



# NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

## Senior Leadership Report to the Board February 2022

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### Quality and Safety

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#### **COVID-19 booster clinics concluded, booster doses continue to be available to NHH staff, physicians and midwives via Occupational Health office**

Last fall, following Ontario's expansion of eligibility for third "booster" doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to additional groups of high-risk individuals, including hospital workers, NHH hosted a mix of pre-scheduled and walk-in on-site booster clinics. The aim: make it as easy as possible for members of the hospital team to obtain their booster when eligible.

Hosted in the NHH Auxiliary Workroom, NHH's final booster clinics concluded in January. The total booster doses administered through these clinics (November through January) was 851 though boosters will continue to be available to NHH staff, physicians and midwives on request via the Occupational Health office.

The percentage of NHH staff, physicians and midwives who have opted to receive their booster is not yet confirmed. NHH's Occupational Health and Safety office cautions that some may have received their booster at public clinics or from their primary care provider. As well, thanks to vaccine capacity, NHH's December clinics were expanded on several occasions to include staff and family members so the total provided above cannot be attributed solely to NHH staff.

Booster vaccines are not considered mandatory at this time and 'fully vaccinated,' as described in NHH's COVID-19 vaccine policy, and verified by local Public Health authorities, continues to mean two doses received. As shared in previous Reports, there is strong support for vaccination at NHH with very close to 100 per cent of NHH staff and 100 per cent of NHH physicians and midwives compliant with NHH's vaccine mandate when it went into effect last year.

#### **Accreditation 2022 update**

Accreditation Canada has notified NHH that, due to pandemic restrictions, they will once again pause our planned survey. Previously rescheduled to March 2022, the new date for the NHH survey is September, 2022.

Accreditation, last completed at NHH in 2017, is an important opportunity to recognize and celebrate excellence, as well as a means of identifying opportunities for improvement. The voluntary exercise demonstrates an organization's commitment to meet the highest standards of care delivery. Assessment is completed using a variety of tools, including evaluation of NHH's Quality Improvement Framework, an on-site survey, a review of priority processes across the hospital, direct observations, interviews and an analysis of policies and related documentation.

NHH will be evaluated against a set of "Required Organizational Practices"—essential practices that organizations must have in place to enhance patient safety and minimize risk—across six safety areas. While subject to change, those areas are currently defined as: Safety Culture, Communication, Medication Use, Worklife/Workforce, Infection Control and Risk Assessment.

NHH fully supports Accreditation Canada's decision. Further updates will be shared as the revised Review date draws closer.

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## Great Place to Work and Volunteer

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### Caring for the Carer

Like other hospitals, NHH continues to experience staffing shortages due to the demand the protracted pandemic has placed on health human resources (HHR). We are working hard to adopt innovative strategies to address these pressures, including—most recently—proactive steps to introduce a new “*Caring for the Carer*” campaign.

This campaign, informed by a newly-struck spirit committee of front-line staff, managers and NHH Foundation and Auxiliary representatives, is intended to ensure that the mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing of our carers here at NHH remains top of mind. Intentional initiatives have and will continue to be rolled out to support and preserve our HHR in these tumultuous times. Further details will follow in future Reports. Other elements of our strategy to address HHR shortages, as highlighted in our previous Report, including offers of paid education, targeted student recruitment, the externship program, ongoing social media advertising, and more continue as well.

### Video thank you message from John Summerfield, Summerfield Films, and the community we serve

NHH received the most heart-warming thank you message last month, in the form of an expertly produced, three-minute video. The videographer was John Summerfield, sole proprietor of Summerfield Films, a local wedding videographer. He filmed the aerial shots and messages on Sunday, January 16. His goal, as he explained to Susan Walsh, NHH President and CEO, when she called him to express the team's thanks, was simply: “to make sure everyone at NHH knows the gratitude people are feeling in the community right now.”

Pandemic response is a community-wide effort but this act of kindness sure warmed NHH hearts. Thank you, John Summerfield, and all who participated in this message to our team.

If you have not seen John's video, find it on his Vimeo channel, here: <https://vimeo.com/667571521>

### Community responds to NHH Foundation's *Light Up a Life* Campaign with over \$272,000 in donations!

The community's response to the NHH Foundation's 2021 *Light Up a Life* campaign was truly outstanding, with over \$272,000 raised to help fund cardiac monitors and a new central monitoring system for the hospital's recently expanded Intensive Care Unit.

Chaired this year by hospital President and CEO Susan Walsh, the campaign was launched in November 2021 with letters mailed to past supporters and other residents across Northumberland County, inviting them to contribute to the annual campaign.

"It was incredible to see first-hand how our community continues to stand with us," said Susan Walsh. "I personally signed over 620 thank you letters, and each one was a reminder of just how many people truly care about our patients and our team. These reminders have been inspiring during challenging times, and I can't thank the community enough for being so incredible."

