MACDONALD FRANKLIN OSI RESEARCH CENTRE

LAWSON HEALTH RESEARCH INSTITUTE

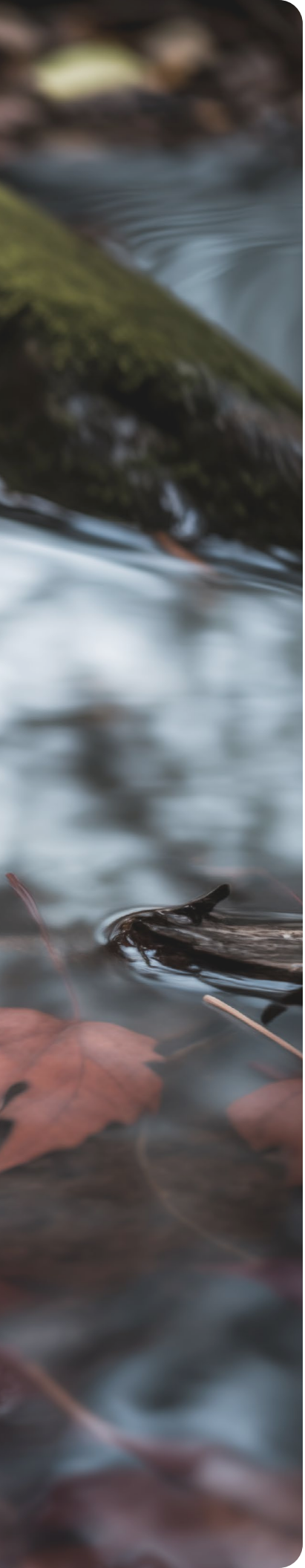
MacDonald Franklin OSI Research and Innovation Centre



ANNUAL REPORT

Conducting collaborative, innovative, and actionable research
to solve emerging challenges in military and Veteran mental health.





MACDONALD FRANKLIN OSI RESEARCH CENTRE

LAWSON HEALTH RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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Director's Statement



As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2023, the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre proudly stands as a beacon of innovation and collaboration in military and Veteran mental health research.

Our dedication to being a global leader in military and Veteran mental health research remains unwavering. Through active participation in key events, such as the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Forum, the International Society for Traumatic Stress, and our continued collaboration with the Five-Eyes Mental Health Research Innovation Collaborative, our commitment to this community is reflected. Additionally, our venture into understanding the benefits of physical activity in the recovery of Veterans through our collaboration with Invictus Games 2025 adds a new dimension to our pursuits. These experiences fortified our vision and amplified our commitment to fostering positive change in the lives of those who have served.

With the conclusion of many long-term data collections and projects during 2023, our team is proud of the accomplishments during this time and look forward to sharing results from many of these projects, including our longitudinal COVID-19 data collections in Veterans, spouses of Veterans, and healthcare workers. Our team continues to be leaders in the field of moral injury and moral distress research, having recently completed a substantial and impactful review on available assessment scales.



Particularly, a point of pride for our team involves progress made towards our Revel initiative, that aims to address wellbeing amongst healthcare workers who support our Veterans. In collaboration with global partners at Phoenix Australia, we have developed a wellbeing framework that takes an organizational approach to workplace wellbeing. By supporting our National Operational Stress Injury Clinic clinicians in caring for healthcare workers, who, in turn, support our Veterans, we extend our impact beyond research into tangible healthcare support.

Gratitude is extended to Kyle MacDonald and John Franklin for their steadfast support through the St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation. Their generous contribution underscores the sustainability of our Research Centre, catalyzing meaningful change in the lives of Veterans and their families.

As we embark into 2024, our commitment to innovation, collaboration, and transformative research remains steadfast. Guided by our enduring vision, we are resolute in making a positive difference in the mental health landscape for those who have served our nation.

Sincerely,



J Don Richardson, MD, FRCPC
Director

Welcome
MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre

MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre was founded in 2018 and is a direct result of the philanthropic spirit of Kyle MacDonald and John Franklin through the St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation.

In partnership with our Advisory Council, our research is founded upon the following principles:

Vision
Working together to be a national and global leader in mental health research to promote the wellbeing of Veterans and their families.

Mission
Conduct collaborative, innovative, and actionable research to solve emerging challenges in military and Veteran mental health.

Core Activities
Through mental health research, training, and knowledge sharing, we are committed to improving the wellbeing of Veterans and their families.

Who we work with
As the Centre grows and expands, we continue to foster the bridge between the voices of the Veteran community, clinicians, researchers, and policymakers. Contributing to this is our mission of collaboration among organizations with complementary goals - locally, nationally, and internationally. These include the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research, Atlas Institute for Veterans and Families, Chronic Pain Centre of Excellence, Dallaire Institute, Department of National Defence, Veterans Affairs Canada, Phoenix Australia, and Combat Stress UK.



Highlights
Year in Review

JANUARY
Don Richardson was named **Tanna Schulich Chair in Mental Health and Neurosciences**, Western University.

MARCH
Don Richardson presented before the **Senate** on emerging treatments for Veterans living with operational stress injuries.

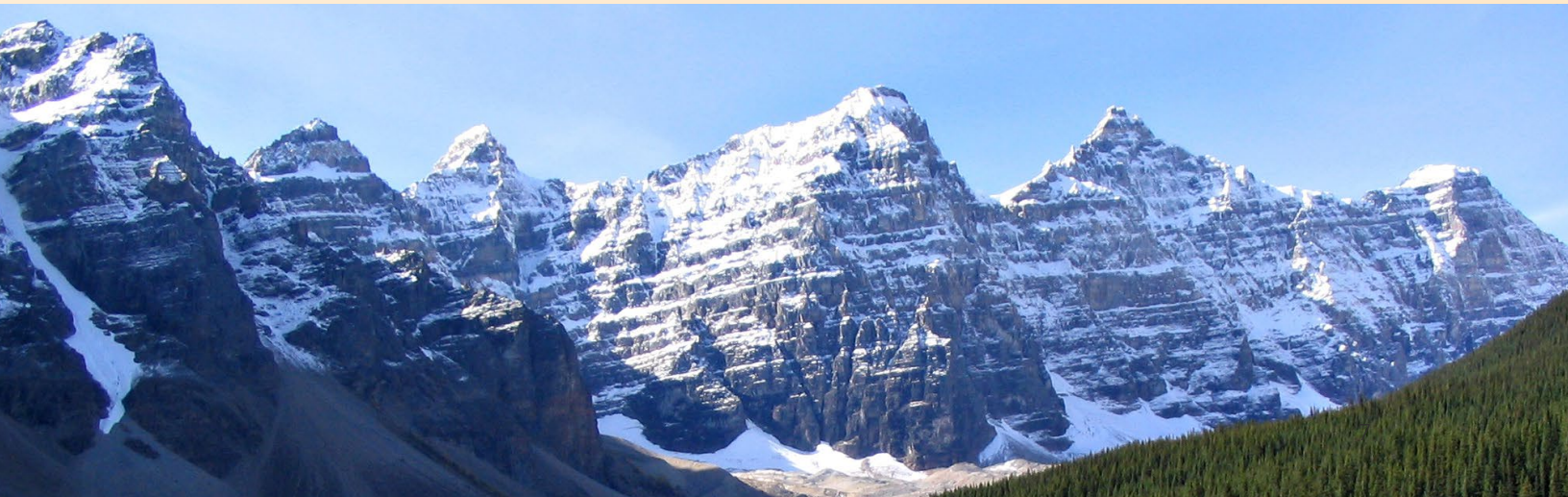
CIPSRT Champions of Mental Health – CIPHER Conference.

MAY
Stephanie Houle presented at the **Stimson Center** to representatives of the US State Department and other international governments on moral injury and encounters with children during military operations.

SEPTEMBER
MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre **leadership team reorganization**, and appointment of **three additional Heads (Drs. Kylie Dempster, Natalie Ein, and Jenny Liu)**.

OCTOBER
Anthony Nazarov named a **CIMVHR Fellow**.

DECEMBER
Anthony Nazarov selected as an **Associate Editor** for the **Journal of Military, Veteran, and Family Health**.



