



Contemporary research with public safety personnel

Canadian Public Safety Personnel (PSP) include, but are not limited to, correctional workers (community and institutional in security and non-security roles), dispatchers, firefighters, paramedics, and police. Increasing support over the past 2 years has led to a significant expansion in available peer-reviewed research dedicated specifically to PSP mental health. The Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT) recently completed a national self-reported prevalence study, which lays the groundwork for continued research growth.

This research theme working group will begin with progress updates towards a National Action Plan to address operational stress injuries among PSP. The underlying objectives of the working group will be to develop theoretical and applied priorities for a PSP research strategy across and within the different PSP fields; identify short, medium, and long-term research objectives; and develop collaborations toward achieving these objectives. We invite all those interested in supporting these intentionally collaborative multidisciplinary initiatives to join us.

Leads

Dr. Nick Carleton, Professor, University of Regina

Dr. Rose Riccardelli, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Memorial University

Dr. Renee MacPhee, Associate Professor, Wilfrid Laurier University

Pre-Forum Sun 24 Sep (1400-1700 hrs)		
1400	First Plenary (all participants)	Introduce themes and provide context - 50 min National Action Plan update; Develops in CIPSRT; Research Priorities and short, medium and long term plans Questions and Discussion - 20 min
1510	Second Plenary (all participants)	Introduction of CIPSRT Sectors; The overlaps of CIPSRT & CIMVHR; Research (ongoing) or (planned) by Sector; Building Research Collaborations - 50 min
1600	Working Discussions	- Working session on building research collaborations within CIPSRT and developing research collaborations between CIPSRT & CIMVHR - What does this working group want to take away from FORUM? How will we do it and associated discussions - 60 min
Post-Forum Wed 27 Sep (1330 – 1630)		
1330	Third Plenary (all participants)	Set stage for Post-Forum activities - 30 min Brief summary of the pre-Forum discussions and conclusions
1400	Breakout Discussion Groups	Discuss knowledge gained during FORUM 2017, focus on research priorities, collaborations and areas of development, discussion of most relevant presentations

		for CIPSRT and it's specific sectors; areas of overlap between CIPSRT & CIMVHR that perhaps were unclear prior to FORUM 2017 - 100 min
1540	Closing Session	Next steps – Where do we go from here? Create recommendations for future research and/or collaborations – 50 min

Context and Scope

Public safety personnel, including firefighters, emergency call centre dispatchers, police officers, paramedics, and correctional workers, experience a variety of different operational and organizational stressors. Moreover, their occupations inherently expose them to real and omnipresent dangers that place them at risk for trauma. The prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Injuries (PTSIs) and other symptoms indicative of compromised mental health are only recently available for these populations in Canada—and the rates are much higher than those found within the general population. The Canadian Institute of Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT) is working to concreate research priorities for the institute as a whole, as well as priorities within each of its four sections: Corrections, Police, Fire and Paramedics. The fact that some persons working in these public safety positons have priority military experience is well known however vastly under researched. Thus, there exists much opportunity for CIPSRT and CIMVHR to collectively serve the populations each represents. To do so sucessfully and effectively, however, more understanding of the needs, experiences, key stressors, and risk factors, as well as available mental health services and the barriers to service access, for PSP is warranted.

Aim

The aim of this working group is:

- i. to describe current and future needs in PSP mental, physical and social health research;
- ii. to identify key areas for collaboration within CIPSRT and across CIPSRT and CIMVHR as well as potential barriers or facilitators for research collaboration across and within sectors; and
- iii. to identify short, medium and long term research priorities, projects, collaboration and outcomes.

This workshop will begin with a discussion of CIPSRT’s formation and vision. The group will then work together to identify research priorities and develop potential inter- and cross- discipline research collaborations among PSP and military stakeholders. Discussion topics will include existing research in and across CIPSRT sectors, explorations of diverse factors and indirect/direct work experiences pertaining to PSPs, including those with military backgrounds.

Key Questions

1. How do CIMVHR and CIPSRT overlap and what are potential avenues for research collaborations?
2. What are the most critical short, medium and long-term research priorities for CIPSRT and for each of the diverse groups of PSP?
3. Are their any specific areas of research focus that must be addressed regarding former military PSP?
4. What are the most pressing challenges PSP and former miliarty PSP face?
5. What are the research gaps in these areas?