiratory Therapist) is concerned," says Derk Damron, a Respiratory Therapist at Northumberland Hills Hospital.

Damron's typical duties include: ventilator care, intubation, chest physiotherapy and arterial blood gas collection. The nature of his position allows him the opportunity to work with a variety of different patient care departments throughout the hospital. In the ICU (Intensive Care Unit) he is responsible for assessment, treatment and therapy recommendations for any patient suffering from respiratory problems, including those patients recovering from surgery. In the Emergency Department (ED) and on the medical floors he is consulted for specific circumstances related to respiratory problems or equipment. He also works closely with other Allied Health Professionals (see page 17) to advocate appropriate acute or chronic care for patients at NHH.

Damron began his career in the health care field working as a Pharmacy Technician for four years at the end of high school and in college. However, a trip to a local community college in his hometown of St. Petersburg, Florida would instill a passion for his current work that has lasted throughout his life.

"Honestly, I did not really know what a Respiratory Therapist was in 1992. I didn't know what I wanted to do and just did a one day internship in RT at a local college in my hometown. It was all meant to be, because I truly love my job," remarks Damron.

After graduating with a Diploma in Respiratory Therapy from St. Petersburg College in St. Petersburg, Florida and becoming licensed to practice as a Registered RT in Florida and New York, he decided to move to Ontario and pursue his profession in Canada. Passing the necessary examinations, Damron became licensed by the College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario (CRTO).

"I love the autonomy that this particular job brings. I also love working with people as they recover from various problems," says Damron of some of the rewards of being an RT.

He also appreciates the fact that at



Derk Damron,
Registered Respiratory Therapist, with a pulmonary function testing machine

NHH, his professional credentials are recognized and his opinions on areas involving patient care and hospital policy development are respected. "The hospital has provided me with a great deal of autonomy. One thing that distinguishes NHH is the trust they place in their allied health team (of which I am a part) to assess, treat and recommend appropriate care for our patients. That is a unique and greatly appreciated quality," remarks Damron.

According to Damron, with the steady growth in outpatient assessment and education, there has never been a better time for those interested to consider becoming an RT. "We have a program for pulmonary function assessment set up through the NHH Laboratory based on outpatient referrals from family physicians. We hope to one day incorporate a community asthma clinic into the RT program. Clearly, for those with the right set of skills and experience, the future looks bright." ■

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Wait Time Coordinator/Coder

Many of us have heard of the Ontario government's vision to reduce wait times in key health service areas. Announced by George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, in November 2004, Ontario's Wait Time Strategy is improving access to health care services and reducing the time that Ontarians wait for services in areas associated with a high degree of disease and disability in the province, namely: cancer surgery, cardiac procedures, cataract surgery, hip and knee replacements, and Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Computed Tomography scans.

A plan to reduce wait times, however, requires resources inside

health service providers such as hospitals to gather and submit the patient data from which progress can be tracked.

At NHH the responsibility rests with the Health Records Department and, specifically, Jo-Anne Merry, Wait Time Coordinator/Coder.

In a department dedicated to health information, Jo-Anne's role is perhaps best described as an intermediary. She is the essential connection between the hospital and the patients it serves, and the province's Wait Time Information System. She collects the information from the various systems within the hospital, monitors the data for

quality, and (with her supervisor's support) reports the hospital's data to the provincial system.

With a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Carleton University in Ottawa, and a graduate of the Canadian Health Association's Health Information Services program, Jo-Anne is well-suited to her chosen field.

"I always wanted to work in health care, but I wasn't sure which direction I wanted my career to go. After graduating from university I worked as a personal support worker as well as a coordinator for various charities. My interests have always leaned towards research. A large

part of my academic training centred on research methods and statistical analysis. Now, as a coder/wait time coordinator, I am using these skills."