Year in Review
By the Numbers

41	Researchers, staff, clinicians, collaborators, students
22	Ongoing projects
9	Number of new external funding supports
20	New publications
+40%	Publication growth (annual increase in publications year-over-year)
30+	New conference presentations of emerging results
$2.95M	Revenue generated from grant funding
$316,000	Funding received through fellowships

MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre initiatives have received funding and support over the years from numerous different granting agencies, including:

- Canadian Institutes for Health Research
- Mitacs
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Canadian Institutes for Military and Veteran Health Research
- Veteran Affairs Canada
- Chronic Pain Centre of Excellence
- Atlas Institute for Veterans and Families
- Digital Research Alliance of Canada
- True Patriot Love Foundation
- Academic Medical Organization of Southwestern Ontario
- Government of Canada

Significant Contributions

Update for 2023





SUPPORTING THOSE WHO SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

Our expertise in occupational resilience was successfully applied to support Canada's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and our health care system. From our own research, we heard that **Veterans were concerned about the barriers to care** that may be imparted by the pandemic. Indeed, the pandemic imposed unprecedented demands on the Canadian health care workforce. Rapid development and deployment of intervention programs have done little to boost the resilience and mental health of Canadian healthcare workers, often failing to prevent burnout while posing additional strains on the individual healthcare worker.

REVEL

Expanding beyond individual-level resilience interventions and traditional single continuum of mental health versus illness, our team, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, set out to **re-imagine healthcare supports as a whole-of-organization endeavour** that embraces the dual continuum model of mental health and wellbeing. Working with our partnering organizations, including the Department of Defence Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) team, we developed the REVEL framework to empower healthcare workers in collaboration, co-design, implementation, and evaluation of **whole-of-system solutions to support flourishing at work**. REVEL is intended to connect everyone in the organization, from leadership to the frontline, so that everyone is able to feel **seen**, **heard**, **valued**, and **understood**.

In addition to REVEL, we are also conducting a longitudinal, multi-systems investigation to understand **burnout, resilience, moral injury, and institutional trust** in physicians, funded by the Academic Medical Organization of Southwestern Ontario. As a result of physicians' complex roles, they have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic as they experience strains from multiple levels. We aim to support physicians in the long-term by better understanding the multidimensional challenges they face. This involves acknowledging and accounting for the different systems within which physicians must act. Working with a team of physician leaders, we co-developed a longitudinal survey designed to capture the experiences and unique challenges physicians face in order to better inform policies and programs aiming to support physician wellbeing in the future.

REVEL was co-developed and is currently piloted in three large health care organizations:

St. Joseph's Health Care London

Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry

The Royal Ottawa Hospital

LOOKING AHEAD...

Our team is committed to partnering with both existing and new organizations to implement and evaluate the REVEL framework. We are engaged in collaborative efforts with international partners to exchange knowledge on workplace resilience and support, driven by leadership at all levels. By doing so, we aim to incorporate new insights into reshaping not only the Canadian healthcare landscape, but enhancing how all workplaces, including the Canadian Armed Forces, cultivate a flourishing workforce.

LEADER IN MORAL INJURY

Moral injury and moral distress represent profound challenges faced by individuals in high-stress environments, including military personnel, healthcare workers, and first responders. **These terms describe the deep psychological, social, and spiritual turmoil experienced when one's actions, or failures to act, starkly contradict their core moral beliefs and expectations.** Moral injury, a concept originally identified within military mental health, delves into the lasting impacts of engaging in, failing to prevent, or witnessing acts that betray deeply held moral convictions. Moral distress, often discussed within healthcare contexts, encompasses the distressing sense of violating one's professional integrity, coupled with the frustration of being unable to act ethically due to external constraints. These concepts not only outline the spectrum of moral conflicts faced but also underscore the variability in their effects on individuals. **At this point, there are still many unknowns related to moral injury, including how to best identify and assess moral injury in individuals, which treatment to choose, and how to best prevent moral injury**.

At the Centre, we are conducting several projects that examine moral injury and moral distress. Here, we highlight progress made on several of these projects.

Understanding best ways to measure moral injury

Despite growing support for the clinical relevance of moral injury and moral distress, challenges persist around the measurement quality of available scales. Recently, as part of the effort with the **Atlas Institute Moral Injury Research Community of Practice**, we completed a systematic review and content analysis of over 40 unique scales that measure moral injury and moral distress. This landmark paper is now published in Clinical Psychology Review, and provides recommendations for the application, development, and validation of moral injury and moral distress. **The Moral Injury Outcome Scale, to which our Centre contributed, is globally recognized as the best assessment tool for moral injury to-date.**

How to recognize moral injury during diagnosis

Moral injury is thought to differ from posttraumatic stress disorder in several ways, including etiology, core emotional reactions, association with physiological stress responses, and function of symptoms and with their maintenance. Presently, there is a **lack of clinical agreement on whether moral injury is its own diagnostic entity**. We are investigating the clinical utility of moral injury and syndrome conceptualization in a sample of mental health professionals.

Moral injury in the context of children and armed conflict

To date, limited evidence documents the impact of witnessing or interacting with child soldiers on the mental health and wellbeing of military personnel. In collaboration with partners at the **Dallaire Institute, Mount Saint Vincent University,** and the **Centre for Addiction and Mental Health**, we have been examining the lived experiences of military personnel who encounter these potentially morally injurious events during military service. This research is a key milestone in ongoing efforts by the Canadian Armed Forces to lead the implementation of the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers, of which a key principle is "to actively promote and support research on the trauma experienced by personnel confronting child soldiers and interacting with children affected by armed conflict, and to provide appropriate pre-deployment preparation, as well as mental health support during and post-deployment."



LOOKING AHEAD...

The Centre will continue its ongoing research on moral injury and moral distress to advance our understanding of the impact of morally stressful events. This will directly inform the application of the construct in both research and clinical practice. We continue to engage in knowledge mobilization efforts to extend the reach of our research nationally and internationally, applying findings to real-life events and contributing to a deeper understanding of moral injury and moral distress on a global scale.

DND photo IS2008-9217 by Corporal David Cribb. Reproduction has not been altered and is a copy of an official Work that is published by DND/CAF.
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ADVANCEMENTS IN TREATING PTSD

Exposure to potentially traumatic events is reported by over 85% of active members of the Canadian Armed Forces. According to research, the lifetime prevalence of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can be as high as 23% in Veterans. Given the prevalence of PTSD and the uniqueness of the PTSD experience in military populations, providing effective treatments and support is critically important.

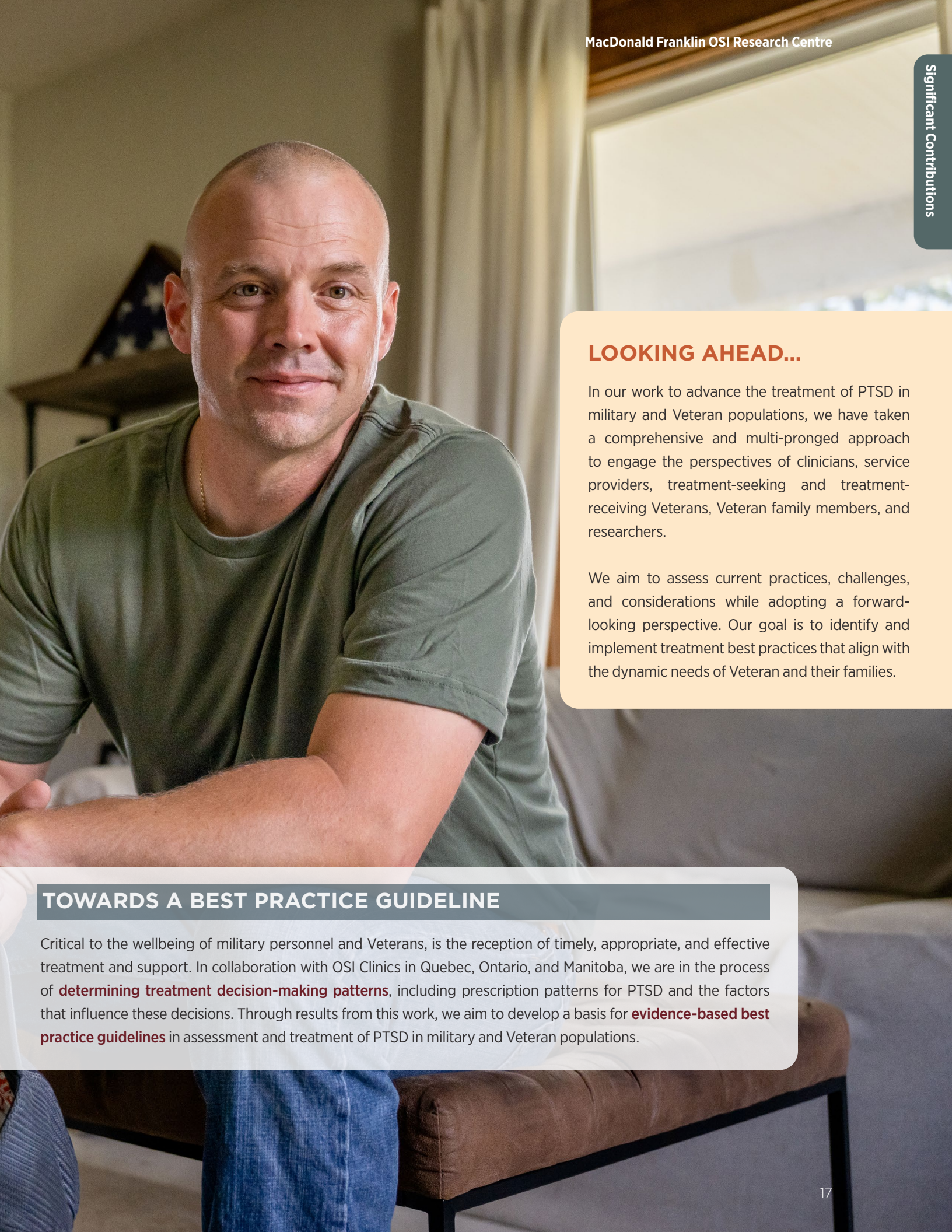
From examinations of treatment patterns, to evaluations of conventional, and alternative treatments, our team has been leading several projects that apply a critical perspective on the assessment and treatment of PTSD in military and Veteran populations.

