NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Northumberland Hills Hospital and Community Partners Advance Indigenous Health Through New Hospital-Based Indigenous Navigator Role

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Thursday, November 19, 2026—Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH), in collaboration with local Indigenous and community partners in Northumberland County, is pleased to announce the introduction of an **Indigenous Navigator** role at NHH.

A step forward in supporting culturally safe, equitable, and respectful care for First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Urban Indigenous patients, families, and care partners, the hospital is now accepting applicants for the new role co-designed with the guidance and collaboration of the Indigenous Relationship Working Group, comprised of Council, elder and patient and family advisor representatives from Alderville First Nation, NHH staff and community partners.

Based at NHH, the Indigenous Navigator will serve as a dedicated point of contact for Indigenous patients and caregivers accessing care at the hospital, helping to reduce barriers, strengthen connections to services and supports, support care coordination, and advocate for culturally informed care experiences. Working alongside patients, families, healthcare teams, Indigenous organizations, and community partners, the role is also intended to help improve continuity of care while identifying opportunities to strengthen Indigenous patient experience and health outcomes at NHH and throughout the community.

The introduction of the role reflects a shared commitment to advancing reconciliation and responding to the healthcare-related Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, particularly Actions 18 to 24, which target the closing of gaps in health outcomes, improving access to culturally safe care, supporting Indigenous health programs, and strengthening Indigenous representation and cultural competency within healthcare organizations. It also supports the province's expectations of hospitals to advance health equity and provide culturally safe care through meaningful engagement and partnership with Indigenous Peoples.

"At Northumberland Hills Hospital, we recognize that reconciliation must be reflected in how care is experienced by patients and families," said Susan

Walsh, President and CEO of NHH. "The introduction of the Indigenous Navigator role is an important step toward addressing the healthcare-related Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and advancing culturally safe, person-centred care. We are grateful to the many Indigenous and community partners who have guided this work and helped shape a role that will strengthen relationships and trust, improve access to care, and support better health experiences and outcomes for Indigenous peoples not only here at NHH but, we hope, across our region."

The role emerged from the Indigenous Relationship Working Group, which has been focused on strengthening relationships between healthcare providers and Indigenous communities while advancing organizational and system-wide learning related to Indigenous health, cultural safety, and reconciliation.

The initiative has also received support from the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N), which provided start-up funding to support the co-design and year one implementation of the role.

"The work of the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N) is well aligned with the collaborative approach to the creation of this important role," said Ram Puva, Executive Lead for the OHT-N. "The Indigenous Navigator represents a practical and meaningful investment in health equity, partnership, and system integration. By helping patients and families navigate care while strengthening connections between healthcare providers, community services, and Indigenous partners, this role will contribute to the growth and spread of a more responsive and coordinated health system across Northumberland."

For participants from Alderville First Nation, the role represents an important step in building trust and strengthening relationships.

"Meaningful reconciliation begins with listening, learning, and creating space for Indigenous voices and experiences within our healthcare system," said Nora Sawyer, Elder, Alderville First Nation, and Working Group member. "The introduction of the Indigenous Navigator role at NHH is a positive step because it recognizes the importance of relationships and cultural understanding in supporting Indigenous people and families. While there is much work to do, this role, and the way we have been invited to co-design it, demonstrates a commitment to walking forward together in a good way, building trust through action."

The Indigenous Navigator role reflects a shared commitment among NHH, OHT-N, Indigenous communities, patients and families, and community partners to advance reconciliation, improve Indigenous health outcomes, and ensure Indigenous

patients and families feel welcomed, respected, and supported whenever they access care.

Interested candidates are encouraged to review the role description on the Careers page of the NHH website here. Applications will be accepted until December 24, 2026 and interviews are expected to be begin in January 2027 with the successful candidate beginning early in the new year.

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About the Indigenous Relationship Working Group – Established by NHH in June, 2026, the Indigenous Relationship Working Group brings together Indigenous community representatives, healthcare providers, patient and family advisors, and health system leaders to strengthen relationships, advance culturally safe care, and support reconciliation and health equity initiatives across Northumberland. In addition to Alderville First Nation and Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child and Family Services, membership includes representatives from Northumberland Hills Hospital, Campbellford Memorial Hospital, Northumberland County Paramedics, and Community Health Centres of Northumberland.

About Northumberland Hills Hospital – Located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto, NHH delivers a broad range of acute, post-acute, outpatient and diagnostic services. Acute services include emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, obstetrical care and palliative care. Post-acute specialty services (PASS) include restorative care and rehabilitation. Mental health care, cancer and supportive care, dialysis and other ambulatory care clinics are offered on an outpatient basis through partnerships with regional centres and nearby specialists. NHH offers a full range of diagnostic services, including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography (CT) and mammography. The hospital serves the catchment area of west Northumberland County. A mixed urban and rural population of approximately 67,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope, Alderville First Nation and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs more than 850 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians, midwives and volunteers. NHH is an active member of Ontario Health (East)—formerly the Central East Local Health Integration Network—and the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland. For more information, please visit nhh.ca or follow us on Facebook @northumberlandhillshosp and LinkedIn Northumberland Hills Hospital.