



## NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Recreational Therapist and Registered Practical Nurse recognized for gerontological excellence at NHH

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Monday, September 21st, 2015**—Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) recognizes staff members throughout the year for both personal and team accomplishments. At the latest staff forum held Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, the winners of the hospital's Gerontological Excellence Awards were presented.

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 26.5% in 2011, considerably older than both the national percentage of 14.8 and the provincial percentage of 14.6.\* Looking ahead, that percentage will grow significantly throughout NHH's catchment area.

"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."

Nominations are open to all staff members, underscoring the fact that every member of the team has a role to play in the quality of an older adult's hospital experience. Again this year nominations were accepted throughout the month of June, which Ontario has designated as Seniors' Month.

Fourteen individuals were nominated for the award this year, up from 11 in 2014. As Helen Brenner explained, "All nominees demonstrate, in their own way, sensitivity to the needs of hospitalized older adults and their families and they all share a true passion for gerontology."

Recipients of NHH's 2015 Gerontological Excellence Awards were **Amanda Phipps**, Registered Practical Nurse, and **Amy Ludolph**, Recreational Therapist.

Nominated by four of her peers, Amanda was recognized for her special combination of skills and compassion which she applies in her day-to-day care of older patients who find themselves at NHH.

A mentor for new graduates, Amanda makes use of specialized Montessori activities for older adults, including specialized care for those with dementia.

Said Helen "Amanda's peers reported that she consistently makes time to walk with her older adult patients, talk with them, listen to their stories and get them to laugh. A recognized team player, Amanda can be counted on to deliver compassionate care even to those who are not assigned to her."

The second award winner this year was Amy Ludolph, Recreational Therapist in post-acute specialty services and the driving force behind NHH's successful Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP).

Amy was recognized with multiple nominations highlighting a number of specific qualities including: her ability to create bright, positive environments for older patients; her collaborative spirit, specifically the work she has done to bring together a team of volunteers to support HELP; and, her commitment to innovation, namely in the area of meal time assistance.

"Amy, your work here as a Recreational Therapist at NHH has done so much to provide purpose and support to older adults who, all too often, can suffer boredom, physical and cognitive decline while in hospital," said Brenner.

"I realize that hundreds of patients have benefited from your programming, but one example in particular stands out in my mind, and that is the work you did with three patients and one unique fishing charter company on Rice Lake. Your work with these patients, which resulted in an outing for them involving a full day of fishing, complete with a shore-side BBQ lunch, took patient-centred care to a whole new level!"

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

For more information please contact Jennifer Gillard at [jgillard@nhh.ca](mailto: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](http://www.nhh.ca) or follow us on Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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