DRIVING INNOVATIVE TREATMENTS FOR PTSD

This year we have laid the groundwork for several projects that will look at innovative treatments for difficult to treat PTSD in military and Veteran populations. Based around previous work led by our team, we are preparing our **first clinical trial into the use of pharmacogenetics in treatment for OSIs**, to begin in early 2024. Additionally, following a successful systematic review of the use of **ketamine therapy**, we are planning to launch two research projects in 2024 around the experiences of receiving ketamine therapy for PTSD along with a consensus-building activity amongst ketamine therapy providers across Canada to harmonize treatment protocols and standardize outcome measurements for ketamine treatment nationally.

LIGHTING THE PATH: FINDING EVIDENCE BEHIND TREATMENTS

Rigorous meta-analytic reviews of evidence for treatments continue to be the standard for the basis of determining treatment guidelines. At the Centre, we are actively engaged in a comprehensive **initiative to identify and assess effectiveness of available treatment** approaches for military-related PTSD using **meta-analyses**. Our goal is to discern the relative efficacy of treatments, considering clinical characteristics, patient and population factors, and other variables that may impact treatment outcomes.



LOOKING AHEAD...

In our work to advance the treatment of PTSD in military and Veteran populations, we have taken a comprehensive and multi-pronged approach to engage the perspectives of clinicians, service providers, treatment-seeking and treatment-receiving Veterans, Veteran family members, and researchers.

We aim to assess current practices, challenges, and considerations while adopting a forward-looking perspective. Our goal is to identify and implement treatment best practices that align with the dynamic needs of Veteran and their families.

TOWARDS A BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINE

Critical to the wellbeing of military personnel and Veterans, is the reception of timely, appropriate, and effective treatment and support. In collaboration with OSI Clinics in Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba, we are in the process of **determining treatment decision-making patterns**, including prescription patterns for PTSD and the factors that influence these decisions. Through results from this work, we aim to develop a basis for **evidence-based best practice guidelines** in assessment and treatment of PTSD in military and Veteran populations.

Other Notable Ongoing Projects

MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre is continuing work in the following domains:

- Effects of disaster relief operations
- Psychological safety
- Impact of loneliness
- Chronic pain and mental health comorbidity
- Transition to civilian life
- Understanding cannabis use
- Improving Road to Mental Readiness program
- Neuroscience of PTSD
- Treatment outcomes

External Grants

New for 2023

Loneliness and Isolation

Stories that INSPIRE: Reducing social isolation and loneliness through storytelling. Funding Source: Chronic Pain Centre of Excellence (CPCoE). Principal Investigator. $138,000.

Barriers to Treatment

Journey to Enhanced Services: Identifying Factors for Improved Mental Health Care Access for Veterans and Families. Funding Source: Atlas Institute for Veterans and Families. Principal Investigator. $66,866.

Invictus Games

Uncovering Barriers and Facilitators of Competitor and Caregiver Experience in a Winter Context: An Invictus Games Research Legacy Project. Funding Source: CIMVHR - True Patriot Love IG2025 Research Initiative. Principal Investigator: $85,000.

Disinformation and Veteran Wellbeing

Perspectives on Automated Disinformation Using Large Language Models. Funding Source: National Defence (MINDS Targeted Engagement Grants). Principal Investigator: $49,828.50

Military Sexual Misconduct

Barriers and Facilitators to Treatment Following Military Sexual Misconduct. Funding Source: National Defence (Sexual Misconduct Response Centre). Principal Investigator: $224,097.

Chronic Pain

Chronic Pain in Mental Health Treatment-Seeking Canadian Armed Forces Veterans. Funding Source: Chronic Pain Centre of Excellence. Principal Investigator: $99,188

Workplace Resilience

Promoting Resilience and Mental Health: Adapting Canada's Department of National Defense Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) Program to Support Canadian Health Care Workers. Funding Source: Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). Principal Investigator: $746,050 (additional support).

Publications

New for 2023

Submitted, Accepted, or In-Press

Houle, S.A., Baillie Abidi, C., Birch, M., Reeves, K., Younger, W., Conradi, C., Patten, S., Bélanger, S., Richardson, J.D., Nazarov, A., Wells, S. (Submitted). **The nature and impacts of deployment-related encounters with children among Canadian military Veterans: A qualitative analysis.** European Journal of Psychotraumatology.

Liu, J.J.W., Ein, N., Gervasio, J., Easterbrook, B., Nouri, M. S., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (Submitted). **Usability and Accuracy of the SWIFT-ActiveScreener Preliminary evaluation for use in clinical research.** PLOS ONE.

Liu, J.J.W., Ein, N., Plouffe, R.A., Gervasio, J., St. Cyr, K., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (submitted). **Meta-analysis and systematic review of the measures of psychological safety.** Journal of Organizational Behavior.

Nazarov, A., Forchuk, C.A., Younger, W.A., Plouffe, R.A., Trahair, C., Roth, M.L., Tuka, A., Shirazi, Z.A., Davis, B.D., & Richardson, J.D. (Submitted). **Beliefs about confidentiality and attitudes toward disclosure of moral injuries among military personnel.** Psychological Injury and Law.

Nazarov, A., Roth, ML., Liu, A., Wanklyn, SG., Dempster, KS., Plouffe, RA., Bird, BM., Fikretoglu, D., Garber, B., Richardson, JD. (Submitted). **Mental health treatment discontinuation among Canadian military personnel.** Canadian Journal of Psychiatry.

Roth, M. (Submitted). E**vidence-based Assessment and Treatment of military/Veteran PTSD: Reflections on fifteen years of practice and what I wish I would have known when I started.** Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health.

Skorzewska, A., Younger, W., Dempster, K.S., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (Submitted). **Use of buprenorphine for treatment resistant depression: case report.** Journal of Clinical Psychiatry.

Forchuk, C.A., Kocha, I., Granek, J., Dempster, K.S., Younger, L., Gargala, D., Plouffe, R.A., Bailey, S., Guest, K., Richardson, J.D., Nazarov, A. (Accepted). **Optimizing Military Mental Health and Stress Resilience Training through the Lens of Trainee Preferences: A Conjoint Analysis Approach.** Military Psychology.

Houle, S., Ein, N., Gervasio, J., Plouffe, R.A., Litz, B.T., Carleton, R.N., Hansen, K., Liu, J.J.W., Ashbaugh, A.R., Callaghan, W., Thompson, M., Easterbrook, B., Smith-MacDonald, L., Rodrigues, S., Belanger, S., Bright, K., Lanius, R., Baker, C., Younger, W., Brémault-Phillips, S., Hosseiny, F., Richardson, J.D., Nazarov, A. and the Atlas Institute Moral Injury Research Community of Practice. (Accepted). **Measuring moral distress and moral injury: A systematic review and content analysis of existing scales.** Clinical Psychology Review.

Nazarov, A., Brandwood, A., Forchuk, C., Fraser, B., Merchant, W., Pavlovic, N., Badell, S., Richardson, JD., Guest, K., Bailey, S., & Granek, J. (Accepted). **Improving Mental Health and Resilience Training: Feedback from Canadian Armed Forces Personnel.** Military Behavioral Health.

