



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NHH's Community Mental Health program celebrates 40 years of service to Northumberland residents

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Wednesday, July 19th 2017—The Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) Community Mental Health Services program is celebrating its 40th year of operation this year.

Rebranded close to a decade ago from its original name, Lakeshore Community Mental Health Services, NHH's Community Mental Health Services (NHHCMHS) have steadily increased local offerings for individuals in need of mental health support through a series of expansions to long-standing services, new additions and collaborative partnerships.

The Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT)—a community-based team within NHH's Community Mental Health Services program—recently introduced a drop-in service operating two days per week in downtown Cobourg where clients can access skills groups and peer supports. The program has been named “The Living Room,” a name selected by the clients it serves who also create and publish the calendar of monthly programs.

Thanks to an effective partnership with Northumberland County, NHH now offers specific programs for hoarding and homelessness. Collaborations with local police, such as the new HealthIM™ mental health crisis response system established with Cobourg Police Services this spring, are linking police cruisers with the NHH Emergency Department triage nurse in advance of arrival, communicating vital information and, where possible, averting trips to the hospital.

NHH has also expanded the number of group therapy programs available in the community, with current offerings including groups on mindfulness, anxiety, trauma, assertiveness, cognitive behaviour therapy, and specialized sessions addressing specific need, such as *Wellness Matters*, *Getting to Know Your Emotions* and *The Gifts of Imperfection*.

Within the NHH Emergency Department at 1000 DePalma Drive the NHHCMHS team has a Crisis Clinician who provides assessment, supportive counseling, community referral and assistance with inpatient hospitalization for individuals experiencing mental health crisis.

Long-standing programs that continue to be offered from the Community Mental Health Services 1011 Elgin Street West offices in Cobourg include: counseling and treatment, case management, housing support, early psychosis intervention and psychiatry. Space is shared at the same location with the region's Fourcast Addictions service.

“Last year, the team at NHHCMHS provided mental health supports to approximately 2,500 individuals,” said Integrated Regional Program Director Scott Pepin. “This is a significant increase from the support we were able to offer a decade ago, but the need is increasing steadily.”

At a regional level, NHH is working to better meet these local needs through participation in a broadening network of mental health care within the Central East LHIN. **Pepin** heads up NHH's

mental health services, and carries regional leadership responsibilities as well. An employee of the regional mental health centre (Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences), Pepin also oversees the mental health programs at Peterborough Regional Health Centre and Campbellford Memorial Hospital, greatly enhancing the transfer of knowledge and care coordination within our region consistent with the aim of the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN).

While need continues to rise in many mental health service areas, the NHH team members embrace their job every day to work against the stigma of mental illness and support their clients in the community to achieve and maintain wellness.

For further details on the support available through NHH's Community Mental Health Service, and contact information, please [click here for the information](#) on our public website, or find it under the Services section at www.nhh.ca. Information is also available by phone at 905-377-9891 or 1-888-294-7579.

The Central East LHIN recently commissioned a system review into mental health and addiction services and need in our region. For the results of that study, completed by Deloitte, and further context on current and planned mental health services, see the Central East LHIN website at <http://www.centraleasthin.on.ca/priorities/mentalhealthandaddictions.aspx>

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

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 more than 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 or follow us on Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).