



NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

15 seconds can prevent infections

Stop! Clean Your Hands Day to be recognized at NHH on May 6

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Thursday, May 2nd, 2013 — Everyone plays an important role in preventing infections in the hospital – including visitors. That’s why visitors will be the focus of *Stop! Clean Your Hands Day* on Monday, May 6th at Northumberland Hills Hospital.

On *Stop! Clean Your Hands Day*, NHH’s infection prevention and control practitioner will be roaming the hospital asking visitors to take the “15-second challenge” to clean their hands using hand sanitizer.

“NHH has a very strong hand hygiene culture among staff. Our audits this past year show high compliance rates at 95 per cent. This year, we’re joining the World Health Organization and health care facilities around the world on May 6th to take the hand hygiene message outside the hospital. This is a great opportunity to remind our visitors that we ALL play an important part in keeping patients, staff and visitors safe from infections. The 15-second challenge is a fun way to go about that,” says Myonne Allan, Director of Quality at NHH.

“Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are an effective way to safely remove germs when hands are not visibly soiled, but only if they are used properly. It takes a minimum of 15 seconds of vigorously rubbing your hands together to effectively remove germs. This is key for anyone coming to visit patients at the hospital. Proper hand hygiene is the most important way to stop the spread of germs to patients and to your family members when you leave the hospital and go home,” she explains.

This Monday and every day, NHH visitors are reminded to wash their hands:

- when they enter the hospital;
- before going into a patient’s room;
- when they leave a patient’s room; and
- as they exit the hospital.

Hand sanitizer stations are available throughout NHH to support this best practice.

Every year, more than 220,000 incidents of health care-associated infections occur in Canada. Hand hygiene is considered the most effective means of preventing the spread of these infections.

Allan adds: “Hand hygiene is a simple way for visitors to keep patients safe and stop the spread of germs. It only takes 15 seconds!”

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.