Nazarov, A., Forchuk, C.A., Houle, S.A., Hansen, K.T., Plouffe, R.A., Liu, J.J.W., Dempster, K.S., Le, T., Kocha, I., Hosseiny, F., Heesters, A., & Richardson, J.D. (Accepted). **Exposure to Moral Stressors and Associated Outcomes in Healthcare Workers: Prevalence, Correlates, and Impact on Job Attrition.** European Journal of Psychotraumatology.

Published

Easterbrook, B., Plouffe, R.A., Houle, S.A., Liu, A., McKinnon, M.C., Ashbaugh, A.R., Mota, N., Afifi, T.O., Enns, M.W., Richardson J.D., & Nazarov, A. (2023). **Moral injury associated with increased odds of past-year mental health disorders: a Canadian Armed Forces examination.** European Journal of Psychotraumatology, 14(1), 2192622.

Ein, N., Houle, S., Liu, J.J.W., Easterbrook, B., Baker, C., Fuertes, M., Turner, R.B., MacDonald, C., Reeves, K., Deda, E., Hoffer, K., Abidi, C.B., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **The potentially morally injurious nature of encountering children during military deployments: A call for research.** Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health, 9(2), 86-90.

Ein, N., Plouffe, R.A., Liu, J.J.W., Gervasio, J., Baker, C., Carleton, N., Bartels, S.A., Lee, J.E.C., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (2024). **Physical and psychological challenges faced by military, medical and public safety personnel relief workers supporting natural disaster operations: A systematic review.** Current Psychology, 43(1),

1743-1758.

Forbes, D., Adler, A.B., Pedlar, D. & Asmundson, G.J.G. for the MHRIC across the Five Eyes nations (2023). **Problematic anger in military and veteran populations with and without PTSD: The elephant in the room.** Journal of Anxiety Disorders, 96, 102716-102716.

Granek, J., Pavlovic, N., Merchant, W., Kocha, I., & Nazarov, A. (2023). **Understanding Canadian Armed Forces Members' Preferences for the Road to Mental Readiness Program.** Scientific Letter prepared for Canadian Forces Health Services. DRDC-RDDC-2023-L154. Defence Research and Development Canada. CAN UNCLASSIFIED.

Hansen, K.T., Plouffe, R.A., Walker, D.L., Wanklyn, S.G., Lamrock, L., Maher, P., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and well-being of Veterans'spouses: A cross sectional analysis.** BMC Psychiatry, 23(1), 1-9.

Liu, J. J. W., Ein, N., Forchuk, C.A., Wanklyn, S.G., Ragu, S., Saroya, S., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **A Meta-analysis of Internet-based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Military and Veteran Populations.** BMC Psychiatry, 23(1), 223-236.

Liu, J.J.W., Lum, P.A., Foxcroft, L., Lim, R., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **Rapid Deployment of a Faculty-Wide Peer-Support Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic.** JMIR Form Res 2023;7:e37527.

Nazarov, A., Fikretoglu, D., Liu, A., Born, J., Michaud, K., Hendriks, T., Bélanger, S. A., Do, M. T., Lam, Q., Brooks, B., King, K., Sudom, K., Jetly, R., Garber, B., & Thompson, M. (2023). **Moral Distress, Mental Health, and Risk and Resilience Factors Among Military Personnel Deployed to Long-Term Care Facilities During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Research Protocol and Participation Metrics.** JMIR research protocols, 12(1), e44299.

Plouffe, R.A., Easterbrook, B., Liu, A., McKinnon, M.C., Richardson, J.D., & Nazarov, A. (2023). **Psychometric evaluation of the moral injury events scale in two Canadian armed forces samples.** Assessment, 30(1), 111-123.

Plouffe, R.A., Ein, N., Liu, J.J.W., St. Cyr, K., Baker, C., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **Feeling safe at work: Development and validation of the Psychological Safety Inventory.** International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 31(3), 443–455.

Plouffe, R.A., Nazarov, A., Heesters, A.M., Dickey, C.C., Foxcroft, L., Hosseiny, F., Le, T., Lum, P.A., Nouri, M.S., Smith, P., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **The mediating roles of workplace support and ethical work environment in associations between leadership and moral distress: A longitudinal study of Canadian health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.** Frontiers in Psychology, 14(1), 1235211.

Plouffe, R.A., Nazarov, A., Forchuk, C.A., Gervasio, J., Le, T., Liu, J.J.W., Nouri, M.S., Trahair, C., Walker, D.L., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **The roles of personality and resilience in associations between combat experiences and posttraumatic stress disorder among Canadian Armed Forces Veterans.** Personality and Individual Differences, 206(1), 112141.

Richardson, J.D., Roth, M., & Liu, J.J.W. (2023). **Clinical utility of moral injury in a treatment-seeking military-Veteran mental health population.** Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health, 9(2), 82-85.

Roth, M., King, L., St. Cyr, K.C., Mohson, U., Baderson K., Rhind, S., Richardson, J.D. (2023). **Evaluating the Prospective Utility of Pharmacogenetics Reporting Among Canadian Armed Forces Personnel Receiving Pharmacotherapy: a preliminary assessment towards precision psychiatric care.** BMJ Military Health.

St. Cyr, K., Nazarov, A., Le, T., Nouri, M.S., Priyonto, S., Forchuk, C.A., Soares, V., Wanklyn, S.G., Bird, B.M., Davis, B.D., King, L., Ketcheson, F., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **Correlates of cannabis use in a sample of mental health treatment-seeking Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans.** BMC Psychiatry, 23(1), 836.

Walker, D.L., Nouri, M.S., Plouffe, R.A., Liu, J.J.W., Le, T., Forchuk, C.A., Gargala, D., St. Cyr, K., Nazarov, A., & Richardson, J.D. (2023). **Telehealth Experiences in Veterans: Associations, Strengths, and Barriers to Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic.** BMJ Military Health.

Watling, S. E., Gill, T., Gaudette, E. V., Richardson, J. D., McClusky, T., Tong, J., Meyer, J. H., Warsh, J., Jetly, R., Hutchison, M. G., Rhind, S. G., Houle, S., Kish, S. J., & Boileau, I. (2023). **Investigating TSPO levels in occupation-related posttraumatic stress disorder.** Scientific Reports, 13, 4970.

A Year of Collaboration and Togetherness

April 27	Parkwood Institute Research (PIR) Day	London, ON (virtual)
May 23	The Dallaire Institute & Stimson Center Symposium	Washington, DC
June 14-17	European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Conference	Belfast, Northern Ireland
June 22-23	London Health Research Day	London, ON
October 16-17	Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research Forum	Gatineau, QC
October 19-21	Canadian Psychiatric Association	Vancouver, BC
October 25	Joint Mental Health and Research Innovation Day	London, ON
November 1-4	International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies - 39th Annual Meeting	Los Angeles, CA
November 5-6	Five Eyes Mental Health Research Innovation Collaborative Meeting	Los Angeles, CA








WHSD: Targeting Isolation and Loneliness
WVN
Women Veterans Network


Earning Complete
Confidence In Care






REVEL
Workplace Well-being
for a Flourishing Workforce
Canada's health care system is beyond stretched. From the executive to the frontline, all health care workers are exhausted and in need of a new approach to workplace well-being.
COLLECTIVE TRUTH FOR COLLECTIVE CHANGE
THE REVEL-UTION
THE REVEL METHOD
READINESS AND PREPARATION
CREATE THE ENVIRONMENT
METHOD IMPLEMENTATION
SUSTAIN, SHARE AND IMPROVE
APPROACH
180
70
150+

The Research Team

LEADERSHIP



J Don Richardson, MD, FRCPC
Director

Dr. Richardson is the Scientific Director of the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre and Medical Director of St. Joseph's OSI Clinic. He is a Full Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry at Western University and Assistant Clinical Professor (adjunct) in Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University. He also holds the distinguished title of Research Fellow with the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR). Dr. Richardson is one of the foremost experts on military-related PTSD and has more than three decades of experience in the assessment and treatment of CAF members and Veterans with PTSD and other OSIs. Resulting in over 80 published peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, Dr. Richardson has conducted research in multiple areas of military and Veteran mental health, including risk factors for PTSD and suicidal ideation, health care utilization, treatment outcomes, and the impact of PTSD on quality of life.



