



**MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, January 7, 2016

### **Accredited with Commendation for Niagara Health System**

Niagara Health System has been “Accredited with Commendation” for 2015-19 as part of a health-quality improvement process to measure our programs and services against national standards.

In November, a group of surveyors from Accreditation Canada travelled to Niagara to complete our on-site accreditation. They visited every NHS site, program and service, spending time talking with staff, physicians and volunteers, interviewing patients and families, and reviewing documents. Accreditation Canada is an independent, not-for-profit organization that accredits healthcare and social services organizations in Canada and around the world.

We were recently informed through our final Accreditation Report that we have been Accredited with Commendation, reflecting that “the organization has surpassed the fundamental requirements of the accreditation program.”

NHS President Dr. Suzanne Johnston and Board Chair Dr. Barry Wright applauded the Niagara Health team for this achievement.

"We are very pleased with the findings of this Accreditation and the strong performance of NHS," says Dr. Johnston. "While we have much to be proud of, we won't let this positive assessment allow us to pause on our journey of continued improvement. We will continue to reinforce important quality and safety practices across the NHS in the lead up to the launch of our new strategic priorities in June 2016."

Dr. Wright adds: "Quality, safe patient care is a top priority for Niagara Health System, and our teams are always looking for ways to enhance the services we provide. Our knowledge and practices in quality and safety are propelling us to achieve excellence in care."

An excerpt from the surveyor team's summary of their overall observations noted that NHS "has worked extremely hard in order to invest in quality and safety of care, and plan for a better future. Participating in the Accreditation Canada process demonstrates this commitment to the organization. The various sites can celebrate many successes in their work, making the accreditation process comprehensive ... The delivery of care and services is foremost in everyone's mind, with a focus on patient safety using Accreditation Canada's required organizational practices to drive key safety elements across the NHS ... Patients and family members reported high levels of satisfaction during the survey visit."

The surveyors applauded NHS for many achievements, including:

- Our improving culture of patient safety and quality.
- Our strong focus on ethics and use of an innovative ethics framework.
- The introduction of My Space patients boards in every room to improve communication between patients, families and caregivers.
- Our favourable financial position as a result of efforts from all levels of the organization.

- The success of our medication management initiatives, including our Antibiotic Stewardship Program.
- Our commitment to the privacy of patient information.

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