NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NHH medical team adds rheumatology to internal medicine expertise

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Wednesday, April 29th, 2015—Northumberland Hills Hospital's medical team is growing!

"We're very pleased to welcome Dr. Entisar Ben Issa to our team," said Dr. David Broderick, NHH's Chief of Staff. "The latest internist to join the in-house internal medicine team that operates under the business name of *IM Care*, Dr. Ben Issa is a general internist—a third for our NHH team—who also brings a sub-specialty that was not previously available in our community, rheumatology."

Originally from Libya, Dr. Ben Issa received her degree in medicine from Al-Fateh University in Tripoli. She practiced in that city for a decade at the largest medical centre in the country, Tripoli Central Hospital, and an instructor in the Faculty of Medicine at Al-Fateh University. In 2005, on a scholarship awarded from the Libyan Ministry of Education through the University of Toronto and St. Michael's Hospital, Dr. Ben Issa came to Canada.

"I had a number of options at the time," Dr. Ben Issa recalls. "I also considered Ireland, the United States and Australia, but I was drawn to Canada because of its multiculturalism and the excellent reputation of its health care system. I am very happy with my decision."

With a preference for smaller communities over larger centres, Dr. Ben Issa eventually relocated from downtown Toronto to western Ontario where she completed a two-year fellowship in rheumatology at the University of Western Ontario (2008-2010). Her most recent experience has been with the Chatham-Kent Health Alliance where she served as a full-time in-hospital internist while operating her own private practice focused on rheumatology, an arrangement very similar to the one she is now establishing here in Northumberland in collaboration with NHH and IM Care.

"I found exactly the qualities I admired in a community when I first started accepting locum (part-time) opportunities at NHH in 2014," she said. "There is a strong sense of inter-professionalism and respect among professionals, and a genuine kindness for one another and the patients served that I really appreciate." After meetings to explore a more permanent opportunity with local physicians and health care administrators, she had made up her mind.

"I want a peaceful city, close to larger centres but still small enough to get to know the community and become part of it. I also want to be close to water and nature, and Northumberland is perfect for all of this. The patient base in Northumberland is very appropriate to my area of expertise and I look forward to working with patients both as a general internist at NHH and as a specialist to support those with clinical conditions such as rheumatism, osteoarthritis, systemic lupus, vasculitis and scleroderma to name just a few of my medical interests."

Beginning this month, Dr. Ben Issa will join the *IM Care* team of Drs. Mukesh Bhargava, Anuja Sharma and Rajesh Krishnan. She looks forward to accepting referrals to her rheumatology practice from all area physicians; in addition, she will care for inpatients at NHH, joining Drs. Bhargava and Krishnan in supporting the Intensive Care Unit, the Emergency Department and the medical/surgical areas of the hospital.

"I am very excited to be joining the team at NHH and IM Care," said Dr. Ben Issa. "One's colleagues are key to one's success and certainly all the people I have had the pleasure of meeting here at NHH have shaped my decision to move to Northumberland. I am particularly grateful for the assistance provided by Drs. Bhargava and Sharma. They are partners in business and in life and I thank them for their very warm welcome and support. I also want to thank Dr. Krishnan, the first physician I met when I visited Cobourg. His kindness and honesty was key in helping me make my decision to relocate to Northumberland."

Media contact: Jennifer Gillard, Director, NHH Communications and Community Engagement, 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, and obstetrical care. Post-acute specialty services (PASS) include restorative care, rehabilitation and palliative care. 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.

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