



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vaccine safety, effectiveness and local distribution to be the focus of Ontario Health Team of Northumberland's third interactive COVID-19 Virtual Forum

Northumberland County – Thursday, February 11, 2020 – With the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines underway for priority populations in Northumberland as part of Phase 1 of the provincial distribution plan, Ontario Health Team of Northumberland (OHT-N) partners will host an interactive online session to answer the public's vaccine-related questions.

How do the COVID-19 vaccines work? Are the vaccines safe? How long will immunization last? How are vaccines being distributed? When is rollout to the general population expected and how will this be coordinated locally? The third OHT-N COVID-19 Virtual Forum will address these questions and more during a 60-minute online event on Thursday, February 25, beginning at 7 p.m.

Join four panelists from the local health care community, who will open the forum with a brief overview of topics including how the vaccines work in the body to combat the virus, the status of local vaccine rollout along with rough timelines for expanded distribution, and the partnerships in place to ensure a coordinated approach to mass vaccination across Northumberland. Panelists will then take questions from participating members of the public.

There are two options to join: directly via the Zoom platform or by phone. Participants joining via Zoom will be able to ask questions directly of the panelists as well as other OHT-N representatives, including both county hospitals, Northumberland Paramedics, community care agencies, long-term care providers and more. Those joining by phone are invited to submit their questions in advance.

“As vaccine supply continues to flow into Northumberland and distribution expands to the broader community, we hope that everyone who is eligible will roll-up their sleeves – in consultation with their health care provider – to help prevent further spread of COVID-19 in our community, and support the national movement to build widespread immunity,” says Linda Davis, spokesperson for the OHT-N and President and CEO of Northumberland Hills Hospital. “We know that vaccination is the only foreseeable way to bring an end to the COVID-19 pandemic – it is a robust layer of PPE we can each do in building our collective defence against this virus. OHT-N partners are collaborating with the Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit and stand ready to support the priority work of local vaccine rollout in any way needed. As part of this vital collaboration, we look forward to sharing information and answering questions during this upcoming Virtual Forum to help members of the public make informed decisions about getting the COVID-19 vaccine, once available.”

Who: Moderated by Linda Davis, President and CEO, Northumberland Hills Hospital, this forum will include the following presenters:

- **Dr. Ian Gemmill**, Acting Medical Officer of Health, Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit

- **Karen Peters**, Pharmacist, Northumberland Family Health Team
- **Dr. Emma Smith**, Primary Care Physician

When: Thursday, February 25, at 7:00 p.m.

Where/How: Join the Virtual Forum in one of the following ways:

- **Connect directly via Zoom:** zoom.us/join
- **Dial-in by phone, toll-free:** 1-855-703-8985
- **Access code for either option:**
 - **Meeting ID:** 984 5373 8346
 - **Passcode:** 599866

Joining by phone? Submit your questions in advance to info@ohtnorthumberland.ca or to 1-800-354-7050, ext. 2335. Joining via Zoom? Submit questions during the event using the 'chat' button.

Why: Get answers to your COVID-19 vaccine-related questions from local experts and learn how community partners are working together to coordinate local vaccine distribution.

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 (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, email the team care of info@ohtnorthumberland.ca or reach out by phone care of the contacts below.

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