



## Transition and the Family

The Transition and the Family working group will engage academic researchers, government scientists, policy makers, military and Veteran family service providers, and charitable agencies to:

- Describe the ways in which the field is evolving,
- Identify barriers and facilitators for collaboration, and
- Explore opportunities to create the conditions for successful and effective collaboration within and across sectors.

A panel of experts will describe the current landscape, followed by small group working sessions and large group discussion. The session aims to come up with the “next steps” in advancing collaboration within the field.

### Leads:

**Deborah A. Norris**, Associate Professor, Department of Family Studies and Gerontology Mount Saint Vincent University

**Alla Skomorovsky**, Defence Scientist, Personnel and Family Support , Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis

<b>Pre-Forum Sun 24 Sep (1400-1700 hrs)</b>		
<b>1400</b>	First Plenary (all participants)	Introduce themes and provide context - <b>60 min</b> A series of 10 min (max) presentations outlining developments in the area of research, policy, service provision, and family engagement finishing with an international perspective. (4 speakers, 10 min each with 10 mins for questions)
<b>1450</b>	Breakout Discussion Groups	Small group work focusing on benefits and opportunities of collaboration, what we could do and how we could do it better - <b>60 min</b>
<b>1700</b>	Second Plenary (all participants)	Presentation of breakout discussion group results and general discussion highlights using PowerPoint [at this stage presentations should represent all views; no need to reach consensus] - <b>60 min</b> Feedback to the whole group (10 mins max per group) - Feedback from the panel (10 mins) - Next steps (10 mins)
<b>Post-Forum Wed 27 Sep (1330 – 1630)</b>		
<b>1330</b>	Third Plenary (all participants)	Set stage for Post-Forum activities - <b>40 min</b> Summary of the pre-Forum discussions and conclusions
<b>1350</b>	Breakout Discussion Groups	Discuss what participants have learned during Forum 2017 and how they may have modified their views based on their Forum 2017 experience - <b>80 min</b>
<b>1520</b>	Fourth Plenary (all participants)	Modify Second Plenary PPT presentation to highlight reflection and changes resulting from Forum 2017 participation. Present recommendations for future research and/or collaboration; compiled results – <b>60 min</b>

## Context and Scope

Release from military service and transition to civilian life is a stressful time not only for the veterans – recent military members, but also for their families. All families experience some challenges in the process of military-to-civilian transition. Most families are able to cope well with the challenges using available administrative, family and community supports. However, some families may experience greater stress levels, experience additional challenges and be at risk for health problems related to stress. These latter families may require additional support. Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and CAF/ Department of National Defence (DND) have developed an extensive array of programs and services to assist CAF members and Veterans during this stressful transition period. Nevertheless, understanding the key stressors, unique risk factors and the areas for improvement of existing services/development of new services are necessary in order to help the families transitioning to civilian life.

## The Family Transitioning to Civilian Life Challenge

**Aim.** This discussion group will discuss the factors related to the families transitioning to civilian life including existing research and ideas for future research as well as the avenues for further collaboration among stakeholders interested in transition to civilian life domain.

Specifically, the following are the working group objectives:

- Describe advancements in military and Veteran family health and well-being research
- Identify barriers and facilitators to collaboration across and within sectors
- Identify potential opportunities and strategies to advance the field through collaboration

## Key Questions

1. Who is transitioning to civilian life – the military member only or the whole family? Is it stressful for the family and why?
2. What type of support do families need to become part of a new civilian community? (E.g., Assistance with job-searching; Information about services available in each community and how to access the right services; Access to appropriate medical, psycho-social and dental care if needed)
3. What are the challenges faced when navigating various VAC community-based services?
4. What type of information do families need on illness/injury, their effects and recovery process?
5. What research gaps do we have on the family transition to civilian life?