For more on *Light Up a Life*, please see the NHH Foundation media release:

<https://nhhfoundation.ca/news/light-up-a-life-campaign-raises-over-272000-in-support-of-northumberland-hi>

## **Seniors Care Network Excellence Award presented to NHH Recreational Therapist and Elder Life Specialist**

Amy Ludolph, Recreational Therapist and Elder Life Specialist with NHH's Elder Life Program, has been awarded a 2021 Excellence Award from The Seniors' Care Network.

As shared in their January newsletter, "The Seniors' Care Excellence Awards recognize the outstanding contributions of individuals and organizations in the improvement of seniors' care in the Central East Region."

2021 awards were presented as follows:

**Pandemic Champion Award** - Amy Ludolph, Northumberland Hills Hospital

**Zahra Abdille Clinical Excellence Award** - Kristin Ferguson, GAIN, Peterborough Regional Health Centre

**Senior Advocacy Award** - Anne-Marie Yaraskavitch

**Leadership Award** - Kerry Shudall, Peterborough Regional Health Centre

**Teamwork Award** - Melissa Tisi, GAIN Peterborough Regional Health Centre and Chris Parish, Haliburton County Paramedic Services

**Community Partner Award** - Community Care Durham

**Visionary Award** - Dr. K. Jennifer Ingram, Kawartha Centre

The Pandemic Champion Award recognizes the outstanding contribution of a specialized geriatric services clinician/health professional or staff member during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among her many roles, Amy has played a critical part in leading the introduction and support for NHH's [Virtual Visiting Program](#), a critical connector for patients and their loved ones through the many waves of the pandemic.

In presenting her award, Seniors Care Network said: [Amy] "has demonstrated exemplary kindness, compassion, and a deep sense of commitment to helping others during the Pandemic." She has "a deep sense of commitment to helping others... [and her] actions have made a meaningful impact on the lives of seniors and their families."

Excerpts from Amy's nomination, put forward by her colleague Megan Blair, Geriatric Emergency Management Nurse, were read at the presentation ceremony and capture the skill and kindness Amy brings to her role at NHH.

"There are no words to accurately describe the passion, empathy, and kindness that Amy shows to our older adult population here at NHH," said Megan Blair. "She is knowledgeable, resourceful, and an absolute team player. During the chaos of the pandemic, she has gone ABOVE and BEYOND to ensure great care is given to our seniors. She cares with her whole heart. She is funny and approachable, and the seniors love her for her care, compassion and humor. She was redeployed during the pandemic and literally was a Jill of all trades. She was open to everything and anything. She is much loved, adored and appreciated here at NHH. She truly is an example of gerontological excellence."

Well said, Megan! Sincere congratulations to Amy Ludolph on this well-deserved recognition and to all the 2021 Award recipients. A video of the virtual award presentation ceremony is available. Find it on the Seniors' Care Network YouTube channel here: <https://youtu.be/til4yO2KGL0>. For more on the work of The Seniors' Care Network, see their website: <https://seniorscarenetwork.ca/>

## **NHH Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) bids farewell to two members, welcomes three new partners**

PFAC volunteer William (Bill) Prawecki retired from his post in December, 2021, following completion of his work at the Clinical Information System/EPIC Patient Experience Working Group.

An inaugural member of the NHH PFAC, formed in 2016, Bill has been at the table since the concept of a PFAC was first introduced. He was an integral part of the co-design of the NHH PFAC Term of Reference and Role Description and a very active participant at a range of hospital decision making tables, beginning with the

Cancer and Supportive Care Quality and Practice Committee and, most recently, with the regional Patient Experience Working Group supporting the launch of the new Central East Clinical Information System, EPIC.

A key contributor to the development of the Central East region's MyChart patient portal, Bill volunteered hundreds of hours of volunteer effort on behalf of NHH.

The first patient/family advisor to participate in our regional Epic planning, Bill's presence inspired other hospitals to bring patient and caregiver voices into the planning as well. Quick to raise his hand to participate on new projects and never one to shy away from difficult discussions, Bill's contribution to the NHH PFAC, to NHH as a whole and to the launch of our patient portal cannot be over stated.

We thank him for his effort and we look forward to the opportunity to continue to work with him through his seat at the regional Experience Partner Council of the [Ontario Health Team of Northumberland](#).

Also retired from the PFAC table is another long-standing and hard-working NHH volunteer, Peter Hoisak. Peter brought the patient voice and experience to our human resources and recruitment activities, in addition to multiple project teams, from the Visiting Working Group to Accreditation, Parking and more. Recent health challenges led him to step down from his volunteering but we thank Peter for his service and his wise advice, and we wish him good health in the future.

Three new advisors have been welcomed to the Patient and Family Advisory Council this quarter. They are: Ashley Bilton (Diversity and Inclusion Committee and Strategic Planning), Donna Tindale-Henderson (Cancer and Supportive Care) and Ann Dobby (Human Resources/Recruitment and Medicine Quality and Practice Committee).

