



# NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

## Senior Leadership Report to the Board October 2021

---

### Quality and Safety

---

#### **COVID-19 Vaccine Policy implemented at NHH**

Together with hospitals across the province, NHH has recently implemented a COVID-19 Vaccine Policy. The important topic was highlighted by President and CEO Susan Walsh in a recent interview with local *Northumberland News* reporter Sarah Hyatt (<https://www.northumberlandnews.com/news-story/10491191-northumberland-hills-hospital-ceo-talks-mandatory-staff-covid-19-vaccinations/>), and featured in Susan's message in the Fall edition of NHH's *In Touch* community newsletter (publication date Thursday, October 7, 2021). See below for an excerpt from Susan's *In Touch* column, detailing the policy and the process used to implement it.

*"For more than a year and a half, NHH and all of our partners in the local healthcare system have been working hard to help navigate and support our community to the best of our ability through an unprecedented global pandemic.*

*It has been a challenging time, but the values we hold most closely as an organization (integrity, quality, respect, compassion and teamwork) continue to guide us well.*

*This past summer the Province of Ontario issued direction (Directive 6) requiring public hospitals to implement a COVID-19 vaccination policy.*

*In response to this Directive, and the increased risk posed by the Delta variant, NHH implemented a new COVID-19 vaccine policy which went into effect on September 7, with an eight-week implementation period.*

*Our policy requires all staff, physicians, and midwives at NHH to provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 or an acceptable and documented medical reason for not being vaccinated. Contractors, students and volunteers are required to attest to the same.*

*We did not make the decision to implement this policy lightly. We did our research, collecting input from a range of stakeholders, including our regional hospital partners, NHH physicians, our NHH Occupational Health and Safety Committee, union partners, our Patient and Family Advisory Council and our regional ethicist.*

*I'm pleased to tell you we have found strong support at NHH for mandatory vaccination against COVID-19. Almost all of our staff, physicians and midwives have now confirmed that they are already compliant (more than 97%).*

*Our policy—which is consistent with the direction taken by many hospitals and organizations in the province, including our own region—is in step with the province's direction: to do all we can to protect everyone, including the vulnerable patients we care for, but also the members of our team.*

*The evidence for vaccination is clear—being vaccinated is a further layer of protection against COVID-19, for ourselves, for those who rely on us for care and our community at large."*

## **NHH encourages area residents overdue for breast cancer screening to be tested - safe in-person cancer screening available from Clay and Elaine Elliott Women's Health Centre**

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and NHH, together with the Central East Regional Cancer Program, Ontario Health and area hospital partners, is encouraging [eligible](#) Ontarians ages 50 to 74 years old to talk to their family doctor or nurse practitioner about getting checked for breast cancer or contact their local [Ontario Breast Screening Program](#) partner to book directly.

As highlighted in [an October 5 media release](#), approximately 12,000 Ontario women are being diagnosed with breast cancer each year and approximately 2,000 will die from it. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in Ontario women, but more people in Ontario survive breast cancer today than almost every other cancer. Regular screening is important because it can find breast cancer early when treatment has a better chance of working.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, many non-urgent health care procedures in Ontario, including cancer screening, were paused or deferred to prioritize urgent health care needs and reduce the spread of COVID-19. While screening has resumed, some patients have been challenged to, or reluctant to, access routine medical care and screening.

Findings from an [Ontario study](#) indicate that in 2020 there was about a 41 per cent drop in cancer screening tests compared to 2019 pre-pandemic levels. While screening for breast, cervical, colorectal and lung cancers in 2021 remains 11 to 22 per cent below 2019 levels, volumes are beginning to increase as people return to get screened. For example, in June 2021, monthly breast screening tests in Ontario were approximately 9 per cent above June 2019 levels.

"We have all taken tremendous measures to stay safe and healthy throughout the COVID-19 pandemic including staying home, but getting checked for breast cancer is still important," said Dr. Linda Rabeneck, Vice-President, Prevention and Cancer Control at Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario). "Health care providers and hospitals in Ontario have strict infection control measures in place so people who need to can visit these sites in person. I encourage you to speak with your family doctor or nurse practitioner if you are overdue for a mammogram."

