



# NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

*inspiring strength, dignity and compassion*

## **NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Hospital to launch volunteer chaplaincy program in the new year**

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2009** – The Northumberland Hills Hospital is pleased to announce the launch of the Hospital's first Volunteer Chaplaincy Program. Designed with the support of the Cobourg Ministerial Association, the Program aims to build upon the spiritual support currently brought to patients at NHH through clergy from the area's many faith communities.

Working on a rotational basis for periods of one week, the volunteer chaplains will offer care to patients, families and staff who are in need of spiritual care and who do not have access to or connections with a representative of a faith community. They will be available by pager for emergency or critical situations that may arise within the Hospital, raise awareness of the Spiritual Care Program through regular visits on the patient care units and facilitate and participate in memorial services for patients.

Participants will be ordained or credentialed clergy or spiritual leaders or lay volunteers who have been endorsed by their respective faith community. As well, participants must have evidence of certification or education in clinical pastoral care or the willingness to participate in a Hospital training program.

Said Janet Burn, NHH Program Director: "The need for a Hospital-based chaplaincy program has been the subject of discussion with our Spiritual Care Committee for several years. Local clergy and spiritual leaders are already very active at NHH, paying regular visits to members of their congregation and faith community when they or a member of their family falls ill. But many patients do not have the spiritual and emotional benefit of such a relationship. The Volunteer Chaplaincy Program, modeled after similar programs at hospitals in other parts of the province, is a creative solution that balances patient needs with the skills present in our community today."

Added Helen Brenner, Vice President, Patient Services and Chief Nursing Executive: "Thanks to the high level of volunteer interest we have had from local spiritual leaders and lay volunteers, we will soon be able to include spiritual care in the mix of care providers in our facility. We are very excited by this new initiative and we are grateful to the many talented community volunteers who are stepping forward to make it a reality."

The Volunteer Chaplaincy Program is expected to be up-and-running at NHH early in the new year.

Applications from ordained or credentialed clergy or spiritual leaders from the community are now being accepted. Evidence of certification or education in Clinical Pastoral Care and/or willingness to participate in a training program is required.

For more information, or to schedule an interview, please contact Jennifer Gillard at [igillard@nhh.ca](mailto:igillard@nhh.ca) or 905-377-7757.

**About Northumberland Hills Hospital** - The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) is located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto. The 137-bed acute care hospital delivers a broad range of services, including emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, complex/long-term care, rehabilitation, palliative care and obstetrical care. A variety of ambulatory care clinics are also offered at NHH. In addition to these, NHH also sponsors a Community Mental Health Centre and an Assertive Community Treatment Team. The hospital serves the catchment area of west Northumberland County. A mixed urban and rural population of approximately 60,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs close to 600 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians and volunteers. NHH is an active member of the Central East LHIN. For more information, please visit [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca).

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