



# NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

## NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### ***NHH reverting to Phase One COVID-19 Visitor Policy in light of continued rise of confirmed positive cases in community - restrictions apply***

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Friday, December 24, 2021**—“Effective immediately, and out of an abundance of caution, NHH will return to Phase One of its COVID-19 Visitor Policy,” said Susan Walsh, NHH President and CEO. “This means just one essential caregiver per patient per day will be able to visit an admitted inpatient or accompany a patient for an ambulatory, outpatient visit or procedure, so long as they are able to meet the expectations set out in our Policy and copied below. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the care team for patients at end-of-life. Visits to confirmed COVID-19 positive patients, or patients suspected to be positive and awaiting lab results, continue to be prohibited as a key step in minimizing risk of spread within the hospital and community.”

“We recognize the hardship families have faced throughout the pandemic, and we thank everyone for their continued patience and understanding as we work to balance the safety of our patient population and care team with visitor and caregiver access. Throughout the past two years we have relied on our COVID-19 Visitor Policy, developed with input from NHH’s Patient and Family Advisory Council and guidance published by the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement, and it has guided us well. Unfortunately, with cases continuing to rise in the community and region, and the percent positivity of provincial test results at an all-time high, we must again move to limit visitor interactions with patients, unfortunately at a time when many families were just looking forward to gathering.”

Essential caregivers will be expected to follow these precautions:

- ✓ Pass the screening criteria upon entry (if screening failed, entry to the hospital will not be permitted)
- ✓ Don a hospital-issued mask that covers both mouth and nose and any necessary PPE required at the time of visit
- ✓ Clean their hands with hand sanitizer provided. If wearing gloves, will be asked to remove them and discard to ensure hands are cleaned thoroughly.
- ✓ Restrict their presence to patient’s bedside only and maintain physical distancing.
- ✓ Limit movement in/out of patient’s room
- ✓ Follow COVID-19 visiting hours where applicable (recognizing these are subject to change)
- ✓ Use public washrooms only (no use of washroom in patient room)
- ✓ Refrain from consuming food in patient room and not bring outside food or drink for the visitor
- ✓ Provide their name and contact information at screening desk to support contact tracing

NHH’s Virtual Visiting program will continue to be available. Virtual visits may be scheduled weekdays by contacting the hospital’s Virtual Visiting Team at 905-372-6811 ext. 3146 or by email to [virtualconnections@nhh.ca](mailto:virtualconnections@nhh.ca). Note: to protect patient privacy, the patient’s full name should not be included in the email.

An appeal process is documented in NHH's COVID-19 Visitor Policy. Any individual patient and/or visitor with concerns regarding the COVID-19 Visitor Policy is encouraged to contact the manager of the patient care unit involved for discussion and resolution during business hours. In the event a visitor-related concern arises outside of business hours, when unit managers are not typically on site, the Clinical Operations Manager has been designated as the point person responsible for addressing the questions, in consultation with NHH's Patient Relations Manager or manager/senior manager on call.

For further information on visiting during the COVID-19 pandemic, please refer to the related policy and Frequently Asked Questions document on our website at:  
[www.nhh.ca/Patients/VisitingGuidelines](http://www.nhh.ca/Patients/VisitingGuidelines)

For news, updates, information and resources related to COVID-19, please visit our website at:  
[www.nhh.ca/covid-19](http://www.nhh.ca/covid-19)

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

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