"It's safe to screen. Getting checked regularly with mammography is important," said Dr. Rola Shaheen, Regional Breast and Cancer Imaging Lead. "Mammograms can find breast cancer early when it may be smaller and less likely to have spread to other parts of the body. Treatment may also have a better chance of working when breast cancer is found early."

The Central East Regional Cancer Program, in partnership with Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario), checks two different groups of people in Ontario for breast cancer: those at average risk and those at high risk. The [Ontario Breast Screening Program \(OBSP\)](#) recommends that:

- Most people ages 50 to 74 who are eligible for the OBSP get checked every two years with a mammogram.
- People ages 30 to 69 who meet the [High Risk OBSP eligibility criteria](#) get checked once a year with both a mammogram and breast magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) (or screening breast ultrasound if MRI is not medically appropriate).
- People ages 70 to 74 who are already in the High Risk OBSP get checked once a year with a mammogram through the program.

"Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) offers a full service for diagnostic breast screening and we are fully operational," says Ian Moffat, Director of NHH's Diagnostic Imaging Program. "We are a registered OBSP Centre, accredited by the Canadian Association of Radiologists. If you or someone you love is due for your routine screening, please do not delay. NHH's fully digital mammography units, generously supported by local donors, are here to serve you together with our excellent team of radiologists, Medical Radiation Technologists and more."

NHH is encouraging area residents to talk to their family doctor or nurse practitioner about breast health and screening test options. Important research is being undertaken to better understand breast cancer risk and

deliver more personalized screening tests for Ontarians. Learn more about this work and who may participate here: [www.cancercareontario.ca/perspective](http://www.cancercareontario.ca/perspective).

---

## Great Place to Work and Volunteer

---

### **Social media campaign targets registered nurses**

NHH's human resources department is leveraging the power of social media to help fill full- and part-time opportunities for Registered Nurses in a range of departments, including Emergency, Intensive Care, Medical/Surgical and Maternal Child. Recruitment ads were placed on NHH's social media platforms in September, resulting in expressions of interest from a broad range of prospective recruits. For information on these and other current opportunities at NHH, please see the [Careers](#) page of our website.

### **Ontario Hospital Association “#ThankYouHCW” campaign launched**

The OHA is asking Ontarians to take a minute to record a short thank-you video message for hospital and health care workers for the hard work and dedication in serving the public throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The campaign builds on the OHA's preceding “Take the Pledge to #StopTheSpread” campaign, which was developed to help Ontario residents get answers to some common questions about COVID-19 and share what they've learned with others.

The OHA will compile the “ThankYouHCW” messages into a thank-you video which hospitals will then be able to share with their staff and communities. The OHA will also share and promote the video (and written messages, which are also an option) over social media and its [Health System News](#) platform.

For information on the OHA's campaign, and instructions on how to upload a thank you message, go to: <https://www.ontariocovidpledge.ca/say-thanks>

### **First National Truth and Reconciliation Day recognized at NHH**

Canada marked its first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, to formally recognize and commemorate the dark legacy of residential schools which operated in Canada for over 100 years.

NHH, together with individuals and organizations across the Northumberland County and Alderville First Nation, honoured the day—and the history it seeks to shine a brighter light on—with reflection and hope for mutual respect and understanding.

In conjunction with the raising of the Every Child Matters flag, an educational display was prepared at the foot of the hospital's main stairwell (beside the Main Street Bistro), with a selection of take-away information aimed to bring greater awareness to the facts about [the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#). Culture Cards for all staff/physicians/midwives were distributed, together with information about Canada's residential school system, including a direct video message for NHH staff, physicians and volunteers from Chief Dave Mowat of Alderville First Nation. Staff members throughout the hospital wore orange, joining a tradition first observed in 2013 in solidarity with Phyllis Webstad, whose orange shirt, bought by her grandfather, was taken away on her first day at residential school and never returned, with some teams preparing on-unit displays to honour the memory of the children lost.

Miigwech to Chief Mowat for saying so well: “At the end of the day, it is about the lives of our precious children, and the common element is that all of our children matter, including yours and mine. Let us never repeat such atrocities, but instead focus on the truth and reconciliation needed to move forward as a stronger society.”