At NHH for almost a decade, Merry's career path has taken her through a number of the hospital's departments. "Each position has helped me to understand the flow of information within the hospital. In this role, I have an opportunity to bring it all together. It's challenging and analytical, and there's a real camaraderie between staff, management and clinicians."

Asked to share her thoughts on opportunities for those considering a career in the health information management field, Merry is very optimistic. "Health Information Management Professionals can occupy a broad range of positions, including collection and organization of health information, decision support as well as privacy and management roles. If you have an eye for detail, and an interest in analysis... this could be an area of health care you should explore." ■

"Health Information Management Professionals can occupy a broad range of positions.... If you have an eye for detail, and an interest in analysis... this could be an area of health care you should explore."

Medical Laboratory Technologist

While Jo-Anne Merry spends her days collecting patient data (the purpose of a patient's visit, their length of stay) in another corner of the hospital her colleague Chris Toope occupies his days (or nights) collecting a different form of patient information: the sort encoded in one's blood.

A Medical Laboratory Technologist, Toope is one of a team of laboratory specialists at NHH who collects blood from patients, performs lab tests on sophisticated analyzers, cross-matches blood, and identifies bacteria for treatment of infections.

A graduate of St. Lawrence College in Kingston, Toope obtained his Medical Laboratory Certificate after the requisite three years of study. He joined NHH immediately after graduation, and continues to enjoy his part in a health care team that, in his words, "saves lives and improves the lives of patients."

"I enjoyed science when I was in high school," he recalls, "and I wanted to do something that involved

the sciences." At NHH, Toope enjoys the small hospital setting, the opportunity to work in a new facility with the latest equipment and the opportunity to "know the majority of the staff."

An affinity for working with people is essential, he notes, for those interested in pursuing a career in the field. He's also found organizational skills and a mechanical inclination to be very helpful. Shift work is not for everyone, though, and he cautions that this is, in most cases, a reality of the work in a hospital setting.

Other opportunities for Medical Laboratory Technologists include: teaching, lab administration, research. Sales and service are further directions one could pursue. NHH's Laboratory recently received a five-year Ontario Laboratory Accreditation certificate, the highest level awarded to hospitals seeking an external quality review of their processes. This dedication to quality, and the continual pursuit of being the best they can be, even in a small hospital context, plays a big role in the satisfaction Toope draws from his career today. ■



Chris Toope, Medical Laboratory Technologist

What the numbers tell us:

NHH's demographics spell job security for aspiring health care professionals, and then some!

In 2007, the average age of an NHH employee was approximately 43 years. The median age for all staff was 44. Employees eligible for retirement will significantly increase during the next five years, increasing from 78 in 2008 to a cumulative total of 126 in 2011. In short, this means 22% (almost one quarter) of NHH's total staff complement will be eligible to retire by 2011.

Hospital staff retirements

+

a growing and aging local population

good news for those seeking a career in health care!

With the hospital's catchment population at 60,000 and growing, patient volumes are expected to increase in virtually every patient care area. So what does this mean for those in our area considering a career in the health field? Hospital staff retirements + a growing and aging local population = good news for those seeking a career in health care!

Physicians (most of whom are not employees of the hospital, but proprietors of their own community-based businesses) are also aging. In Ontario, the Canadian Medical Association reports that the media age of a physician today is 50, spelling excellent long-term career prospects for those aspiring to a career in medicine!

Volunteers wanted

In addition to the career opportunities available today in the health care sector, opportunities are always available at the hospital for those interested in volunteering their time and skills. The NHH family includes several volunteer organizations essential to the performance of the hospital as we know it today: the NHH Foundation and the NHH Auxiliary. The hospital's Board of Directors is also made up of volunteers from the community.

The NHH family includes several volunteer organizations essential to the performance of the hospital as we know it today: the NHH Foundation and the NHH Auxiliary. The hospital's Board of Directors is also made up of volunteers from the community.

