



The RCMP Veterans' Association was very happy to hear the announcement by Minister of Veterans Affairs Seamus O'Regan and Minister of National Defence Harjit Singh Sajjan regarding the establishment of a Centre of Excellence on PTSD to be established in partnership with the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group at The Royal in Ottawa.

This announcement, coming as it does during Mental Health Week, will give energy and hope to those suffering from PTSD, and other Operational Stress Injuries (OSI), as well as hope to the families and caregivers who support those service personnel and RCMP officers who are struggling with service-related illness.

As a society we have an obligation to do our best to support those who stand to protect us, and to ensure that they receive the best health care possible to recover from physical and mental injuries that they incur while serving Canadians. The Royal has a world class reputation for its outstanding research and patient care. It also hosts the Brigadier Jonathan C. Meakins Research Chair in Military Mental Health. Establishing the new Centre of Excellence at The Royal is an excellent and logical choice.

The establishment of a Centre of Excellence on mental health was included within the mandate letter to Minister O'Regan by Prime Minister Trudeau when Minister O'Regan was appointed in the Fall of 2017. The Minister and the Government of Canada are delivering on this commitment and they have our thanks for doing so.

The delivery on this promise also gives us some optimism that other commitments within Minister O'Regan's mandate letter will also be realized, notably the elimination of the "marriage after 60" claw back clause so that surviving spouses of Veterans receive appropriate pension and health benefits, and the increase to the Veterans' survivor benefit from 50 percent to 70 percent, to help survivors afford to live in comfort and dignity after the loss of their spouse.

This is a good day for Veterans. Our thanks to the Ministers for their action on the creation of the Centre of Excellence on Mental Health.

Al Rivard

President

RCMP Veterans' Association