Anthony Nazarov, PhD, PMP
Associate Director

Dr. Anthony Nazarov is a neuroscientist with expertise in psychological resilience and military mental health. Dr. Nazarov has extensive expertise in conducting military and Veteran mental health research, and has received funding from Veterans Affairs Canada, Department of National Defence, and CIHR. Prior to joining the Lawson Health Research Institute, Dr. Nazarov was a Defence Scientist at Defence Research and Development Canada, Department of National Defence, investigating psychological resilience and mental health in Canadian Armed Forces personnel. Dr. Nazarov is a Fellow with the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR). With over 50 peer-reviewed publications, his work aims to advance our understanding of occupational trauma and identifying approaches to treating operational stress injuries and improving wellbeing outcomes.



Brent Davis, PhD
Head, Advanced Analytics

As the head of the Advanced Analytics Research Division, Brent brings a unique blend of expertise from his PhD in Computer Science and HBSc in Biochemistry, combined with a fervent interest in the latest computational technologies. His primary focus is on harnessing artificial intelligence, machine learning, and natural language processing to unlock novel clinical opportunities, aiming to revolutionize mental health diagnostics and treatments for our military personnel and veterans. Some of his research at the OSI has been promising in identifying difficult treatment cases with AI as early as the first clinical assessment. His research, grounded in developing sophisticated algorithms for in-depth social network analysis, now pivots towards creating impactful, technology-driven solutions to meet the complex needs of those who have served, marking his commitment to advancing mental health care through innovation.



Kylie Dempster, PhD
Head, Operations

Kylie, our Head of Operations, holds a PhD in Health Biosciences from Brock University where she previously served as Research Coordinator and Instructor for several undergraduate courses with the Department of Health Sciences. Kylie's doctoral research examined the effects of adverse childhood experiences on cardiovascular and autonomic development from childhood to young adulthood. She brings an established interdisciplinary research background to the team. In her capacity as Head of Operations, Kylie optimizes internal processes, facilitates funding and grant opportunities, and oversees the long-term sustainability of the Centre.



Natalie Ein, PhD
Head, Research and Implementation

Dr. Natalie Ein is a Postdoctoral Associate and Head of Research and Implementation with the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre. Natalie's background is in stress-related intervention research, including methodological reviews (meta-analyses, systematic reviews), mixed method designs, and psychophysiology.



Jenny Liu, PhD
Head, Scientific Development and Knowledge Mobilization

Dr. Jenny Liu is the Head of Scientific Development and Mobilization at the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre, an Adjunct Research Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, Schulich School of Medicine, Western University, and a Lecturer in the Department of Psychology, Toronto Metropolitan University. Jenny's work focuses on the scientific advancements at the centre while driving the effective dissemination of knowledge through mobilization and translation.

STAFF



Clara Baker
Research Assistant

Clara joined the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre in 2021 and works as a full-time Research Assistant. She graduated from the University of Western Ontario with a Bachelor of Arts, Honours Specialization in Psychology. Clara is passionate about health and rehabilitation, and plans to pursue a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy.



Michelle Birch
Research Assistant

Michelle has worked with the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre since March 2023. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with Honours from The University of Ottawa. Michelle's research interests centers on the field of psychotraumatology, with a specific focus on moral injury.



Luciana Brown, MBA
Research Coordinator

Luciana Brown joined the team in October 2019 as the Research Coordinator with Lawson Health Research Institute for the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre. Luciana completed her executive MBA in 2015 and holds a post-baccalaureate diploma in Management, both from Athabasca University, Faculty of Business. She completed her Bachelor of Administrative Studies degree at York University in 2003. Luciana has many years of senior administrative and project management experience in Canada and the Middle East, and has worked in varied environments, including teaching and community hospitals, government organizations and research settings.



Jenna Dias
Administrative Assistant

Jenna is a 2009 graduate of Western University with a BA in Political Science and a Diploma in Human Resources Management from Sault College. Jenna is looking forward to using her experience and skillset to support the OSI Research Centre Team.



Kate St. Cyr, MSc, PhD Candidate
Research Associate

Kate has been with St. Joseph's OSI Clinic team since 2009, working as a Researcher and Program Evaluation Support Officer. After completing a BA in Anthropology at McMaster University and an MSc in Public and Population Health in 2008 at Simon Fraser University, she relocated from BC to London, ON, where she found work with the Middlesex London Health Unit and, ultimately, the OSI Clinic at the Parkwood Institute. Once the MacDonald Franklin Research Centre was opened in 2018, Kate migrated from the OSI Clinic to begin her role as a Research Associate with the Research Centre. In her current role, Kate is involved in all stages of the research process, from the development of research studies to data analysis to writing and the dissemination of final products. Kate's research interests include treatment outcomes and determinants of health, particularly as they relate to military personnel and Veterans; and vicarious trauma.



Callista Forchuk, MSc
Research Assistant

Callista Forchuk has been working at the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre at Parkwood Institute since 2018. She holds a BA in psychology, and MSc in Personality and Measurement from Western University. Callista has published on the relation between PTSD and depression comorbidity with quality of life, and the relations between PTSD symptoms and sexual dysfunction. Currently, Callista is involved in research examining the longitudinal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Veteran and spouse well-being, and on moral distress in health care workers, as well as research examining the role of confidentiality in mental health help-seeking and disclosure of morally injurious events.



Dominic Gargala
Research Assistant and Data Scientist

Dominic joined MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre as a computer science intern in August 2020 and has since become a full-time employee. He graduated from Western University with degrees in Medical Science & Biology and Computer Science. With experience in web application development and a deep interest in data science, machine learning, and AI, Dominic applies his skills to enhance data collection and analysis at the centre, driving forward research with innovative technological solutions.



Julia Gervasio, MA, PhD Candidate
Research Assistant

Julia is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Psychology at Toronto Metropolitan University. She received her MA in Psychological Science from Toronto Metropolitan University and BSc. (Hons.) from the University of Toronto. Broadly, her research interests lie within biological psychology. Specifically, her current research involves understanding alterations in stress physiology as they relate to disordered eating behaviours, and oral contraceptive use. Other areas of research interest include the use of personalized pharmacotherapy interventions, individual resilience, and systematic review and meta-analysis methodologies.



Stephanie Houle, PhD
Research Associate

Stephanie is a clinical psychologist and researcher with both Veterans Affairs Canada and the MacDonald Franklin Operational Stress Injury Research Centre. Her research focuses on the psychological impact of traumatic and morally injurious experiences, with a keen interest in understanding how moral injury research can be applied to advance clinical practice for military personnel, Veterans and their Families. Dr. Houle's clinical specializations include the assessment and treatment of operational stress injuries (OSIs), as well as the treatment of mental health problems for individuals suffering from concurrent physical health conditions.



Ilyana Kocha
Research Assistant

Ilyana Kocha started as a Volunteer with the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre before joining the team as a Research Assistant. She holds a BA in Anthropology and Psychology from Western University, and a BPR in Public Relations from Humber College. She's interested in studying and promoting outreach and access to mental health services.



Tri Le
Research Assistant

Tri is a dedicated member of the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre, initially joined as a Volunteer in 2019 and later transitioned to the role of Research Assistant in 2020. As a Council Member at-large for the Research Data Management Community of Practice at Lawson Health Research Institute, Tri contributes to advancing research practices, both at the Centre and across Lawson. Holding a BHSc in Health Sciences from Western University and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Gerontology from Fanshawe College, Tri is passionate about research focused on the mental health and wellbeing of older adults. He actively supports the team in various projects related to the wellbeing of Veterans and Veteran families.



Vanessa Soares, MD
Research Assistant

Vanessa joined the team in February 2020. She completed her HBSc in Biology at the University of Toronto and her Medical Degree from the Medical University of the Americas in the Caribbean. Vanessa has spent most of her clinical experience focused on psychiatry in various hospitals in both the US and Canada. She previously worked at McMaster University through the Offord Centre as a Research Assistant in pediatric psychiatry.



William (Liam) Younger
Research Assistant

Liam has worked with the MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre since December 2022. Holding a Bachelor of Science with Honours from Acadia University, where he majored in Psychology and Biology, he is currently pursuing a Masters in Psychotherapy at McMaster University. Liam has a keen interest in a variety of topics within clinical psychology and neuroscience, and is dedicated to advancing our understanding and the effective application of innovative therapeutic approaches for trauma-related, mood, and concurrent disorders. Liam is particularly interested in the use of ACT both overall and for treating moral injury, as well as the domain of psychedelic-assisted therapies, especially psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy. Beyond his academic pursuits, Liam finds joy in hiking, cooking, disc golf, and music production.