The Northumberland Hills Hospital Foundation is made up a dedicated team of enthusiastic staff and volunteers committed to raising the funds necessary to support the Northumberland Hills Hospital's capital equipment needs. By growing and sustaining donor support, the NHH Foundation helps to improve health care and the quality of life in west Northumberland. For more

information on how you can get involved visit the Foundation section of the Northumberland Hills Hospital Web site at www.nhh.ca or contact Rhonda Cunningham, Executive Director, at 905-377-7767 or rcunningham@nhh.ca

The Northumberland Hills Hospital Auxiliary is another area of the NHH family tree where opportunities are regularly available for volunteers. With 597 members (406 of whom are presently active), it's a formidable group. Auxiliary volunteers are active in many areas of the hospital, both in supporting the day-to-day operations of patient care areas, such as guiding patients to appointments in Ambulatory Care, and in raising funds for capital equipment. Those looking for a place to apply their experience, energy and commitment will be most welcome to look further into the opportunities available today with the Auxiliary. For further information, contact the Director, Volunteers, at 905-372-6811, ext. 4630.

NHH's Board of Directors is also seeking candidates to serve. Applications for a seat on this skills-based board must be submitted by 4:00 pm on May 20, 2008.

For more information, visit the About Us section of the hospital Web site www.nhh.ca.

Scheduling solutions

Elderly parents to care for, young children to shuttle to and from daycare and school, a home and a career to manage. Working families, young and older, have a world of challenges to cope with today, and the demands for many just seem to get greater with every week that passes.

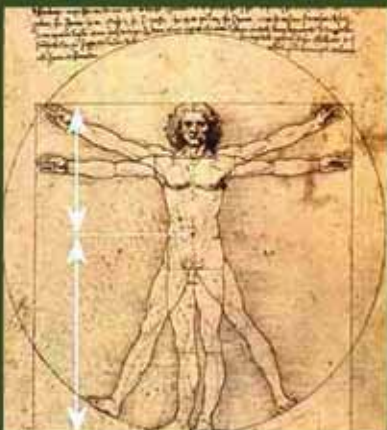
It's no surprise, then, that the phrase "work-life balance" has become a buzzword in contemporary employer and employee discussions. In short, employees want more of it and employers—at least those who want their pick of the best and the brightest—will be wise to accommodate.

NHH has taken a number of strides in recent years to ensure it's not only responding to the scheduling and work-week expectations of today's health professionals, it's anticipating solutions that can help those who might, in a more traditional environment, choose to leave the organization, or not sign-on in the first place! Today, NHH has a retention rate that rivals that of hospitals across the Central East Local Health Integration Network (CE LHIN).

Part of this, says Elizabeth Vosburgh, Director of Human Resources, can be tied to the benefits the hospital offers its people. Financial and logistical support for continuing education is a big focus at NHH, as are the "perks" of a new facility (up-to-date, modern equipment, technology-assisted tools to augment treatments, electronic charting capability).

Work schedules designed to meet individual needs are also becoming increasingly common, including variable and flexible shift options. "We try to be as flexible as possible at accommodating the needs of our staff, and balancing the organization's needs with an individual's personal lifestyle requirements," says Vosburgh. "If someone demonstrates a willingness to dedicate themselves and their skills to us, why shouldn't we be flexible? In our mind, it's a win-win."

