



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rehab Assistant and RPN recognized for gerontological excellence at NHH

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Wednesday, August 27th, 2014—Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) recognizes individual staff members throughout the year for personal accomplishments. Achievements in innovation and leadership are celebrated, as well as outstanding examples of the hospital's values of integrity, quality, respect, collaboration and compassion.

On Wednesday, August 27th, the winners of NHH's newest staff recognition awards were announced at a staff forum.

First introduced in June 2013, the Gerontological Excellence Awards celebrate personal achievement in what has become a timely priority for NHH: exceptional patient care for those over the age of 65. In Cobourg alone—the largest community in NHH's catchment area—the percentage of the population aged 65 and over was 26.4% in 2011, considerably older than both the national percentage of 14.8 and the provincial percentage of 14.6.*

“Gerontology isn't a department or a unit,” said Helen Brenner, NHH's Vice President of Patient Services and Chief Nursing Executive, who presented the awards. “It's a specialty we all need to own.”

As was the case in the award's inaugural year, nominations for the Gerontological Excellence Award were open to all staff members, underscoring the fact that every member of the hospital team has a role to play in the quality of an older adult's stay at the hospital. Nominations were accepted throughout the month of June, which Ontario's Seniors' Secretariat has designated as Seniors' Month.

A total of eleven individuals were nominated for the award in 2014. As Helen Brenner explained, “All demonstrate great sensitivity to the needs of the individual patients and their families and they all share a true passion for gerontology and the unique needs of hospitalized older adults.”

Presented with the 2014 awards were **Jeanette MacDonald**, a Rehabilitation Assistant in NHH's Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit, and **Susan King**, a Registered Practical Nurse on 2B.

Nominated by her department, Jeanette was recognized for the “exceptional care she demonstrates every day.” A recognized leader in fall prevention, Jeanette is a smart moves coach with a special interest in teaching staff in her department and across the organization the best ways to safely transfer older adults. She pays special attention to creating a home-like routine for older adults, a fact supported by a testimonial from one of her recent patients who said: “From the very beginning I found Jeanette to be compassionate, patient, extremely pleasant and very skillful in teaching my exercises. When I first came to NHH I could neither walk nor look after myself. As of today, with the aid of my walker, I am now able to walk and am independent in caring for myself. I will never forget all that Jeanette has done for me, and I will always remember her with much gratitude and affection, and treasure our friendship.”

Susan King was nominated by several colleagues who shared consistent accolades about her practice and care of older adults.

Described as having a “friendly, caring approach” and a “great sense of humour,” Susan is particularly skilled at gently redirecting people with dementia when they become frustrated or anxious. She provides both physical and emotional support to elderly patients using, for example, the Montessori doll therapy, an innovative approach to supporting patients with dementia. Described by one of her colleagues as a caregiver who “brightens her patient’s day,” Susan, who can often be seen accompanying older patients on their daily walks through the NHH halls, is also described as a strong advocate for the benefits of mobility among her senior patients.

Also recognized for their geriatric expertise at the August 2014 ceremony were the following staff members: Ann Hoffman, RN, Palliative Care; Jeri Henderson, Ward Clerk, 2B; Suzanne O’Rourke, RN, 2B; Kristin Devereaux, security, 2A; Tammy Misasi, Dietary Department; Alice Cunningham, RPN, 2B; Steve Colson, RPN, Restorative Care; David Harris, Physiotherapist; and Dr. David Moorsom.

Introduced to NHH by Sarah Gibbens, Geriatric Emergency Management nurse, the Gerontological Excellence Award ceremony is now an important annual opportunity to recognize the special efforts of staff members who are helping NHH become a true centre of excellence in the provision of care sensitive to the complex care needs of older adults.

For more information please contact Jennifer Gillard at jgillard@nhh.ca or 905-377-7757.

**2011 Census, Statistics Canada*

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](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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