



# NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

## NEWS RELEASE/PUBLIC NOTICE

### **COVID-19 outbreak declared over— Regular visiting guidelines resume on Inpatient Rehabilitation and Restorative**

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Friday, February 3, 2023**—The COVID-19 outbreak on Northumberland Hills Hospital's first floor has been declared over. The outbreak was initially identified on Inpatient Rehabilitation (1A) on January 24 and on the adjacent Restorative Care (1B) unit on January 25.

Effective today, regular visiting guidelines have resumed for all with the exception of patients in isolation for a COVID-19 infection or suspected exposure.

"Thanks to the diligence of our NHH team, who helped control and contain this latest COVID-19 outbreak, we have once again welcomed visitors to the Inpatient Rehabilitation and Restorative Care Units," said Ellen Douglas, Manager, Occupational Health and Infection Control. "We thank everyone for continuing to do their part to prevent future outbreaks. If you are feeling unwell, we ask that you postpone any visits to your loved one. Visitors are reminded of NHH's universal masking policy which requires everyone to remain masked while inside the hospital and especially during visits to patient rooms. Thank you for helping to keep our vulnerable patients safe."

As a reminder to all, the following is a summary of the infection prevention and control measures that remain in place at NHH:

- **Daily self-screening by staff for COVID-19 symptoms** – All individuals entering the hospital for work must pre-screen for symptoms and refrain from entering the building or community mental health offices in the event symptoms develop.
- **Mandatory use of appropriate PPE** – All staff, physicians, midwives, and essential caregivers/visitors are expected to pay strict attention to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements throughout the hospital and NHH's universal masking policy remains in effect.
- **Mandatory vaccination of staff** – All staff and physicians are required to be up to date with their vaccines (two doses); booster vaccines continue to be distributed to further reduce the risk of infection and spread.
- **Thorough hand hygiene practices** – Strict adherence to thorough hand hygiene will continue to be reinforced.
- **Enhanced environmental cleaning** – enhanced cleaning, with a focus on equipment shared between patient rooms.
- **Proactive communication** – Public notices are continually updated across NHH's communication channels, including on doorways within/leading to the hospital, to

promote awareness of the presence of COVID-19 and the importance of vigilance with PPE.

### **Universal masking remains a shared responsibility to mitigate spread**

As a high-risk setting, NHH's universal masking policy continues to remain in place throughout the hospital and Community Mental Health offices. Visitors have access to free masks on entry to the hospital and NHH's Community Mental Health offices and will be expected to keep their medical-grade mask on at all times (or over top of their personal cloth mask) while inside, unless eating or drinking in designated areas. No eating or drinking is permitted by visitors in patient rooms, due to the fact that masks would need to be removed.

For details on NHH's Visiting Guidelines and expectations, including virtual visiting options and answers to other Frequently Asked Questions, please see our website. Updates on NHH's COVID-19 status will continue to be communicated through the hospital's website and related social media channels. Community outbreak information will be found on the HKPRDHU's recently updated [Respiratory Diseases Dashboard](#), which provides a high-level assessment of local respiratory virus activity.

**Media contact:** Jennifer Gillard, Senior Director, Patient Experience, Public Affairs and Strategic Partnerships, [jgillard@nhh.ca](mailto: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, cancer and supportive care, dialysis and 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 63,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope, Alderville First Nation and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs more than 700 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians, midwives and volunteers. NHH is an active member of Ontario Health (East)—formerly the Central East Local Health Integration Network—and the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland. For more information, please visit [nhh.ca](http://nhh.ca) or follow us on Facebook [@northumberlandhillshosp](#) or Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](#).

**–END–**