For more background on the Patient and Family Advisory Council, please see our website: <https://nhh.ca/AboutNHH/Accountability/patient-and-family-advisory-council>

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## Collaborative Community Partnerships

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**Northumberland PACE talks returning this month! Join the PACE partners on Wednesday, February 16 on Zoom for a discussion on *Pets and Wellness***

After a recent pause, the Northumberland PACE speakers' series continues virtually on Wednesday, February 16 at 5:30 PM with a discussion about the impact animals can have on our health and well-being. Held on Zoom, this month's discussion will feature guest speaker Dr. Janet Hoy-Gerlach, an expert on the health benefits of the human-animal bond.

Moderated this month by [Denise O'Brien](#), a volunteer Board Member with the NHH Foundation, the session will offer tips for being more intentional at incorporating pets into one's wellness journey, and highlight ways to maximize the benefits for both humans and animals.

A collaboration between community health-care providers and local residents interested in learning more and promoting health and wellness, PACE (which stands for Personalized Assessment and Change Education) has been offering free public education sessions on a broad range of crowd-sourced topics since 2018. Lasting an hour in length, each PACE event consists of a 30-minute talk or panel discussion, a 20-minute question-and-answer period with the guest speaker(s) and a 10-minute moderator summary.

Gather your pets and join the Northumberland PACE partners for what promises to be another great discussion! The event is free but pre-registration is required. Find the registration link and details, including recordings of previous PACE conversations, at [pacetalks.com](http://pacetalks.com). Questions? Please reach out to the partners care of Jennifer Gillard, Senior Director, Patient Experience, Public Affairs and Strategic Partnerships at 905-377-7757.

## **NHH and Friends team preparing for Coldest Night of the Year – Walk with us or consider sponsoring!**

For the sixth year in a row, NHH physicians, staff and volunteers will be participating in our community's *Coldest Night of the Year* walk, and we need your help!

A fun, family-friendly fundraiser raising money and awareness for hungry, homeless, and hurting people across Canada, this year's event will take place on Friday, February 26 and, in Northumberland, will once again support the street level outreach work of [Green Wood Coalition](#).

This year Green Wood is organizing a blended event, which includes both an in-person, COVID-compliant, fully outdoor component, with a group send-off, ONE WAY 2K and 5K walks, and a virtual component for those participants who do not wish to participate in person.

As explained by Phil Redford, Green Wood's 2022 Event Director, "The need is now greater than ever, as homelessness and the opioid crisis hit our most vulnerable neighbours so hard and now so visibly during this pandemic! By walking and fundraising, you have supported people in your community who needed help - families, youth, seniors, moms with kids, and many more. Over \$100,000 was raised last year by 56 teams made up of 325 walkers across Northumberland! We would love to have your support this year! Momentum is building and we already have many walkers signed up, so please register today. Thanks again for your help - we hope you will join us on February 26. Why? Because it's cold out there."

Join the NHH team February 26 and come along with us or plan a solo walk on your own, at your own place and time. Not a walker? Consider joining us in spirit by pledging a donation toward our **NHH and Friends** team goal of \$2,000 by visiting our team page on the event website below!

Thank you to everyone for supporting this inspiring and very successful event. And a HUGE thank you to IM Care's Dr. Anuja Sharma, for leading the way in our fundraising to date!

<https://secure.e2rm.com/registant/TeamFundraisingPage.aspx?teamID=973250&langPref=en-CA>

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## **Operational Excellence**

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### **Worsening symptoms from COVID-19? Questions? The COVID-19 Clinical Assessment Centre team is here to help!**

With ongoing support from a multidisciplinary team of NHH staff, area primary care providers, and [Ontario Health Team of Northumberland](#) partners, the expanded **NHH COVID-19 Clinical Assessment Centre** service is continuing to offer a mix of virtual and in-person supports in an expanded and easier-to-access one-stop-shop model, including:

- ✓ Quick, direct access to a clinician
- ✓ Alternative to the Emergency Department (ED) for those with worsening symptoms or question regarding whether or not their symptoms *could* be COVID-19
- ✓ Booked appointments, often same day; no need to wait in the ED
- ✓ Phone-based triage option to start (often avoids the need for an in-person visit)
- ✓ On-site testing with results in 12-24 hours (provincial eligibility for testing applies)
- ✓ Coordination of COVID-specific treatment with approved medications as applicable

Open daily, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, the COVID-19 Clinical Assessment Centre will relocate, again, on Wednesday, February 2. In anticipation of updated direction from the province permitting a staged resumption of the [non-urgent/non-emergent hospital services ramped down since January 6](#), the NHH COVID-19 Clinical Assessment Centre will shift, effective Wednesday, February 2, from the Ambulatory Care Clinic inside the main entrance back to the portable trailers outside the Emergency Department.

Please CALL AHEAD to 1-905-377-7783 or toll free 1-833-678-2435 for a phone-based assessment prior to arriving on site. Walk-ins are also accepted.

Visit [nhh.ca/covid-centre](https://nhh.ca/covid-centre) for more information.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** In all urgent situations, call 911 or go directly to the nearest ED.