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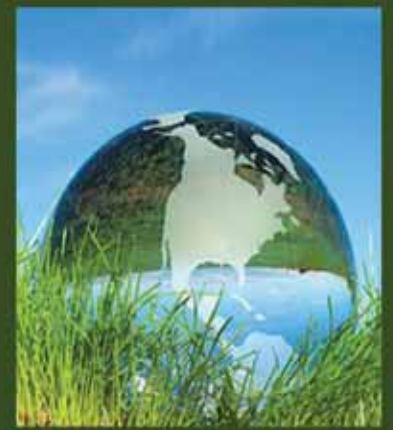
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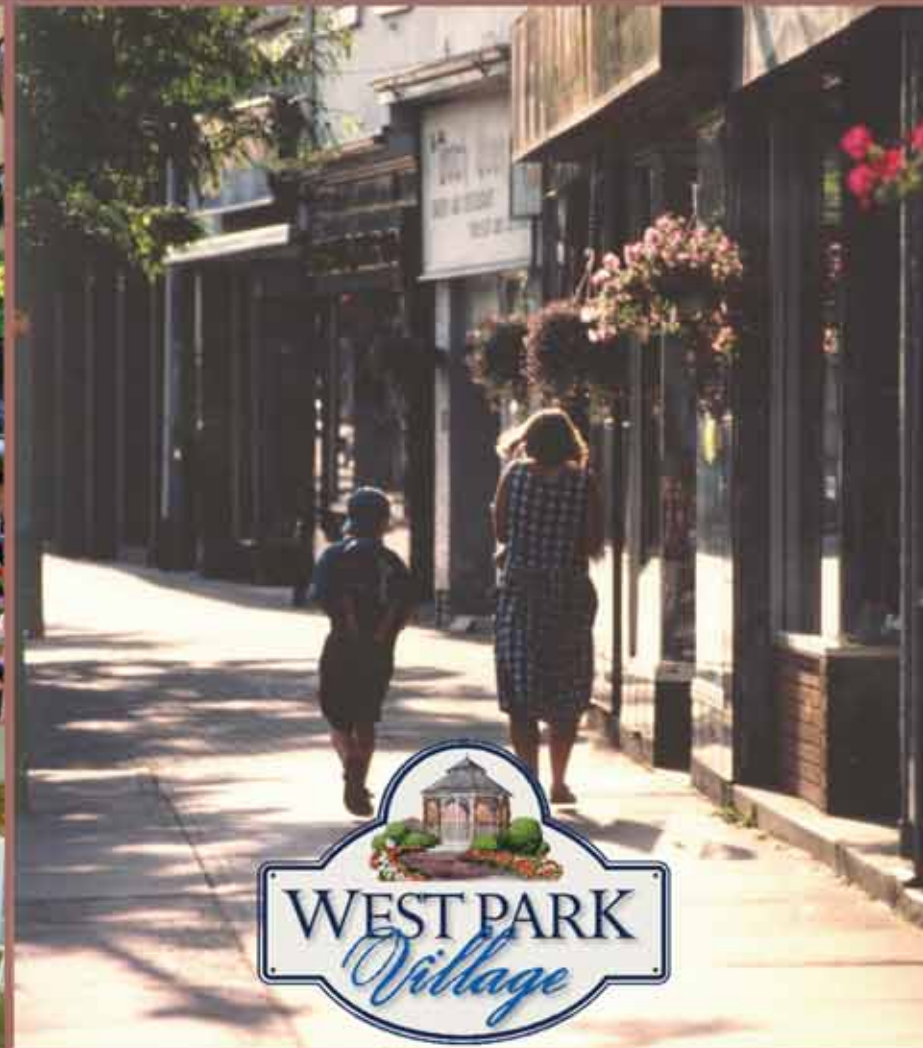
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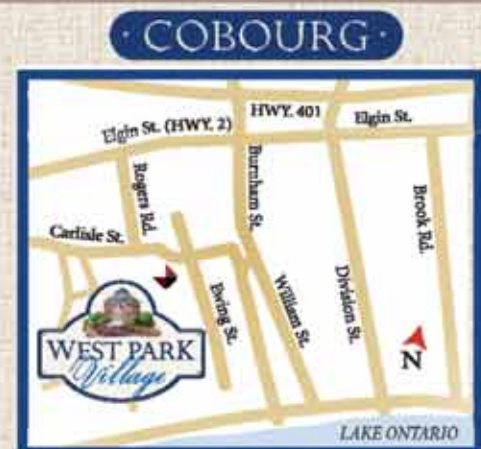
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