



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Third dedicated COVID-19 testing service preparing to open in Northumberland with support from OHT-N partners and the Municipality of Port Hope**

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Tuesday, October 27, 2020** – Local health and community care providers continue to work together through the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N) partnership to maximize Northumberland County’s capacity for COVID-19 assessment and testing.

Formed prior to the pandemic, the OHT-N has quickly mobilized community resources around this unprecedented public health challenge.

As announced [October 9](#), the partners are taking a proactive, phased approach to care delivery by focusing health human resources where they are needed most while preparing to quickly increase additional testing capacity as local needs require and in step with provincial direction.

Up to now, COVID-19 assessment and testing services have been focused on two centres within Northumberland County:

- the NHH COVID-19 Assessment Centre at Northumberland Hills Hospital; and
- the Trent Hills COVID-19 Testing Centre in Campbellford.

Testing is also available on an emergency basis via the Emergency Departments at both Northumberland Hills Hospital and Campbellford Memorial Hospital, and in a ‘pop-up’ capacity through the Community Paramedicine team of Northumberland Paramedics. To date, pop-up support has responded to unique needs as they have arisen at a range of long-term care and retirement homes, Alderville First Nation and various congregate living settings, such as Transition House shelter.

Beginning Wednesday, November 4, a third dedicated COVID-19 testing site—this one focused primarily on service for individuals without symptoms—will be introduced in Northumberland County by the OHT-N partners. It will operate three days a week (Monday, Wednesday and Thursday), and be located at the **The Port Hope Community Hub** (formerly the Canton Municipal Hall) at 5325 County Road 10, just north of Canton.

“The specific aim of the Canton COVID-19 Testing Centre is to provide another local option for those without active symptoms, such as those who require a test because they wish to visit a loved one in an area long-term care home, or those who may have been exposed in a work or school setting,” said Linda Davis, spokesperson for the OHT-N and President and CEO at Northumberland Hills Hospital. “This new service in Canton will provide another option for these people, thereby adding capacity at our existing sites to cater to those with COVID-19 or other respiratory-like symptoms. On behalf of the OHT-N members, I thank the Municipality of Port Hope for their support in this work.”

“This initiative is a tremendous example of how community collaboration and shared resources can benefit residents throughout the County, and we are proud to participate in this proactive approach

alongside OHT-N,” adds Bob Sanderson, Warden of Northumberland County and Mayor of the Municipality of Port Hope. “This partnership streamlines the testing process, will allow more people to get tested, and will hopefully result in shorter wait times at the Centres. I commend the OHT-N and their team for the careful planning and delivery of these services amid the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Like the NHH COVID-19 Assessment Centre and the Trent Hills COVID-19 Testing Centre, the new Canton COVID-19 Testing Centre will see patients by appointment only. Appointments will be coordinated through the existing booking line at NHH: **905-377-7783**. This model will allow the OHT-N partners to prioritize those who most require assessment and testing—based on the latest provincial eligibility criteria—align booking with patient needs, including their geographic location, and better manage physical distancing requirements at all three sites.

Services will continue as previously communicated at the two pre-existing Centres. Patients needing to see a physician/nurse practitioner will continue to be booked for appointments at the NHH site.

The decision to focus the new service in Canton on the needs of those without symptoms is intended to better support the following:

- Pre-operative patients who require a negative COVID-19 test prior to receiving a surgical procedure
- Caregivers or visitors to long-term care residents
- Individuals with employment-related or public health-directed testing needs
- Other general testing that does not require the specific services of a full assessment centre

In an effort to free up much-needed space within the Northumberland Hills Hospital’s Emergency Department, where the Centre is currently being operated, and minimize traffic in and out of the main hospital site, NHH will also transition its COVID-19 Assessment Centre this week to the new self-enclosed trailer that has been set up on the lawn immediately in front of the Emergency Department entrance. No change to services is anticipated. Signage will direct patients accordingly. This move will take place on/around October 28.

Below is a table listing the full complement of services available at each Centre, and the numbers to call to access each.

