



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE

Hospital team prepared to receive area's first shipment of Pfizer vaccine week of February 22

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Wednesday, February 17, 2021 – Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) has received confirmation of some very good news. The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPRDHU) has advised the hospital team to expect delivery of its first shipment of COVID-19 vaccine sometime during the week of February 22nd.

It is expected that the vaccine NHH will receive first will be Pfizer-BIONTech, one of two COVID-19 vaccines currently approved for use in Canada. In anticipation of this, the hospital team acquired and calibrated a large-capacity refrigeration unit necessary to store this sensitive product appropriately.

In an update to hospital staff, physicians and midwives earlier today Linda Davis, NHH President and CEO, said: “We are pleased that we were able to secure the refrigeration unit necessary to store the Pfizer vaccine. We look forward to the arrival of the first local supply of Pfizer vaccine next week. Capacity to store Moderna vaccine at NHH is also set to come on stream shortly, with a dedicated refrigerator specifically for Moderna vaccine received on February 16 and now in the process of calibration. With both refrigeration units in place we will be well positioned to support local vaccine rollout as global supply improves.”

While the quantity of vaccine cannot be confirmed until delivery, it is understood that the doses expected the week of February 22 will go to further support the ongoing vaccination of “Phase One” priority populations in the region.

With local vaccination of long-term care residents recently completed at all area homes, attention will now turn to the next target groups within Ontario's Phase One priority groupings: staff and essential caregivers in long-term care homes, high-risk retirement homes and First Nations elder care homes, and any residents of these settings that have not yet received a first dose vaccine. Alternative level of care patients in hospitals who have a confirmed admission to a long-term care home, retirement home or other congregate care home for seniors are also now eligible to receive a vaccination, as well as priority health care workers, in accordance with the Ministry of Health's recently updated guidance on vaccine prioritization.

Per new provincial direction provided to the Medical Officers of Health and Hospital Chief Executive Officers on February 14, when all of the above are complete, the next priority for first-dose vaccination will be:

- Adults 80 years of age and older
- Staff, residents and caregivers in retirement homes and other congregate care settings for seniors (e.g. assisted living)
- Health care workers in the High Priority level, and in accordance with the Ministry of Health's guidance on health Care Worker Prioritization
- All Indigenous adults
- Adult recipients of chronic home care

"We are pleased to work with NHH to be able to continue vaccinating our residents as outlined in the provincial directives for vaccine distribution," said Dr. Ian Gemmill, Acting Medical Officer of Health for the HKPRDHU. "Our goal is to continue working through the vaccine supplied to us to get the vaccine in as many arms as possible. While we know that many people are anxiously awaiting their opportunity to get vaccinated, I would ask everyone to be patient until their time arrives. Once we move through the provincial distribution plan, and we have lots of vaccine, we will be working with our health care and municipal partners to ensure we provide lots of opportunities for people to get vaccinated."

Added Linda Davis: "As vaccine supply continues to flow into Northumberland and distribution expands to the broader community, we hope that everyone who is eligible will roll up their sleeves to help prevent further spread of COVID-19 and build immunity. We know that it will take our entire community to complete this work. Together with our community partners, our team looks forward to supporting the distribution of vaccine as quickly as possible to all who wish to receive it."

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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