



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NHH adds surgical safety checklist compliance to list of quality indicators tracked on public website, nhh.ca

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Friday, July 30, 2010 – Patients and community members now have a new tool for assessing surgical operations at Northumberland Hills Hospital and other hospitals around the province.

Beginning today, NHH's compliance rate for use of a standardized surgical safety checklist has been posted on its website, nhh.ca.

The Surgical Safety Checklist (SSC) is a tool used by the team of operating room professionals (surgeons, nurses, anesthesiologists and others) to discuss important details about a surgical case at three distinct stages of the procedure: pre-induction (before the patient is put to sleep), time out (before the procedure begins) and debriefing (during or after surgical closure).

The checklist includes a review of routine but important questions relating to such issues as relevant medical tests, the administration of antibiotics and post-surgery recovery plans.

Building on existing safety procedures in the surgical suites, NHH began using the new SSC tool earlier this year. NHH's compliance for the first reporting period (April 1 through June 30, 2010) is 100 per cent, reflecting the percentage of surgeries in which a surgical safety checklist procedure was performed. The overall provincial rate was 91.82 per cent. The checklist is considered performed when the designated checklist coordinator confirms that surgical team members have implemented and/or addressed all of the necessary tasks and items in each of the three phases.

SSC joins eight other patient safety indicators first introduced in hospitals by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in the fall of 2008. Also tracked are the rates of certain infections, such as *C. difficile*, and hand hygiene compliance with an aim to identify trends and monitor performance over time.

For more information on SSC and NHH's performance on other quality indicators, visit the dedicated section under "About NHH" on www.nhh.ca.

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

About Northumberland Hills Hospital – The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) is located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto. The 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.

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