## **NHH Patient Family and Advisory Council welcomes newest member, Ann Dobby**

At the latest (virtual) quarterly meeting of the NHH Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC), held via Zoom on September 22, NHH welcomed Colborne resident Ann Dobby to the team.

Ann was born in Montreal and attended McGill University for both her undergraduate and graduate degrees in Nursing. Her thirty-eight years in health care took her to a variety of settings including university and community hospitals, the community, and psychiatric and rehabilitation centres, primarily in management roles, and brought her to Montreal, Toronto, Peterborough and Cobourg. Her clinical areas of work included mental health, emergency, spinal cord injury, cancer care and out-patient services.

Ann's biography, now published alongside NHH's other PFAC volunteers on the [Patient and Family Advisory Council page of our website](#), notes that she moved to Northumberland in 1994. She achieved her "dream job" as Director of what was then "Out-Patient Services" at NHH in 2002, finally working in her own community and helping in the transition to the then new hospital.

Ann retired thirteen years ago. Her interest in NHH's PFAC was sparked by stories from family and friends about their experiences with the health care systems. She looks forward to sharing those experiences—as a friend and caregiver—and giving back to the hospital and the community she loves and appreciates in many ways.

Ann brings a wealth of experience to NHH in her new capacity as a patient/family advisor. She will serve as the PFAC representative on the Quality and Practice Committee of NHH's Medicine program. She will also bring the PFAC voice to selected recruitment opportunities as the PFAC's Human Resources representative, assuming that role from Peter Hoisak. Peter resigned from the NHH PFAC last month for personal health reasons after several years of dedicated service to the HR portfolio and a broad range of ad hoc projects including advising on recent changes to visitor policy.

NHH welcomes Ann to her new role and sincerely thanks Peter Hoisak for his community service in bringing the patient perspective into planning and policy development at NHH.

If you or someone you know has experience with NHH as a patient or caregiver, and has an interest in joining the team (virtually, for now) as a Patient and Family Advisor, please find additional background on the role of PFAC on the NHH website, including role description, term of reference and Expression of Interest form, or reach out directly to the team care of Jennifer Gillard, Senior Director, Public Affairs and Strategic Partnerships, [jgillard@nhh.ca](mailto:jgillard@nhh.ca) or 905-377-7757.

## **Canada flag placed at half-mast on Wednesday, September 22 in honour of NHH Auxiliary volunteers who passed away in 2020/21**

The Canada flag outside the main entrance at Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) was lowered on Wednesday, September 22, in honour of active and former NHH Auxiliary volunteers known to have passed away in the last year.

In conjunction with a reading of their names at the Auxiliary's Annual General Meeting—which was held virtually on the same day—this annual flag tradition recognizes the exceptional commitment of Auxiliary volunteers throughout the hospital.

Prior to the pandemic, Auxiliary members collectively contributed more than 40,000 hours of time each year, greeting patients as they entered, supporting wayfinding, offering a comforting voice in the Emergency Department, serving customers in the Little Treasure Shop gift shop inside the main entrance, and sorting and selling gently used items donated to their community thrift shop, Petticoat Lane, to support the hospital's capital equipment needs.

"The NHH Auxiliary's mission is to provide effective and compassionate assistance to visitors, staff and patients, in an environment that promotes the dignity and wellbeing of all," said Susan Walsh, NHH President and CEO. "For over 95 years this team has been helping to deliver quality care at

NHH and our legacy organizations. Many Auxiliary roles have changed in the past 18 months, due to the pandemic, but the Auxiliary's commitment to NHH and generosity of spirit has not. On behalf of everyone at NHH, thank you for all you do for NHH and the patients and families we serve and a very special thanks to the 36 individuals recognized... for 575 years of volunteer service, combined."

See the [full media release at nhh.ca](#) for a listing of those recognized.

---

## Collaborative Community Partnerships

---

### Virtual Northumberland PACE talks return this month for 2021/22 season

The Northumberland PACE Talk series will return this month for the 2021/22 season with a panel discussion exploring the *Physician-Patient Interaction - The Changing Landscape for Better Care*.

Featuring panelists Dr. Jackie Gardner-Nix and Dr. Kaes Al-Ali, the virtual PACE Talk will take place on Zoom on Wednesday, October 20 at 5:30 PM and will be moderated by NHH Patient Family Advisory Council member William Prawecki.

