



NEWS RELEASE/PUBLIC NOTICE

COVID-19 outbreak on NHH's Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit (1A)— Regular visiting temporarily paused in this area of the hospital

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Tuesday, May 23, 2023—A COVID-19 outbreak has been declared in Northumberland Hills Hospital's Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit (1A) after three patients have tested positive.

Visiting continues as usual outside the Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit unless patients are in isolation for COVID-19 infection or exposure. Limited exceptions are made for COVID-19 positive patients on discussion with Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) staff and the care team including, for example, those at imminent end-of-life.

The following is a summary of the infection prevention and control measures in place at NHH:

- **Effective May 23, temporary closure of Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit to all new admissions.**
- **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 in clinical and patient care areas** – All staff, physicians, midwives, and essential caregivers/visitors are expected to pay strict attention to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements throughout the hospital. NHH's masking policy remains in effect for all clinical and patient care areas. Visitors continue to have access to free masks at entry to the hospital and NHH's Community Mental Health offices and will be expected to keep their masks on at all times while inside clinical areas.
- **No eating or drinking is permitted by visitors in patient rooms** – This is due to the fact that masks would need to be removed.
- **Cohorting of patients considered "high risk contacts"** – Any patients identified as having a high risk of exposure have been co-located into the same area, tested, and cared for with appropriate precautions.
- **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.
- **Strict adherence to 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 doorways within/leading to the hospital, to promote awareness of the presence of COVID-19 and the importance of vigilance with PPE.

Masking remains a shared responsibility to mitigate spread

As a high-risk setting, masking continues to remain in place throughout clinical and patient care areas in hospital and NHH’s Community Mental Health offices. Visitors have access to free masks on entry and are 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 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 [Respiratory Diseases Dashboard](#), which provides a high-level assessment of local respiratory virus activity.

Media contact: Amy Seymour, Communications Officer, aseymour@nhh.ca or 905-372-6811 ext. 4009.

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 or follow us on Facebook [@northumberlandhillshosp](https://www.facebook.com/northumberlandhillshosp) or Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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