



NEWS RELEASE

Third Obstetrician-Gynecologist joins NHH, bringing new laparoscopic surgery expertise and building local obstetrical capacity

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Tuesday, January 24th, 2017 – Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) is very pleased to welcome **Dr. Nasser Abu Awad** to its growing team of medical specialists.

With more than three decades of medical expertise spanning primary care, research and teaching, Dr. Abu Awad—one of three Obstetrician-Gynecologists now serving patients at NHH, together with Dr. Michael Green and Dr. Asiya Hameed—is a welcome complement to the hospital and the community. In addition to bringing new expertise in minimally invasive laparoscopic gynecological surgery, Dr. Abu Awad brings specialized training in pregnancy care and delivery as well as added infertility expertise. Though with NHH for a short time, he has already hosted several workshops for the team, including one on the latest clinical best practices and techniques for breech births.

Trained as a doctor in Amman, Jordan, where he obtained his Bachelor of Medicine and General Surgery and a specialization in obstetrics and gynecology, Dr. Abu Awad worked for more than a decade in his specialty in the Middle East before moving to Canada to pursue further clinical research work at McMaster University in Hamilton.

From McMaster Dr. Abu Awad trained, through the University of Toronto's Faculty of Medicine, as a clinical fellow in advanced obstetrics at Mount Sinai Hospital's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He spent a year expanding his skills in the area of high risk pregnancies at Mount Sinai before completing his Canadian residency with the University of Toronto in 2012.

It was through a colleague at the University of Toronto that he came to know Northumberland and, specifically, Northumberland Hills Hospital.

"Dr. Jessica Green, daughter of Dr. Michael Green, was a colleague of mine in Toronto. She learned about my interest in someday relocating to a smaller community in Ontario, and she told me about the potential for an opportunity here at NHH," explained Dr. Abu Awad. "A visit and tour was arranged and I was immediately impressed, not only with the community—I like the beach in Cobourg very much—but also the professionalism and quality of the team and the facility itself."

With NHH since October, 2016, Dr. Abu Awad has seen first-hand the benefits of the generosity NHH enjoys from the community it serves. Responding to his need for

specific equipment to build NHH's laparoscopic service, the NHH Foundation's 2016 Gala succeeded in raising the necessary funds for the highly specialized tools that will be put into service this winter.

Thanks to the successful recruitment and equipment purchase, "More gynecological surgeries, including hysterectomies, can now be offered, to selected patients, laparoscopically," said Dr. David Broderick, NHH's Chief of Staff and a member of the team, with President and CEO Linda Davis, Dr. Michael Green and NHH's Chief of Maternal/Child Services Dr. Kathy Barnard-Thompson, that helped recruit Dr. Abu Awad. "Minimally invasive surgery has benefits to both the patient and the system. From the patient's perspective, the pluses include reduced risk of complications, such as infection, faster recovery and minimal cosmetic impact—that is, a smaller incision. From a hospital perspective, minimally invasive surgeries translate into shorter lengths of stay which, in turn, free up much needed acute care capacity for other patients' needs."

Another benefit of Dr. Abu Awad's arrival is the opportunity to reduce previous reliance on locum (itinerant) physician support. "We have had circumstances, in recent years, when both of our two Obstetrician-Gynecologists had to be away from the community," said Linda Davis. "In those situations, we had to call on locum support to fill the gap. With a third Obstetrician-Gynecologist now in the call group, we have not had that situation, thus enhancing continuity of care for patients in our community and reducing cost to the hospital."

In addition to his work in the NHH Surgical Services department, Dr. Abu Awad sees patients in NHH's ambulatory care outpatient clinic and in his off-site office with NHH's general surgeons in the Fleming Building at 1005 Elgin Street West in Cobourg.

The father of six children, aged 5 to 19, Dr. Abu Awad will be relocating his family from Milton, Ontario in the coming months. "My wife and I have a large family," he joked. We need time to find a large house."

Referrals to Dr. Abu Awad are now being accepted through local family physicians or specialists. For further information, please contact: Jennifer Gillard, Director, Communications and Community Engagement, at 905-377-7757 or jgillard@nhh.ca

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 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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