As noted by the PACE partners in the [October 5 media release](#), Dr. Gardner-Nix has been on courtesy staff at NHH since 2014 and has focused much of her career on chronic pain management. She trained in the renowned Jon Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and evolved this program to meet the needs of those suffering from chronic pain, developing the Mindfulness-Based Chronic Pain Management (MBCPM™) program, which supports patients in learning skills for changing their relationship with pain, suffering and stress, and developing new "habits" that involve neuroplastic changes in the brain. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of Anaesthesia at the University of Toronto and has a special interest in hospice care, currently serving as the Vice Chair of Community Care Northumberland's Board of Directors. In her personal life, she lives in Port Hope with her husband and new puppy, has three daughters and four grandchildren.

Dr. Al-Ali has been a surgeon on the Surgical Services team at NHH since 2012. A fellowship trained breast surgical oncologist with oncoplastic training from the University of Toronto and the Breast institute in Paris, France, Dr. Al-Ali also has extensive training in colon cancer and melanoma surgeries. He is an assistant Professor and regular lecturer at Queen's University and was first drawn to medicine due to a fascination with anatomy, the endless pathologies, and the opportunity to make a huge difference in people's lives in a meaningful way. In his personal life, Dr. Al-Ali is a father of two and loves architecture, photography and design.

Both doctors will bring their varied experience to this PACE Talk to share how they have witnessed the physician-patient relationship and decision-making process for care change throughout their careers. A timely topic as patient access to health information and patient portals are becoming more prevalent in society, they will address how patients can best participate in their own care, the importance of establishing a trusting physician-patient relationship, and shared decision-making. Panelists will also address questions from the audience, which can be pre-submitted by emailing [mbhargava@imcare.ca](mailto:mbhargava@imcare.ca) prior to October 19, 2021.

This Talk also comes following recent updates to the [Patient, Family, and Caregiver Declaration of Values for Ontario](#) – a document drafted by the Minister's Patient and Family Advisory Council in consultation with Ontarians, the purpose of which is to articulate patient, family and caregiver expectations of Ontario's health care system. The Declaration—which also guides the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland's Experience Partner Council work—is intended to serve as a compass for the individuals and organizations who are involved in health care and reflects a summary of the principles and values that patients, families and caregivers say are important to them.

Held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 5:30 PM, Northumberland PACE talks last an hour in length, and typically include a 30-minute talk (or panel discussion), a 20-minute question-and-answer period and a 10-minute moderator summary.

Pre-registration is required. Find details and a link at [www.pacetalks.com](http://www.pacetalks.com) and on the NHH and PACE partner social media channels in the coming days.

### **Communications and community engagement support continues for Ontario Health Team of Northumberland priorities**

NHH continued to support the work of the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N) by collaborating with Communications Working Group partners to develop and implement effective communications strategies and meaningful community engagement approaches to advance OHT-N priorities for improved local services and health outcomes.

These collaborative engagement efforts include but are not limited to:

- Ongoing co-facilitation of the [OHT-N Experience Partner Council](#) - a body of patients and caregivers now working together with service provider partners to transform the delivery of local health and community care through the Ontario Health Team model. Formation of an Experience Partner Council was a key commitment of the Collaboration Council in establishing the OHT-N.
- Use of social media to expand reach of communications about OHT-N work in the community and increase opportunities to directly engage with stakeholders. In conjunction with the OHT-N website, [www.ohnorthumberland.ca](http://www.ohnorthumberland.ca), social media work has generated nearly 400 followers to the OHT-N Twitter account in the first year online. A Facebook account launched in June 2021 to support timely and cost-effective awareness of the benefits of COVID-19 vaccine and promotion of the OHT-N's Mobile Vaccine Clinics generated 748 followers in the first 90 days. 4,901 vaccines have been administered through collaborative Mobile Vaccine Clinic efforts. No further OHT-N Mobile Vaccine Clinics are scheduled at the present time. For the latest information on local clinic availability, visit: <https://www.hkpr.on.ca/2021/03/12/vaccination-clinics/>
- Ongoing development and implementation of communications campaigns to increase awareness and use of the OHT-N's Rural Outreach Clinic (ROC) at 34 Victoria Street in Colborne by Cramahe and area residents.
- Most recently, development and support for the recruitment of Volunteer Peer Support volunteers, now underway (see related item, below).

