



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NHH Laboratory earns equivalent of an A+ during recent Ontario Laboratory Accreditation assessment

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Friday, August 17th, 2012 – Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) met 97 per cent of the required standards set out in a recent Ontario Laboratory Accreditation (OLA) assessment, improving even further on the 90 per cent achievement earned by the Lab in its last assessment in September 2007.

Mandated by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and operated by the Ontario Medical Association, OLA accreditation assessment is required for all licensed medical laboratories in Ontario. Now conducted on a four-year cycle, the accreditation requirements, as defined on the [OLA website](#), “are based on ISO 15189 and are augmented with international standards for safety and point-of-care testing, national standards for blood safety, government regulation and generally accepted principles of good practice.”

The process reviews the entire laboratory operation, including everything from organizational structure and management to physical facilities, quality assurance processes and safety. A formal report is issued to the recipient facility within 14 days of the accreditation assessment visit, and an action plan to address any non-conformances must be formulated within 90 days. Once the action plan has been returned to OLA, a panel determines if the laboratory meets the criteria for an accreditation certificate. Ongoing surveillance including a mid-cycle self-assessment and monitoring of changes within the laboratory, ensures continued competency between assessment visits.

Over the course of a three-day visit to NHH last month, a four-person team of peers made up of both quality system and technical experts scrutinized operations and systems in place at the local Lab to ensure its ability to perform the tests for which it is licensed.

“The mandatory requirements we are required to meet are really extensive,” said Myonne Allan, NHH’s Director of Quality and Safety, who also serves as an OLA assessor for other labs in the province. “For our Lab here at NHH, these were grouped into 11 categories, with a combined total of 497 required standards. They looked at everything that we do, and we were very pleased to see how well our work stood up against recognized best practices.”

Allan and the Lab team are now addressing the reviewers’ feedback in detail. NHH’s Laboratory Accreditation certificate is expected to be received following the final review by an OLA panel this fall.

The NHH Lab employs 10 full- and 12 part-time staff, including laboratory technologists, laboratory assistants and clerks. Operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the Lab performs a wide range of tests for the purpose of diagnosis, prevention or treatment. Services are provided exclusively for hospital patients, with medical oversight supplied by Dr. Allison Collins, Medical Director.

Robert Biron, President and CEO of NHH said: “An assessment of this caliber does not come without careful attention to detail. These exceptional results are a testament to the leadership and commitment to quality patient care shown by Myonne Allan, Director of Quality and Safety, Dr. Allison Collins, our Medical Director of Laboratory Services, and the entire NHH Laboratory team. Congratulations!”

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

About Northumberland Hills Hospital – Located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto, Northumberland Hills Hospital (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.