AFFILIATED SCIENTISTS



Rachel Plouffe, MSc, PhD
Affiliated Scientist, Assistant Professor

Dr. Rachel Plouffe is currently an Affiliated Scientist with the Research Centre and a Lecturer (Assistant Professor) at the University of Dundee. Rachel obtained her MSc and PhD degrees in Psychology at Western University. Prior to her role as Affiliate Scientist and Lecturer, Rachel undertook a three-year postdoctoral position with MFOSIRC, where she conducted research examining associations between combat exposure and posttraumatic stress disorder in Canadian Armed Forces Veterans, and whether these relations were influenced by personality trait levels. Rachel's work at MFOSIRC also reflects the development and validation of measures designed to assess levels of moral injury and positive mental health in Veterans and health care workers.



Maya Roth, PhD, CPsych
Affiliated Scientist, Clinical Psychologist

Dr. Maya Roth is a Clinical Psychologist at the St. Joseph's OSI Clinic – Greater Toronto Site. She is also an Associate Member of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies at Ryerson University, and an Associate Scientist with the Lawson Health Research Institute. Dr. Roth is a passionate advocate for evidence-based treatment of military-related PTSD and OSIs. She has presented and published in this area, and has also provided evidence-based treatment for PTSD workshops to clinicians.



Sonya Wanklyn, PhD, CPsych
Affiliated Scientist, Clinical Psychologist

Dr. Sonya Wanklyn is a Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Lead at the St. Joseph's Operational Stress Injury Clinic – Greater Toronto Site. She is also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Psychology at Western University, and an Assistant Scientist with the Lawson Health Research Institute. Dr. Wanklyn's research is primarily focused on the etiology of co-occurring mental health conditions subsequent to traumatic events, and the psychosocial risk and resilience factors for comorbid psychopathology, with a particular focus on understanding and treating PTSD and substance use disorders.



Thomas Wasiuta, MD
Research Fellow, Psychiatrist

Dr. Wasiuta is a resident psychiatrist with the Schulich School of Medicine. He has an undergraduate degree in neuroscience from the University of Toronto and completed his medical doctorate training at Western University. He has experience working with first responders, Veterans, and Canadian Armed Forces members with PTSD and other OSIs. Dr. Wasiuta has a research interest in studying novel therapeutic approaches to PTSD treatment. He continues his training with the Schulich Psychiatry program in London, Ontario.

VISITING SCHOLARS



Bethany Easterbrook, MSc, PhD Candidate
Clinical Psychology PhD Candidate and Visiting Scholar

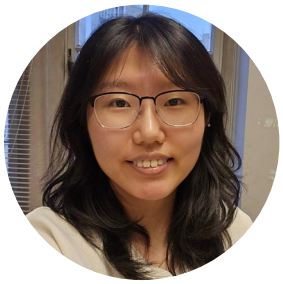
Bethany Easterbrook is a PhD Candidate in McMaster University's Clinical Psychology program, supervised by Dr. Margaret McKinnon. She obtained her undergraduate degree in Kinesiology from University of Toronto, and a Master's degree in Health Research Methodology from McMaster University. Bethany has previous research experience in a variety of clinical settings, with her current research focusing on the development of moral injury and PTSD in military members, Veterans, and public safety personnel. In addition to her research interests, she has experience treating adults and adolescents with various trauma, anxiety, mood, and emotion regulation difficulties.



Deanna Davis (Walker), PhD

Psychology PhD Candidate and Visiting Scholar

Dr. Davis (Walker) graduated with a Doctoral Degree in Clinical Science and Psychopathology at Western University, and completed her Clinical Residency at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Care Centre in Ottawa, Ontario. Her doctoral research explored the assessment of impostor phenomenon and its relation to psychological distress and occupational functioning. Her research interests at the OSI Research Centre are focused on the intersection between psychological trauma and well-being, including factors impacting mental health outcomes and health care access for Veterans and Military members. In addition to her research interests, she has extensive experience in providing psychological services within trauma-focused populations, including working with first responders, Veterans, and trauma-related disorders.



Jieun Jung, MSc Student

Visiting Scholar

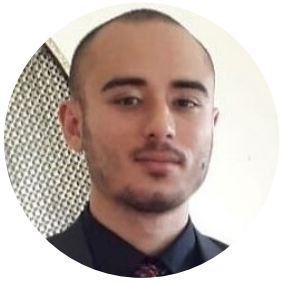
Jieun is starting her first year as a Masters Student in the Neuroscience Program at Western University. She completed her Bachelors Degree in Science with an Honours Specialization in Neuroscience from Western as well and currently volunteers with recreational therapists at Mount Hope. Jieun is interested in many areas of research spanning from the neural systems of audiovisual/multisensory perception to mental health and extraordinary development. She hopes to be able to better understand the circuitry underlying these phenomena and through her research, she wishes to positively impact and add to the growing field of knowledge.



Evgenia (Jane) Milman, PhD

Clinical Psychologist and Visiting Scholar

Dr. Evgenia (Jane) Milman, PhD, is a postdoctoral fellow with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council in the Psychology Department at Western University. Dr. Milman publishes research on grief-related mental health complications and examines how making meaning of difficult life experiences influences mental health following grief, trauma and other stressful events. Most recently, Dr. Milman developed the Handbook of Grief Therapies for Sage Publications. Dr. Milman also directs continuing education webinar programing for grief clinicians at the Association for Death Education and Counseling and she is a Licensed Psychologist in private practice.



Pouria Saffaran, MA Student

Visiting Scholar

Pouria is a 2nd year MA student in Developmental Psychology at the University of Toronto (OISE). He completed his undergraduate degree in Psychology and Neuroscience from the University of Toronto, where he first pursued research in the field of stress and trauma. Continuing this research, he now focuses on the manifestation of moral injury in Veterans and first responders with PTSD.

Volunteers and Undergraduate Trainees

Priyonto Saha
Neha Raina
Madelena Costa
Evelyn MacDonald
Sana Munir
Akshitha Ereddy
Hung Nguyen
Sierra Crocker
Janissha Pushpaharan
Ara Fitzpatrick
Rishika Bhogadi
Valerie Kulakouski
Marie Michelle Dallaire
David Diao

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge **Sherry Frizzell** (Director of Veteran Care), **Bev van der Heide** (Coordinator of London OSI Clinic), and **Omer Vandevyvere** (Coordinator of Greater Toronto Area OSI Satellite Clinic) for their support of research, and the ongoing commitment and contribution of OSI Clinic staff and collaborators.

Thank you to the many Veterans, Veteran family members, and other members of the public who have participated in our research initiatives. Your altruistic contribution is greatly appreciated.

Departures

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of the following team members and trainees who have left the Research Centre in 2023. We wish you the best in your future research and clinical endeavours.

Danny Du, Research Associate and Data Scientist
Hudson Howlett, Research Assistant and Data Scientist
Eliza Khan, Research Assistant
Isaac Baker, Research Assistant and Data Scientist
Rose Gao, Research Assistant and Data Scientist
Kelly Schluter, Administrative Assistant
Kevin Hansen, Postdoctoral Associate
Zahra Shirazi, Research Associate and Data Scientist

Advisory Council

CURRENT MEMBERS



Catherine Baillie Abidi, PhD

Director of Research & Learning, Dallaire Institute
Adjunct Professor, Department of International Development Studies, Dalhousie University
Adjunct Professor, Department of International Development Studies, Saint Mary's University

Dr. Catherine Baillie Abidi joined Dalhousie University's Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security in 2018 and has extensive experience researching, publishing and teaching in the areas of peace and conflict, children affected by armed conflict, and international humanitarian law. As the Director of Research & Learning, Catherine oversees multiple research projects exploring the interconnections between peacekeeping, gender, child protection and moral injury, with the primary focus of protecting children affected by conflict and the security sector actors who engage with them. Catherine is also an Adjunct Professor in the Departments of International Development Studies at both Dalhousie and Saint Mary's University.



Rod Balsom, PhD

Clinical Lead, St. Joseph's OSI Clinic

Dr. Balsom obtained his PhD in clinical psychology from Western University. He is registered with specialization in Adult Clinical, Behavioural Medicine and Forensic Psychology. Over his career, he has worked in the Crisis Intervention and Forensic area. Currently, he is Clinical Lead of the OSI Clinic at Parkwood Hospital site of St. Joseph's Health Centre in London, Ontario. As part of a multi-disciplinary team, he specializes in the treatment of individuals and their families suffering from PTSD and/or other difficulties arising from military service. Current research interests include the impact of moral injury on recovery from PTSD and the relationship between personality and the onset of, and recovery from, PTSD in military and first-responder populations.