### **Ontario Health Team of Northumberland seeks volunteers for innovative new patient support program**

As part of preparations to launch an innovative new patient support program, the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N) is inviting community members interested in a fulfilling volunteer opportunity to attend upcoming training sessions.

The Volunteer Peer Support Program will, once launched, match trained volunteers with people in the community who require informal support, broadening their social network and assisting them to navigate and access the services they need. One of three priority projects undertaken by the OHT-N partnership of local health and community care providers, patients and caregivers, the Volunteer Peer Support Program is expected to begin accepting patient participants before the end of this year.

"A central focus for the OHT-N is improving patient and caregiver experience with health and community care services. We are therefore thrilled to be nearing the point of implementation with this new initiative," states Trish Baird, Co-Chair of the OHT-N Collaboration Council and Executive Director of Community Care Northumberland – the organization overseeing this program in partnership with the OHT-N. "The Volunteer Peer Support Program will initially serve older adults experiencing persistent complex problems and conditions, who may have difficulty navigating and accessing the supports available to them in the community. Volunteers will work together with participants and, as appropriate, their caregivers, to help them get the most out of local services."

Volunteers will be trained in a specific method of support called High-Fidelity WrapAround. This model involves working with a participant to build an individualized team of support. This team – typically caregivers, friends and

family – will help the participant address their unique needs and goals in areas such as housing, safety, finances, spirituality, social connection, recreation and more.

“The Volunteer Peer Support Program will empower participants to have voice and choice in planning the care and support they require to live a full life,” says Scott Macpherson, Co-Chair of the OHT-N Experience Partner Council. “The intention is to keep people in their homes and sustain their involvement in the community by increasing their capacity for self-care. This program will be an important step forward in achieving improved health outcomes in our community.”

For the launch of the Volunteer Peer Support Program, the OHT-N is seeking 20-25 volunteers who are able to dedicate an average of 8 to 10 hours per month to the program. Community members who are interested in this opportunity are invited to attend the upcoming four-day training program:

**When:**

- October 28 and 29
- November 4 and 5

**Where:**

- Ed's House Northumberland Hospice Care Centre  
Education Room  
1301 Ontario Street, Cobourg

Training will be conducted in-person and with careful attention to all COVID-19 public health precautions, including masking and physical distancing. Interested volunteers must also demonstrate proof of vaccination upon arrival at the first day of training, prior to entry.

To register for this training **by the deadline of Monday, October 18**, and for more information, please visit [www.OHTNorthumberland.ca/en/ohtn/volunteer-peer-support-program.aspx](http://www.OHTNorthumberland.ca/en/ohtn/volunteer-peer-support-program.aspx).

Community Care Northumberland anticipates accepting patient participants into the Volunteer Peer Support Program before the end of this year, however registrations are not accepted at this time. To learn more about whether this program is right for you, please visit the Community Care Northumberland website or contact:

**Kelly Peterson**

Coordinator - Volunteer Peer Support Program  
Community Care Northumberland  
905-373-2998  
[k.peterson@commcare.ca](mailto:k.peterson@commcare.ca)

**Paddling program offered through NHH Community Mental Health Services thanks to support from community partners**

October 3 through 9 is Mental Illness Awareness Week and as shared in an October 4 joint release with the NHH Foundation, NHH's Community Mental Health Services (NHHCMHS) Peer Program is taking the opportunity to spotlight an innovative new paddling group recently concluded with support from Cobourg Dragon Boat and Canoe Club and a generous donation from Cameco Corporation. This paddling opportunity was provided to local adults as part of the Peer Program's Teaching and Education Learned through Living (TELL) Talks series and was one of the most popular groups of this series so far, with attendees sharing feedback on this program positively impacting their mental health.

“I am most grateful for the opportunity to try Paddleboards,” shared one participant. “This activity came at the perfect time for me to try something new. The experience has brought some much-needed peace, joy and a sense of accomplishment. Thank you to the people that were open to allowing this to happen. The magnitude of this gift will certainly help on my journey forward.”

