



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NHH Board approves 2012/2013 Operating and Service Plan

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Friday, November 4, 2011 – The NHH Board has approved the 2012/2013 Operating and Service Plan for the hospital.

The Plan achieves the hospital's obligation to balance its budget in the next fiscal year (2012/2013) while providing for:

- new investments to strengthen staff development and interprofessional practice
- expansion of outpatient chemotherapy services;
- new investments in surgical services to strengthen the program; and,
- completion of a commitment originally made by the NHH Board in March 2010 to close NHH's 11 interim long-term care (nursing home) beds.

Expansion of Outpatient Chemotherapy Clinic

As a result of a new joint venture with the Central East Regional Cancer Program (CERCP), NHH anticipates a 93 per cent increase in planned visits to its outpatient Chemotherapy Clinic once fully implemented in the coming year. For local cancer patients the joint venture will translate to enhanced delivery of care, close to home. The expansion is being supported by new operating funding (\$330,000) provided by Cancer Care Ontario through the Central East Regional Cancer Program. CERCP will also provide medical and management support. NHH staff increases are expected in the future as new patient volumes are achieved.

Strengthening Surgical Services

The Plan allows NHH to strengthen the surgical program to ensure it is meeting current standards of practice with regard to safe patient care. As well, new investments will:

- reduce biopsy wait times for patients;
- increase the staffing complement to improve delivery of safe patient care; and,
- improve work/life quality for staff (eg., improved relief coverage).

Closure of Interim Nursing Home Beds

This Plan includes the closure of the 11 interim nursing home beds, which were opened on a temporary basis in 2006. The decision to close these beds was made by the NHH Board in March 2010, and was premised on the need for the hospital to focus its attention and resources on providing a comprehensive basket of high quality, acute care patient services. NHH was built and designed as a hospital, not a nursing home. The residents can be better served in facilities that specialize in long-term care services.

Timing of the closure of the interim nursing home beds has been on hold since March 2010, pending availability of alternative providers for the service in the community. The Central East LHIN has assured NHH that it is working with local long-term care operators to enhance the local supply of long-term care beds.

Nursing home residents were notified earlier today, emphasizing that no bed will be closed until appropriate placement is found in the community. The placement coordination officer of the Central East Community Care Access Centre will work with the 11 patients and/or their family members in the coming weeks and months to coordinate moves to another more suitable nursing home facility before March 31, 2012.

“The 2012/2013 Operating Plan continues to strengthen our hospital and achieve its strategic objectives,” said John Hudson, Chair of the NHH Board. “It meets NHH’s service mandate to focus on acute care services, it further reduces wait times and improves local access to key services such as chemotherapy and surgery and it improves the quality of patient care through new investments in services and staff development. It does this while achieving strong financial performance, including a balanced operating budget and repayment of debt.”

For more information, contact Jennifer Gillard at 905-377-7757 or jgillard@nhh.ca.

About Northumberland Hills Hospital – Located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto, Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) delivers a broad range of acute, post-acute, outpatient and diagnostic services. Acute services include emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, and obstetrical care. Post-acute specialty services (PASS) include restorative care, rehabilitation and palliative care. Mental health care, chemotherapy, dialysis and 16 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 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 approximately 600 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians and volunteers. NHH is an active member of the Central East Local Health Integration Network. For more information, please visit www.nhh.ca.

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