Colette Currin, CCAC

National Director, Military, Veterans and First Responders for the Edgewood Health Network

Colette Currin is the National Director of Military, Veterans and First Responders for the Edgewood Health Network, Canada's largest provider of Mental Health, Addiction and Trauma treatment. Colette's focus is on building relations and facilitating dialogue regarding the specific challenges and treatment needs of these segments by working in partnership with healthcare professionals and referents to support clients struggling with mood, anxiety, trauma, addiction and concurrent disorders. Colette is also a Certified Mental Health and Addiction Counsellor working as a clinician at Bellwood Health Services in Toronto delivering inpatient, outpatient, family and online programs and counselling services. A determined advocate for change at the individual, family and social level, Colette believes that recovery is a return to the true potential inherent in each and every one of us. As a nature lover and outdoor enthusiast, Colette hopes to one day to complete the Bruce Trail together with her partner Bill and their dog Finn.



Mark Daley, PhD

Vice-President, Research at the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR)
Faculty member, Vector Institute
Chief AI Officer, Western University
Professor, Departments of Computer Science; Biology; Epidemiology & Biostatistics; Electrical & Computer Engineering; Mathematics; and Statistics & Actuarial Science, Western University

Mark Daley is the Vice-President, Research at the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR) and a Professor in six departments at Western University (Computer Science; Biology; Epidemiology & Biostatistics; Electrical & Computer Engineering; Mathematics; and Statistics & Actuarial Science). He is also appointed as a faculty affiliate at The Vector Institute for Artificial Intelligence and an associate scientist at the Lawson Health Research Institute. Daley chairs the board of Compute Ontario and serves on the Ontario Research Fund Advisory Board and the board of directors of IC/ES. He is also co-founder of CanCOVID, an expert network of Canadian COVID-19 researchers, clinical collaborators, and health-care professionals. He was Associate Vice-President (Research) of Western University from 2015–2019 and in 2019 was appointed Western University's Special Advisor to the President on Data Strategy.



Marco Di Cola

Director, Harbour Grace Holdings Inc

With a passion for business, politics and history Marco is graduate of the University of Western Ontario and holds an Honours B.A. As someone who thrives on challenges, Marco has welcomed several career changes over the past 25 years that have pushed him outside of his comfort zone and challenged him to reinvent himself. Marco began his career in the banking sector and held multiple Sales and Service roles for Canada Trust and later TD Canada Trust (TSX:TD), where he was recognized with Top Performance awards. While working with TD Canada Trust, he coached and mentored dozens of professionals who have gone on to lead outstanding careers and have reached executive level positions. Marco's outstanding track record in banking opened the door in the mid-2000's to an exciting career in the technology industry. He enthusiastically accepted the challenge of working for Phoenix-Interactive Design Inc., a progressive software company in London, Ontario who was making a big push on a global scale in self-service software solutions for the banking industry. A few years after accepting a role as Sales & Account Manager for some of the world's leading banks, he was promoted to Vice President, Global Software Business Development. At Phoenix, who was later acquired by Diebold Nixdorf (NYSE: DBD), Marco was responsible for acquiring some of their largest bank clients and was recognized with Outstanding Achievement Awards. A few years after his mentor Kyle MacDonald sold Phoenix to Diebold Nixdorf, he accepted his greatest and most fulfilling challenge yet in her newest endeavour, Harbour Grace Holdings Inc. As Director of Programs & Partnerships, Marco works with the executive management team and has multiple responsibilities including IT services, charter yacht sales management, and pursuing the philanthropic goals of the corporation's owners which includes building partnerships with leading charitable organizations such as the David Foster Foundation, the St. Joseph's Foundation and academic



Bryan G. Garber, MSM, CD, MD, FRCS(C), MSc

Head, Research and Analysis Section, Directorate of Mental Health, Canadian Forces Health Services

Adjunct Professor, School of Epidemiology and Community Medicine, University of Ottawa

Bryan G. Garber, MSM, CD., MD, FRCS(C), MSc joined the Canadian Forces Health Services Group in 2005 and is currently Head of the Integrated Mental Health Research and Analysis Section in the Directorate of Mental Health, leading a team of researchers engaged in studying the effectiveness and efficiency of the Canadian Armed Forces clinical mental health programs and services. He is an adjunct professor with the School of Epidemiology and Community Medicine, University of Ottawa and retired as a Reserve Medical officer with the Canadian Armed Forces in December 2019 following twelve years of loyal service that included serving with The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa.



LCol (Retd) Stéphane Grenier

Mental Health Innovator

When it comes to mental health, Stéphane Grenier walks the talk. He was recently appointed to the Order of Canada and awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree by the University of Guelph and Humber College for his contributions to the field of workplace mental health. Stéphane's riveting keynotes are not only thought-provoking, but also lead to tangible action and sustainable change for those leaders who are prepared to rethink how they support their people. His autobiography, After the War: Surviving PTSD and Changing Mental Health Culture, tells his story from the day he landed in the midst of the Rwandan genocide, through his journey of changing mental health culture in the Canadian military, developing national Guidelines for Peer Support with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, all the way to creating Mental Health Innovations (MHI); a consultancy that leads innovative and sustainable change in organizations to enhance the mental health of their people. Today, he and his business partners develop non-clinical mental health interventions as a complement to traditional clinical care for private and public sector organizations, as well as for provincial health care systems. Stéphane's vision is a world where people no longer face barriers to good mental health.



LCol (Retd) Alexandra Heber, MD, FRCPC, CCPE

Chief Psychiatrist, Veterans Affairs Canada

She has over 30 years of experience in mental health, first as a nurse, then as a psychiatrist. After a decade in Toronto coordinating the Women's Program in the Clinic for HIV-Related Concerns at Mount Sinai Hospital, and working on an Assertive Community Treatment Team, Dr. Heber started working as a civilian psychiatrist for the Canadian Forces in 2003, then enrolled in the military in 2006. She deployed to Afghanistan as the Psychiatrist in Charge of the Canadian Forces Mental Health Services for Task Force Afghanistan in 2009. After retiring from the military, she accepted the position of inaugural Chief of Psychiatry for Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), where she became the VAC lead author on the 2017 CAF-VAC Joint Suicide Prevention Strategy. She has published and presented nationally and internationally on PTSD in the military and veteran population, and has designed two online courses on PTSD for health care professionals. Her current research interests include: suicide prevention, the military-civilian transition experience, effects of cannabis on mental health, outcome measurement in mental health treatment, and the effects of military sexual trauma.



Fardous Hosseiny

CEO, Atlas Institute for Veterans and Families

Fardous Hosseiny is the President and CEO at the Atlas Institute for Veterans and Families (formerly known as the Centre of Excellence on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Related Mental Health Conditions) located at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre in Ottawa. Before coming to the Atlas Institute, Fardous was most recently the interim National Chief Executive Officer and the National Director of Research and Public Policy, at the Canadian Mental Health Association. His research focuses on strategic policy issues related to mental health system transformation, parity legislation, substance use and addiction and mental health for newcomers and underrepresented groups. Fardous is also a frequent commentator on these issues for Global News, CBC, CTV News, The Globe and Mail, The Toronto Star, among others. Fardous was a part of the Canadian delegation to the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly and played a role in the development of the first ever United Nations event dedicated to mental health. Fardous also serves on many national and international committees, including as an executive advisor on the Global Alliance for Mental Health Advocates (GAMHA) and past co-chair for the Canadian Alliance for Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) and Canadians for Equitable Access to Depression Medication (CEADM).



Col (Retd) Rakesh Jetly, MD, FRCPC

Former Chief Psychiatrist, Canadian Armed Forces

Dr. Rakesh Jetly is the former chief psychiatrist for the Canadian Armed Forces. In addition, he has been selected as the inaugural chair in military mental health at the IMHR (Institute for Mental Health Research). He began his military career as a general duty medical officer and flight surgeon and deployed to the middle east and Rwanda. After his post graduate training at the University of Toronto in psychiatry he deployed twice to Kandahar, Afghanistan. Col (Retd) Jetly has an interest in operational mental health with a focus on PTSD and has worked within Canada and with allies (NATO) to advance the field. Occupational and workplace mental health are also specific areas of interest. Research and academic interests are varied and include suicide prevention, nabilone as a treatment for PTSD-related nightmares, neurofeedback and pharmacogenomics. Current international collaborations include a lecture series on Morality and Mental Health as well as chairing Research Task Groups (RTG) Leveraging Technology in Mental Health and Personalized Medicine.



