



THE NEW VETERANS CHARTER

For CF Veterans and their Families



Operational Stress Injury

Services and Supports



Operational Stress Injury Services and Supports

Do you have an operational stress injury (OSI) such as depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) resulting from your military service? If you do, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) has services and supports that can help you and your family. Veterans Affairs Canada provides:

Support on Military Bases

The **Veterans Affairs Canada transition interview** is included in the Department of National Defence's release process and members are required to see a Veterans Affairs Canada area counsellor prior to their release. During the transition interview, you will receive information about:

- the full range of VAC services, benefits and programs;
- help in developing a plan to organize your transition from military to civilian life;
- health care information; and
- contact numbers for Veterans Affairs Canada and other government, community and local service providers who may be able to help you during or after your release.

Telephone Support/Referral to Community Support

The **Veterans Affairs Canada Assistance Service** provides Veterans and their families with access to short-term professional counselling services. If you need urgent support, face-to-face counselling can also be arranged with a professional counsellor in your community. You can call the VAC Assistance Service toll free, 24 hours a day at **1-800-268-7708**.

Peer Support

The **Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS)** program is a Veterans Affairs Canada/Department of National Defence peer support network which helps those living with operational stress injuries as a direct result of military service. This program is available to Canadian Forces (CF) members, Veterans, and their family members. Peer and family support coordinators

are located at most Veterans Affairs Canada offices across the country. For confidential peer support, you can call, toll free, at **1-800-883-6094** or visit the OSISS Web site at www.osiss.ca.

Pastoral Support

The **Pastoral Outreach Program** provides spiritual and pastoral care. CF members, Veterans and families in need can be connected with a member of the clergy. For more information on the Pastoral Outreach Program you can call, toll free, **1-800-883-6094**.

OSI Clinic Network

Veterans Affairs Canada has Operational Stress Injury clinics to help Veterans, members of the CF and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and their families, recover from an operational stress injury.

The OSI clinics have teams of mental health professionals, including psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses and clinical social workers, who provide standardized assessment, treatment, prevention and support services.

To receive services at an OSI clinic, you must be referred by a medical doctor from VAC, a military base or the RCMP. For a referral:

- Veterans and their families can call Veterans Affairs Canada toll free at **1-866-522-2122**;
- Still-serving CF members can contact their Base Medical Officer; and
- RCMP personnel can contact an RCMP medical doctor.

Veterans Affairs Canada also has **registered community health professionals** who provide care. They can provide you with support in your own community.

The New Veterans Charter

The Government of Canada has passed the *Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act*. Many people know this Act as the New Veterans Charter. It is the most sweeping change to occur to Veterans' benefits in Canada in more than

half a century. The New Veterans Charter provides a package of "wellness" programs and services including:

Case Management: Veterans Affairs Canada will work one-on-one with you and your family to determine your needs. Your VAC area counsellor will help you access the services and programs you need to make sure programs are coordinated and improve the quality of your life.

Rehabilitation: The Rehabilitation Program will help you adjust to civilian life. It includes:

- **medical rehabilitation:** health experts will work with you to stabilize your health and make it easier for you to cope with your OSI or any other health problems.
- **psycho-social rehabilitation:** can help you and your family adapt to living with an OSI or other health problems.
- **vocational rehabilitation:** can help you develop the skills needed to find a civilian job.

Financial Benefits:

- Monthly financial support is available while you take part in the Rehabilitation Program.
- If you successfully complete the Rehabilitation Program and are capable of working but have not yet been successful in finding work, you may be able to receive monthly income support, if you meet the eligibility requirements.
- If you can't work after completing the Rehabilitation Program, you may continue to receive monthly financial support until you reach age 65.
- CF Veterans who are the most seriously disabled may qualify for a Permanent Impairment Allowance.
- You may also qualify for a Supplementary Retirement Benefit from Veterans Affairs Canada to make up for the lost opportunity to contribute to a retirement fund.

Health Care: Veterans Affairs Canada provides access to group health insurance to qualified CF Veterans and their families.

Disability Award: You may qualify for a lump sum disability award if you have a disability that is the result of military service and the diagnosis of the disorder is made by a qualified health professional.

Under the New Veterans Charter, it's quicker and easier to get services as you do not need to have a disability pension to get treatment for an OSI.

Need to Know More?

To learn more about the services and benefits now available through Veterans Affairs Canada please call **1-866-522-2122**. You can also visit the VAC Web site at www.vac-acc.gc.ca or e-mail us at information@vac-acc.gc.ca.

This publication is available upon request in other formats.

Revised February 2008

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Cat. No.: V32-170/2006 ISBN: 0-662-69641-7

Printed in Canada