“TELL Talks are open to any adults willing to identify they have a mental health concern and that they want to improve their mental wellness,” says Alexandra McPhee, a Peer Support Specialist with NHHCMHS. “We had 21 attendees join us consistently throughout the summer.”

McPhee, a paddleboarder herself, came up with the idea for this group after seeing youth paddling programs taking place in the Cobourg Marina. She reached out to Jeremy Fowlie of the Cobourg Dragon Boat and Canoe Club to inquire about adult programs and the potential to partner and Jeremy and the Club were quick to support the idea, offering a deeply discounted rate for participants to try paddling canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards once a week for six weeks with Club staff teaching and supporting attendees of all skill levels.

In late 2020, NHHCMHS received a grant through The Cameco Fund for Mental Health, which supports mental health projects that benefit Northumberland County. This grant was specifically earmarked for the TELL Talk program and a portion of these donated funds was used to cover the paddling program’s discounted registration costs for all participants, removing any financial barriers for adults interested in joining.

“I think the success of this particular group and the testimonials we’ve heard from participants really shows how important these activities are for adults we serve,” says McPhee. “Many people don’t have the resources or access to activities like this, and we are so grateful we were able to provide this experience thanks to generous community partners.”

“The Cameco Fund for Mental Health has supported a wide variety of projects and programs throughout Northumberland County over the past two years,” said Dale Clark, vice-president of Cameco’s Fuel Services Division. “I’m happy to see that the fund has helped the TELL Talk program to offer unique experiences to provide growth and learning opportunities for participants.”

The paddling group has now ended for the season, but those looking for more information on upcoming TELL Talks can contact [TELLTalks@nhh.ca](mailto:TELLTalks@nhh.ca).

“I would like to thank the Cobourg Dragon Boat and Canoe Club, Cameco, and my peer support worker, Alex McPhee, for having the NHH group attend on Thursday nights,” shares another participant. “It has been amazing during such a difficult year to be able to meet my supports outdoors while getting physical activity. I believe a large part of my healing comes from discovering hobbies and the Cobourg Dragon Boat and Canoe Club helped me discover my love for paddleboarding. I also appreciate how the staff, instructors/lifeguards are so kind, polite and nonjudgmental. If every agency could operate like the Cobourg Dragon Boat and Canoe Club and support local mental health groups, I know the world would be a better place.”

For more information on NHHCMHS, visit [www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca) or for ways you can support NHH, including NHHCMHS, visit [www.nhhfoundation.ca](http://www.nhhfoundation.ca).

---

## Operational Excellence

---

### **NHH preparing to welcome successful candidates in new nurse externship program**

Currently available at a number of hospitals in Ontario, nurse externships are opportunities for nursing students between the second and fourth year of a College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) approved Baccalaureate Nursing (BScN or BN) program, or in their final year of a Practical Nursing (PN) program.

Considered unregulated health care providers, externs are “supernumerary” (ie. not part of the base staff of their assigned units) and as such work under the supervision of a registered nursing professional. A regulated nurse is assigned to and responsible for all patients. Externs support regulated staff with care delivery and unit operations.

Upon review of the multiple benefits of an externship program, NHH recently issued a call for interest for six temporary part-time externs. The externs will be assigned to the Emergency Department, Post Acute Specialty Services and Acute Care, with an aim to provide opportunities for student nurses beyond those provided in



educational settings, while simultaneously providing NHH with the chance to establish an early relationship with future potential recruits prior to their graduation.

Beth Davis, Director of Professional Practice at NHH, Interim Chief Nursing Executive and lead for the hospital's new Externship program, notes that research shows externs report feeling better prepared to transition to the new graduate role: "Externs report the collegial nature of working with the team contributed to their confidence. They develop organizational skills and learn to prioritize patient care. Some externs have reported finding the specialty area where they wanted to work upon graduation, and increased motivation to work harder in their studies as they recognized how much they needed to know before working as a graduate nurse."

Evaluation of the new program will be conducted at regular intervals throughout its 12-month duration. Externs will work a maximum of 37.5 hours per week, with more time per week anticipated in the summer months, and less during the school year. NHH anticipates welcoming the first successful candidates in the coming weeks.