Lisa King, MSc

Program Evaluation and Research Officer, St. Joseph's OSI Clinic, Parkwood Institute

Lisa King has worked as a Researcher/Program Evaluation and Support Officer (PESO) at St. Joseph's OSI Clinic since 2014. She holds a B.A. in Psychology and a MSc in Neuroscience from the University of Western Ontario. Her published research primarily examines how factors such as gender, sleep disturbance, social support, deployment experiences, and comorbidity relate to PTSD, depression, and anxiety among military personnel and Veterans. She's currently interested in better understanding the breadth of trauma experienced by non-deployed Veterans, and the effectiveness of novel group therapies for treating military-related mental health conditions.



Laryssa Lamrock

Family Peer Support Coordinator, Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS) Program

Laryssa Lamrock is the Strategic Advisor, Families, for the Centre of Excellence on PTSD and also has extensive experience in the field of family peer support with OSIs, such as anxiety, PTSD and depression. She has had numerous speaking engagements involving mental health awareness specific to OSIs, peer support and her lived personal experiences. A few of the most noteworthy have been the National Conference on PTSD, an appearance before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs and the Healing the Family Forum at the Canadian Embassy in Washington D.C. She has also participated on a number of Committees including the National DND-VAC-RCMP Mental Health Advisory Committee and the National OSI Family Ad Hoc working group. Laryssa strongly believes in the importance of education and support for families of military members, Veterans and first responders living with OSI. Along with her professional experiences, Laryssa is truly a military family member as she is the daughter, spouse and mother of formerly or currently serving Canadian Armed Forces members. Her personal experiences in supporting a loved one with OSI and her own journey with depression drives her passion for representing and advocating for families of those with OSI in hopes of helping make their journey a little easier.



Polliann Maher

Family Peer Support Coordinator, Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS) Program

Polliann Maher is a Family Peer Support Coordinator with OSISS. She started volunteering with the program in 2009 and was employed with the program since 2011. Polliann took part in the Vocational Rehabilitation program through Veterans Affairs Canada in 2009 and went back to school to successfully complete her Community Service worker diploma. She has been part of the development and facilitation of the Psycho-education workshops for Family members in collaboration with the OSI Clinic at Parkwood Hospital. The research from these workshops was presented in a poster presentation at CIMVHR in 2018 in collaboration with the staff from the OSI Clinic. Polliann is passionate about promoting Mental Well-being within the Military and Veteran community and was part of the Military Family Resource Centre Board of Directors for 6 years. Polliann is the spouse of a retired Veteran that was has been diagnosed with PTSD since 1999, mother to two adult sons and brings several years of lived experience as a caregiver, spouse, mother and peer support coordinator.



Candice M. Monson, PhD

Professor, Ryerson University
Director of Clinical Training at Ryerson University

Candice M. Monson, Ph.D., is a Professor of Psychology at Ryerson University in Toronto, ON. Dr. Monson is one of the foremost experts on traumatic stress and the use of individual and conjoint therapies to treat PTSD. She has published extensively on the development, evaluation, and dissemination of PTSD treatments more generally. She has been funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, U.S. National Institute of Mental Health, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Defense, and the Canadian Institutes of Health for her research on interpersonal factors in traumatization and individual- and conjoint-based interventions for PTSD. Recognizing her distinguished contributions as a clinical psychologist and educator, she is a Fellow of both the American and Canadian Psychological Associations, a Beck Institute Scholar, received the Canadian Psychological Association Trauma Psychologist of the Year Award in 2013, was named the Outstanding Mentor by the International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies in 2014, and was inducted into the Royal Society of Canada in 2016. She has co-authored 7 books, including Cognitive Processing Therapy: A Comprehensive Manual and Cognitive-Behavioural Conjoint Therapy for PTSD, and has published over 150 publications. Dr. Monson is well-known for her efforts in training clinicians in evidence-based assessments and interventions for PTSD.



David Pedlar, PhD

Scientific Director, Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR)

Dr. David Pedlar is the scientific director of the Canadian Institute of Military and Veteran Health Research and professor in the School of Rehabilitation Therapy at Queens University. He has dedicated his career to advancing the care and well being of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Veterans. After working as a clinician, he spent fifteen years as the national director of research for Veterans Affairs Canada. He has held the positions of adjunct professor at the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Prince Edward Island and the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University. In 2015, he received his second Fulbright Scholar Award as the visiting research chair in military social work at the University of Southern California where he continues as an international affiliated faculty at the Center for Innovation and Research on Veterans & Military Families. For his work in military and Veteran health, Dr. Pedlar has received a number of honours and awards. His research interests include improving military to civilian transition and enhancing Veteran well-being in the life after military service.



Shawn Rhind, PhD

Defence Scientist, Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC)
Associate Professor, University of Toronto

Dr. Shawn Rhind earned his doctorate in Immunobiology from the University of Toronto. He completed an NSERC Postdoctoral Fellowship with the Defence & Civil Institute of Environmental Medicine (DCIEM) and US Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine (USARIEM), examining biomolecular interactions between neuro-endocrine-immune systems under severe physiological stress and environmental extremes and their impact on health and performance. Today, Dr. Rhind is a senior Defense Scientist in the military Operational Health Group at DRDC Toronto and an Associate Professor at the University of Toronto, where he leads an integrative – molecular to systemic – translational research team. His research spans basic laboratory science to human clinical trials, and is currently focused on elucidating the biological basis and therapeutic interventions for combat-related psychological and physical trauma, including PTSD and battlefield care after traumatic shock and brain injury.



Maya Roth, CPsych

Psychologist, St. Joseph's OSI Clinic, Greater Toronto Site
Affiliated Scientist, MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre
Associate Member of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies, Ryerson University
Associate Scientist, Lawson Health Research Institute

Dr. Maya Roth is a Clinical Psychologist at the St. Joseph's OSI Clinic – Greater Toronto Site. She is also an Associate Member of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies at Ryerson University, and an Associate Scientist with the Lawson Health Research Institute. Dr. Roth is a passionate advocate for evidence-based treatment of military-related PTSD and OSIs. She has presented and published in this area, and has also provided evidence-based treatment for PTSD workshops to clinicians.



LCol Andrea Tuka, CD, MD, FRCPC

Chief Psychiatrist, Canadian Armed Forces
Clinical Assistant Professor, University of British Columbia

LCol Tuka graduated from Medical School in Hungary. She enrolled into the Canadian Armed Forces in 2000. After completing the Family Practice Residency Program at University of British Columbia, she served as a General Duty Medical Officer in Edmonton. During that time, she was deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan. Following that, she completed the Psychiatry Postgraduate Program at University of British Columbia in 2009. She was deployed to Kandahar Airfield as a Military Psychiatrist in 2010. She has been serving as a Chief Psychiatrist of the Canadian Armed Forces and as Clinical Leader for the Medical Units in British Columbia.



Sonya Wanklyn, PhD, CPsych

Psychologist, St. Joseph's OSI Clinic, Greater Toronto Site
Affiliated Scientist, MacDonald Franklin OSI Research Centre
Allied Scientist, Lawson Health Research Institute

Dr. Sonya Wanklyn is a Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Lead at the St. Joseph's Operational Stress Injury Clinic – Greater Toronto Site. She is also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Psychology at Western University, and an Assistant Scientist with the Lawson Health Research Institute. Dr. Wanklyn's research is primarily focused on the etiology of co-occurring mental health conditions subsequent to traumatic events, and the psychosocial risk and resilience factors for comorbid psychopathology, with a particular focus on understanding and treating PTSD and substance use disorders.

Former Members

Ken Balderson, MD, CM, FRCPC*	Psychiatrist, St. Joseph's OSI Clinic, Greater Toronto Site
Christine Basnett, MSW, RSW	Clinical Social Worker, St. Joseph's OSI Clinic, Parkwood Institute
Jason Carr, PhD	Psychologist, St. Joseph's OSI Clinic, Parkwood Institute
Maj Gen (Retd) Glynne Hines*	Former Director of Consultation, Command and Control, NATO, Brussels
Ruth Lanius, MD, PhD	Psychiatrist, Western University
Michelle Marlborough, MD, FRCPC	Psychiatrist, St. Joseph's OSI Clinic, Parkwood Institute
Margaret McKinnon, PhD. CPsych	Associate Chair of Research, Psychiatry, McMaster University
LCdr (Retd) Ken Osborne*	Director, Licensing and Accreditation, Law Society of Ontario
Patrick Smith, PhD	Former CEO, Atlas Institute
Sgt (Retd) Edith St-Jean, CD	Coordinator, OSI Social Support (OSISS) Program

**Change occurred in 2023*



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