



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New location for NHH COVID-19 Assessment Clinic, effective Monday, June 8 2020

Walk-ins are accepted, but to minimize wait times and support physical distancing it is strongly recommended that you call ahead and schedule your assessment.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Friday, June 5, 2020—Effective Monday, June 8, 2020, the NHH COVID-19 Assessment Centre will be relocated from its current home inside the hospital's main (front) entrance to a new location within the hospital, adjacent to the Emergency Department.

Non-urgent surgeries, procedures and tests were paused at Ontario hospitals on March 19 under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. NHH has recently been approved to begin resuming these services, together with hospital partners in the region, and that work is now under way. The current location of the COVID-19 Assessment Centre—within the Ambulatory Care Clinic space—will be needed as these services gradually return.

The NHH COVID-19 Assessment Centre was opened swiftly by the hospital team just days after global pandemic was declared. Since opening on Saturday, March 14, the Centre has assessed 5,273 virtual and in-person visits. Of those, swabs to test for COVID-19 have been completed on 3,333 individuals. Demand for COVID-19 assessment is expected to continue. An expansion of Ontario's testing strategy was recently announced and testing is now available for:

- all those with at least one symptom of COVID-19, even if mild;
- asymptomatic people who think they may have been exposed to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19; and
- asymptomatic people who may be at risk of exposure to COVID-19 through their employment.

“When the pandemic arrived, hospitals were challenged by the government to meet local need for screening and assessment, and divert traffic from Emergency Departments which needed to be protected in the event of high volumes of COVID-19 patients,” said Linda Davis, President and CEO. “NHH moved quickly to put this in place and it continues to be needed. We are moving now into a careful and staged resumption of some of our non-essential services. A plan has been devised that will allow us to maintain the COVID-19 Assessment Centre inside the hospital, but in a location that will permit both the Emergency Department and the Ambulatory Care Clinics to function as well. We will closely monitor patient flow in the days following this change, and adjust as needed.”

New entrance for COVID-19 Assessment Centre access

Effective Monday, June 8, those arriving for assessment are asked to enter via the Emergency Department entrance, versus the current entrance which is at the main front doors of the hospital. Access to the COVID-19 Assessment Centre will no longer be permitted through the hospital's main entrance.

Street signage to communicate this change will be placed outside the hospital and information will be shared via local media and social media channels.

No change in hours of Assessment Clinic operation

NHH's COVID-19 Assessment Centre is **open daily from 8AM to 4PM. Call the Centre directly at 905-377-7783 to book an appointment** or if you have questions. While walk-ins are accepted, it is strongly recommended that you call ahead and schedule your assessment to minimize wait times and support physical distancing requirements. If symptoms are severe, call 911 and alert the dispatcher to the potential concern regarding COVID-19 so they can be appropriately prepared.

Reminder regarding hospital visitor restrictions and universal masking policy

Visitor restrictions remain in place, with limited exceptions. We appreciate that these are difficult for patients and their loved ones, but the precaution remains necessary at this time to minimize the risk of spread to vulnerable populations. If you are coming to the Assessment Centre please do not bring others in with you unless they too require assessment. If you require support please call the Assessment Centre staff directly to discuss.

What happens after the test is conducted?

Follow-up instructions for individuals tested for COVID-19 will be provided, explaining any self-isolation requirements that may be applicable and how to obtain test results. Test results are typically available between 2 to 10 days.

What does the test tell me?

A COVID-19 test is not an antibody/serology test. The swab test determines if you do or do not have COVID-19 *at the time the test sample was collected*. As such, it is useful to identify the presence of COVID-19 so that you can receive appropriate care and so that you do not inadvertently spread it to others. If you test negative for COVID-19, you did not have detectable virus at the time your sample was collected. This does not mean you will not get sick. It also does not mean that you will not be exposed to, test positive for or become sick with COVID-19 at any time after that test.

For more on COVID-19, including answers to frequently asked questions and links to related resources, please see the COVID-19 section of the hospital's website at nhh.ca/covid-19

Media contact: Jennifer Gillard, 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 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 Ontario Health (East) – formerly 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).

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