

# CIMVHR FEBRUARY 2015 • ISSUE 10



Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research • Newsletter

### MVHR Forum 2014 Highlights

Forum 2014 was held in Toronto, ON and was extremely successful. During the Scientific Poster opening reception, Forum attendees had the honour of listening to an inspirational speech from CBC's Rex Murphy, host of Cross Country Check Up. Rex spoke about the importance of serving those who serve us through evidence-informed practices, policies and programs.

Forum 2014 hosted many remarkable and memorable keynote speakers such as General Tom Lawson, Chief of the Defence Staff, who discussed how removing stigma around mental health is critical to developing resilience.



Dr. Stéphanie Bélanger, The Hounourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell and Dr. Alice Aiken

Other Forum keynotes included, in chronological order of presentation, Françoise Mathieu, Director of Compassion Fatigue Solutions Inc.; Dr. Mark Zamorski, Forum 2013 Banting Award Winner; Dr. Terence M. Keane, from the National Center for PTSD; and The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

Each year at Forum, attendees have the privilege of finding out the winners of two very prestigious scholarships offered through CIMVHR. This year, Wounded Warriors Canada announced that Celina Shirazipour, from Queen's University, was the winner of the Wounded Warriors Doctoral Scholarship in Military and Veteran Health Research, while The Royal Canadian Legion announced former Reservist Brigitte Phinney, from Carleton University, as the winner of the Royal Canadian Legion Masters Scholarship in Veteran Health Research. Good luck to both recipients, we look forward to seeing your research at future Forums.

The Forum 2014 delegation had the opportunity to see over 50 poster presentations and listen to over 115 podium presentations that touched on six distinctive themes relating to mental health and rehabilitation; physical health and rehabilitation; social health and wellbeing; occupational health; novel health technologies; and, transitioning from military to civilian life.

CIMVHR would like to take the opportunity to recognize all of the Forum 2014 sponsors. Because of their support we were able to ensure yet another successful Forum. A special thank you goes out to Queen's University, Royal Military College of Canada, Canadian Forces Health Service Group, Veterans Affairs Canada, True Patriot Love Foundation, Wounded Warriors Canada, The War Amps, Calian Health, Proximify, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, University of Alberta, Canadian Medical Association, Homewood Health Centre, Bellwood Health Services, Sunshine Coast Health Centre, Motek Medical, The Royal Canadian Legion, Medavie Blue Cross, University of Laval, University of Regina, York University, Canadian Physiotherapy Association, Canadian Chiropractic Association, OthoCanada, Canadian Institutes of Health Research, and Esprit de Corps Magazine. We are truly grateful for all of your support.

# Message from the Directors

The Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR) had an outstanding 2014. We have now grown to 36 university members from across the country; we completed our third webinar on *Issues in the Health of Military Personnel, Veterans and their Families*; we facilitated an additional webinar on Military Families hosted by MSVU; and we held our 5th annual Military and Veteran Health Research Forum (Forum 2014) where we hosted over 500 engaged participants who had the opportunity to share the latest research and practices.

In this issue we will provide you with an overview of our highly successful Forum 2014 and offer highlights on the 2014 winner of the Major Sir Frederick Banting Award. Thank you all for your continuous support and we look forward to working with all of you in 2015.

Alice B. Aiken, CD, PhD, *Director* and Stéphanie A.H. Bélanger, PhD, *Associate Director* 

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The first edition of the Journal of Military, Veteran, and Family Health Research (JMVFH) will be launched this month. Visit http://jmvfh.utpjournals.com for more information and details on how you can submit your research for future issues.

Forum 2015 will be held in Quebec City on November 23-25, 2015. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for Forum updates.



Call for abstract submissions will open March 2, 2015.

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### Dr. Steven Fischer – Forum 2014 Major Sir Frederick Banting, MC, RCAMC Award for Military Health Research Winner

— By Rosie Hales, Queen's Communications

Each year at Forum one researcher is presented with the Major Sir Frederick Banting, MC, RCAMC Award for Military Health Research. The Banting award is presented to the Canadian whose research paper the Surgeon General determines to be of the greatest overall value to military health. It is adjudicated by the Surgeon General on the advice of a scientific advisory committee during CIMVHR's annual Forum. It is sponsored by True Patriot Love, a national foundation established by corporate and community leaders to raise funds for programs that support the health, well-being, and morale of Canadian Armed Forces members and their families. This year's award winner was Dr. Steven Fischer from Queen's University for



Dr. Steven Fischer

his research entitled Near Term Solution to Address Aircrew Neck Pain. Here is a look at his research:

For 70 per cent of CF-146 Griffon Helicopter aircrew in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), a helmet equipped with the necessary night vision goggles and battery pack can be a real pain in the neck. To help alleviate this pain for RCAF aircrew members, Steven Fischer and his research team from the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, at Queen's University, have designed a short-term solution in the form of a simple add-on to the back of the standard military helmet.

Currently, CF-146 Griffon Helicopter aircrew don a large helmet before takeoff. For night-flying, aircrew must also affix night vision goggles to the front of their helmet. Even though it's only an extra 1.8 kg, the added weight can cause significant neck pain for those flying the helicopter as it causes an increase in the muscular demand of their necks to hold their heads upright. Helmets can cause significant neck strain for the wearer, especially after night vision goggles and a battery pack are fixed to the front of a helmet.

"We've designed a device that can be added to the back of the helmet to help support the muscles in keeping head balanced when the extra weight is placed on the front of the helmet," says Dr. Fischer. "Our aim was to be able to reduce the strain on the neck to day flight levels at a minimum. While it's only a short term solution — a long term solution being a redesign to the entire helmet and night vision goggles system — we needed something practical and easy for pilots to use, that they could wear in the interim."

After in-lab trials with the device, wearers reported considerably less neck-related pain or fatigue. The team is now working on the device's ability to adjust/individualize the tension depending on the wearer.

Dr. Fischer will be a Keynote Speaker at Forum 2015.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Vanier Institute for the Family will be hosting the Families in Canada Conference on June 10 & 11, 2015. www.familiesincanada.ca

LCol Markus Besemann, the Canadian Armed Forces Chief of Rehabilitation, was awarded the esteemed Association of Military Surgeons of the United States Rehabilitation Award http://bit.ly/1vuLyTO



Mr. Rex Murphy addresses the Forum 2014 delegation at the opening reception

