



# NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

## NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week to be recognized at NHH**

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Thursday, October 5, 2017**—NHH will be recognizing **Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week** this month with a number of activities and awareness initiatives.

Sponsored by the Canadian Multifaith Federation, the theme for the national week in 2017, **“Forgiveness in an Unforgiving World,”** serves to re-enforce NHH’s commitment to support and value the services offered by spiritual and religious providers at the hospital and in the community at large.

Recognizing the role spiritual care can play in the total health and wellbeing of patients, NHH’s **Spiritual Care Committee** and on-call Spiritual Care Program work in collaboration with local faith communities to support interfaith care for patients, families and team members at NHH.

The individuals involved in NHH spiritual care are all volunteers. They include ministers, priests and lay people trained in counselling, social work, or other related fields. Rather than representing their respective faith groups, they work as a team on behalf of NHH. Their role is to provide a safe space for patients as well as hospital personnel to communicate their feelings and hopes and to receive the spiritual and emotional support they need.

Spiritual Care Providers are assigned to various units in the hospital and visit patients on a regular basis. They are also available, as needed, on an on-call basis. Patients, or their loved ones, may speak to any member of their care team to request spiritual care at any time.

Located on the first floor of NHH, the hospital’s Spiritual Care Centre serves many purposes and many faiths. It is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and serves as a quiet spot for reflection for staff and patients alike.

Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week offers an opportunity to recognize the value of spiritual and religious care and to honour those who provide the care. 2017 marks the first time it has been formally recognized at NHH.

“Spiritual and religious care is about listening, clarifying and offering spiritual direction to those who request it,” said Sabine Fischer, Volunteer Spiritual Care Team Lead at NHH. “When one is scared, lonely, confused, angry or disillusioned, spiritual and religious care providers can offer emotional and spiritual support. While spiritual care providers are trained to discuss spiritual concerns and conflicts, their professional ethical obligations require that they do not impose their own values and beliefs on those served. This type of care is provided to all, regardless of faith, creed or no spiritual belief system. In a time of need, the spiritual care providers are there to provide support for patients, families or staff.”

To learn more please stop by the NHH Spiritual Care Committee's information display this month. The volunteers will have a display set up on the main floor by the stairwell outside the Bistro the week of October 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>.

*Note: The Canadian Multifaith Federation is one of North America's largest organizations dedicated to advocacy of spiritual care and the protection of religious rights. The activities of the Canadian Multifaith Federation promote an environment of acceptance and respect amongst the diverse communities of Canada.*

**Media contact:** Jennifer Gillard, [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 more than 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](http://www.nhh.ca) or follow us on Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).