



# The Government of Canada is dedicated to ensuring Veterans and their families have the mental health support they need, when they need it.



Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) has worked with the Department of National Defence (DND) over the past four years to open 24 **integrated personnel support centres** on Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) bases and wings. More than 100 Veterans Affairs employees

are working alongside their counterparts at National Defence to provide one-stop access to care and support to Veterans and still-serving members. These centres allow front-line staff from VAC and DND to work side by side to develop personalized care plans to help CAF members and their families with injuries and illnesses to make a successful transition to civilian life.

The centres were founded on the principle that early intervention makes a difference. VAC provides **transition interviews** to releasing members and their families up to six months prior to their release from the Canadian Armed Forces to minimize gaps in service delivery and to ensure a smooth transition. The interviews consist of a screening process to identify potential risks and/or barriers to successful re-establishment into civilian life. Additionally, the interviews determine the type and level of support that the member and his/her family may require from VAC and/or other community support systems.



For Veterans with complex needs, VAC **case management** services enable them and their families to achieve mutually agreed-upon goals. The VAC case manager works with Veterans and their families to do an assessment of needs, develops a plan to address them and provides access to VAC services, benefits and programs as well as community resources.

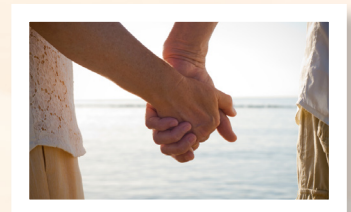
For Veterans with complex mental health needs, **clinical care managers** provide intensive case management services to help them become re-connected to their communities and support systems, and to help them access programs and services that are essential to their mental health.

Veterans Affairs Canada also has staff across the country who provide case management to Veterans and their families with complex needs to ensure they get **timely access to appropriate services** in order to optimize their independence and quality of life.



VAC has a well-established national network of more than 4,000 **mental health professionals** including psychologists, social workers and mental health nurses registered to deliver mental health services to Veterans with PTSD and other operational stress injuries (OSIs).

A VAC-DND joint network of 17 **operational stress injury clinics** is in place, including ten specialized clinics established by VAC. This includes one VAC residential treatment clinic in Ste. Anne's Hospital, in Quebec. VAC also has arrangements with seven **specialized treatment centres/facilities** for the provision of intensive in-patient care and treatment to Veterans who have co-existing OSI and substance abuse issues. Tele-mental health capacity is in place in every VAC clinic for those living in rural areas.





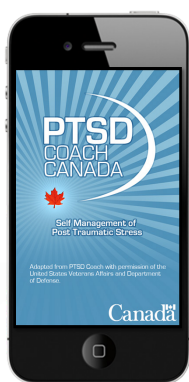
The VAC-DND **Operational Stress Injury Social Support** (OSISS) Program offers social support for Veterans, CAF personnel and their families who have been impacted by an OSI with trained peer support and family peer support coordinators.

The continuum of support is complemented by the **New Veterans Charter** which has significantly enhanced the Department's capacity to support eligible Veterans living with mental health conditions and their families by providing access to:




- medical, psychosocial and vocational rehabilitation services;
- financial and health care benefits;
- disability awards; and
- career transition services.

VAC Assistance Service is a **24-hour toll-free help line** that provides Veterans and their families with short-term professional counselling and referral services, including support for mental and emotional health concerns.



**PTSD Coach Canada**, a VAC mobile application developed in partnership with DND and the Canadian Mental Health Association, is available for download free-of-charge through the iTunes store and the Android Market. PTSD Coach Canada provides users with access to information about PTSD, a self-assessment for PTSD symptoms, information about professional health care available and where to find support. It includes tools that can help users manage their PTSD symptoms and the stresses of their daily lives. This application was adapted from PTSD Coach, developed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Department of Defense.

 **Help is only a phone call away**

Any Veteran who feels he or she may have an operational stress injury such as PTSD should contact Veterans Affairs Canada.

**Help Contacts:**

Information on accessing VAC's OSI clinics and other benefits can be obtained by calling **1-866-522-2122**.

The Veterans Affairs Canada Assistance Service, at **1-800-268-7708** (or TDD **1-800-567-5803**), provides free counselling to Veterans and their families and can be accessed 24 hours a day.

Confidential peer support (peer, family, and bereavement support) is available at **1-800-883-6094**.



**OSI Connect** is a mobile application developed by the Royal Ottawa OSI Clinic with the support of VAC. It is available for download free-of-charge through the iTunes store and the Android Market. This regularly updated, information rich, interactive mobile application offers

assessments, videos and clear information for Veterans and others on the subject of OSIs, including how to get an OSI clinic appointment.