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Hours of operation</b>	<b>Services available</b>
<b>NHH COVID-19 Assessment Centre</b>	1000 DePalma Drive, Cobourg – <i>NOTE</i> – effective October 28 this service is relocating to the NEW trailer space entry directly <u>adjacent</u> to the NHH Emergency Department entrance, with a dedicated and accessible entry/exit.	Open daily, 8AM to 4PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 testing for eligible patients</li> <li>• Primary care provider assessment (Nurse Practitioner, physician) of patients eligible for COVID-19 testing as needed for other related care needs, eg. strep throat, common cold, prescription, etc.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-scheduled appointments only – call 905-377-7783</li> </ul>
<b>Trent Hills COVID-19 Testing Centre</b>	At 146 Oliver Road in Campbellford, lower side level of Campbellford Memorial Hospital (the old Ambulance Bay).	Open Monday to Thursday, 9AM to 5PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 testing available for eligible patients</li> <li>• Pre-scheduled appointments only – call 705-395-1801</li> </ul>
<b>NEW – Canton COVID-19 Testing Centre (effective Wednesday, November 4)</b>	At the Port Hope Community Hub (formerly the Canton Municipal Hall), 5325 County Road 10, just north of Canton	Open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 8AM to 4PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 testing for those without active symptoms</li> <li>• Pre-scheduled appointments only – call 905-377-7783 to book</li> </ul>

**Who should be tested at the Centres listed above?** - Local residents are encouraged to schedule an appointment with a local COVID-19 Assessment Centre if they:

- have COVID-19 symptoms (see what those symptoms are, or take a self assessment, on Ontario’s COVID-19 website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread#section-0>);
- have been notified by public health or the COVID Alert app that they have been exposed to a confirmed case of the virus;
- have been notified by public health that they are a resident or worker in a setting that has a COVID-19 outbreak;
- have had a school health nurse, public health or primary care provider (family physician or nurse practitioner) tell them to be tested;
- are eligible for testing as part of a targeted Ministry of Health testing initiative;
- live or work in a setting considered at-risk for COVID-19, such as a long-term care home, community shelter or other congregate living setting;
- will be visiting a long-term care home.

**Looking forward** - The OHT-N partners are prepared to implement mobile pop-up services swiftly for specific institutional or community sites as required, with support from Northumberland County’s Community Paramedicine program. Hours of operation may also be adjusted at the testing and assessment sites listed above, as need arises.

**Precautionary measures the best defense** - Taking precautionary measures is the best way to continue to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The OHT-N encourages Northumberland residents and visitors to:

- 1) Maintain physical distancing:** Don’t give the virus a chance to spread. Keep a minimum distance of two metres (six feet) from other people outside of your immediate household.
- 2) Wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible, or required**
- 3) Practice good hand hygiene:** Clean your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth unless you have just washed your hands.

- 4) **Limit your social circle:** Monitor the latest provincial requirements and recommendations for limiting contacts outside your immediate household. As we head into the Hallowe'en, take note of the recommendations put forward by our local public health to minimize the risk of spreading the virus or exposing those in our families and social circles who may be vulnerable.
- 5) **Download the COVID Alert app** - Get a phone alert if you may have been exposed to COVID-19, and let others know if you test positive without sharing any personal information by downloading the COVID Alert app: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covidalert>

### **About the OHT-N**

Drawing on a strong history of collaboration, patients, caregivers, health and social care providers from across Northumberland County are working together to improve patient and caregiver experience of health care in our community, as well as provider work-life experience, through the Ontario Health Team (OHT) model.

On December 6, 2019, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health Christine Elliott visited the Colborne Emergency Services Base to announce the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland 3 (OHT-N) as one of the first 24 OHT candidates in the province. The OHT-N is now moving forward with implementing this new model of organizing and delivering health care, better connecting local patients and health care providers in order to improve patient outcomes. COVID-19 has provided an unexpected opportunity to capitalize on these partnerships.

For more information please visit the OHT-N website, [OHTNorthumberland.ca](http://OHTNorthumberland.ca), follow the team on Twitter @OHT\_Nthld, email the OHT-N directly at [info@ohtnorthumberland.ca](mailto:info@ohtnorthumberland.ca) or reach out by phone care of 905-377-7757 or 905-372-3329, ext. 2335.

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