



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

### **Hospital recognizes 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with staff celebration, Healing Hands Awards presentation and community open house**

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018**—Five Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) staff members and one physician were recognized today with Healing Hands Awards, in recognition of their outstanding demonstration of the hospital's values of **integrity, quality, respect, compassion and teamwork**.

The annual event was particularly special this year, as it fell on the exact day the hospital received its first patients 15 years ago: October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2003.

Held in the heart of the hospital, in the Bistro, the internal celebration followed a community event for the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary, hosted from the same space last week.

On Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, NHH--together with the NHH Foundation and the NHH Auxiliary—hosted the public, including local media, at an open house and behind-the-scenes tour, to thank area residents for their continued support, demonstrate the many services available at NHH today, and highlight services and supports expected to grow in the coming years.

Like today's internal celebration, the community event was well attended, with guests receiving guided tours by staff and physicians through Dialysis, Cancer and Supportive Care, Diagnostic Imaging, Surgical Services, the Laboratory and the NHH Birthing Suites.

Both the internal and external celebrations highlighted the marked increase in patient activity seen at NHH in just a decade and a half, including Emergency Department visits (up 26%) patient admissions (up 30%), chemotherapy visits (up 415%), dialysis visits (up 427%) and community mental health visits (up 855%).

"This tells me that each and every member of this team is doing not just important, but essential work in this community," said Davis, in her opening remarks at today's ceremony, "and your skills, whatever they may be—from front-line to housekeeper and all the roles in between—are needed more and more by this hospital as our community grows and ages and we work to bring as much care possible, close to home."

"As we look to our next 15 years and beyond, we see increasing patient needs in many critical areas," said Davis. "Medical/surgical care will need increased bed spaces to better meet inpatient volumes; cancer care will require expansion and redesign of its physical space, to improve patient flow and care; dialysis services will need to grow, to meeting rising local demand; ambulatory care will need an assessment of current offerings against new opportunities, and a plan for physical space requirements; and, our Emergency Department design requires review, to see where we can improve the use of space to enhance patient and staff flow."

To plan for these growing needs, NHH is embarking—with the support of the NHH Foundation—on a master planning exercise, to determine the future programs and services needed to properly

support care in the community over the next 15-25 years, and the physical infrastructure required to deliver that care. Further details will be communicated as this process moves ahead.

The Healing Hands Awards celebrate the day-to-day acts that have made individual staff members stand out among their peers in the past year. Provided below are excerpts from the nominations for the six 2018 Award recipients. Congratulations to all our 2018 nominees and recipients!

**Mariette Pelletier, Registered Nurse, Medical/Surgical inpatient unit** – Described by her peer nominators as an “excellent nurse,” and “a great listener” with “a combination of kindness, sense of humour and professionalism,” Mariette is known as a team player who shows initiative and a quick ability to adapt to change. One example her peers provided is the extra effort Mariette has put into recent work related to reducing pressure injuries, recording and monitoring patient cases, investigating as necessary, and following up. Included in Mariette’s nomination were letters of thanks from patients and families who received care in her department in the past year, including one that described Mariette as “a force to be reckoned with,” remarkable for her kindness, sense of humour and genuine caring.

**Rachel Chard, Case Manager, Community Mental Health program, and M-HEART (Mental Health Engagement and Response Team) member** – A member of an innovative new service that is working directly with local police services, Rachel goes out into the community to offer care to individuals in need of mental health and/or addictions support, versus waiting for them to come to NHH. As an M-HEART clinician, Rachel brings a mix of street-level supports, including intensive case management and connections to community resources with the goal of supporting longer-term stabilization of some of the community’s most vulnerable residents. Recognized for her fearlessness in advocating for her clients, one of Rachel’s nominees said she is never afraid to use her intelligence “to de-escalate situations where others may have felt at a loss for words....” Rachel “believes in rights, fairness and equality for clients and co-workers alike... she is organized, concise, efficient and able to engage in creative problem solving when necessary to meet the unique needs of our clients.”

**Dr. Peter Barnett, Department Chief, Emergency** – A relative newcomer to the NHH team, Dr. Barnett joined the hospital just over two years ago from the US. His nominators included peers and, through one peer, a past patient—someone he cared for in the Emergency Department directly—who said: “[Dr. Barnett] goes above the call of duty... sometimes my actions don’t make sense to others... he didn’t judge me... I was a patient who needed to be heard, and he did just that. I sat on the ground... he sat beside me. He introduced himself. I introduced myself. He calmly got me the resources I needed at that time. He used a patient-centred approach... this doctor is top notch and I’m glad our paths crossed.” Likewise, a colleague from NHH’s mental health team echoed Dr. Barnett’s patient-centred style in her nomination: “I will never forget how Dr. Barnett responded to my client....He acts like a person first, doctor second; he treated my client as a person first, and patient second.”

**Valerie Rumball, Admitting Clerk, Admitting/Switchboard** — Described as a core member of her team, Valerie’s nominations highlight, in particular, the respect she receives from others, and the calm, respectful and comforting manner she shows to others— important qualities for someone who is at the front door of the hospital. “Valerie is a respected co-worker. She is always patient with all patients and puts them at ease when they are nervous or afraid....I have seen patients come back by the department to say thanks for her help while they were here....One patient event brought her flowers to express thanks.”

**Karen Walsh, Food Service Worker** – Nominated for her exceptional teamwork and positive spirit, Karen was recognized for the support she provides both to her colleagues and her patients. “If I’m running a bit late...and I can’t get ahead, Karen will go out of her way to help me...” said one nominee. “She listens and understands the patients/co-workers’ needs without judging. She goes the extra mile to make sure that she is dependable, flexible... and positive.” Described as “a

bright light” at NHH, one colleague submitted a poem to support her nomination, noting “even a little spotlight is enough to radiate the darkness.”

**Wendy Scott, Senior Medical Radiation Technologist, Mammography – Diagnostic Imaging Department** – A long-standing member of the Diagnostic Imaging team with 40+ years of experience in mammography, Wendy’s nomination package was a collaborative effort on the part of her colleagues. “With her good nature and manner, [Wendy] allays concerns, consoles, and inspires confidence as she applies her skills as an MRT,” her peers said. “Her dealings with people are a product of integrity and respect. With the respect she gives others, she earns their respect. This, in turn, promotes teamwork. [Wendy] shows interest and discipline in the pursuit of quality. Her character and personality is expressed in the compassionate manner in which she treats patients, their families and staff....[Wendy] is an outstanding representative for the hospital—a true ambassador for NHH... particularly for the radiology department.”

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**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, 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](http://www.nhh.ca) or follow us on Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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