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Joint Federal Research Funding for Military Personnel and Veterans

Project Report Summary Template

Funding Opportunity
Canadian Armed Forces Health Services Survey 2019 – Women and Diversity Health
Brief Overview
Female Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members, who represent approximately 16.5% of CAF members, may have different occupational exposures and stressors than their male counterparts that could influence mental health outcomes, mental health service use, and adherence to preventive health services such as cancer screening.
What is this Research About? This research explored sex-based differences in occupational exposures among CAF members and their effects on health outcomes. Objectives included examining work stressors, mental healthcare use, adherence to cancer screening guidelines, associations between psychosocial work environment and health outcomes, and the role of parental status.
What did the Research Do? Using data from the 2019 Canadian Armed Forces Health Survey administered by Statistics Canada, researchers conducted descriptive, logistic regression, and negative binomial regression analyses. Analyses were stratified by sex and force component where possible and included interaction testing and sensitivity analyses.
What did the Research Find? Work was the most frequently reported daily stressor among CAF members. Female members reported higher use of mental healthcare services than males. Adherence to breast and cervical cancer screening guidelines was generally high. Psychosocial work environment was associated with poorer mental health outcomes and lower screening adherence among males, while associations among females were less consistent. Parental status showed limited influence, although some differences were observed for PTSD outcomes among female Regular Force members.
What does this Research Mean? The findings show that organizational stressors and psychosocial work environments affect health outcomes differently for male and female CAF members. Male members in active, high-strain, and low-strain work environments were more likely to report mental health disorders and less likely to adhere to colorectal cancer screening. The research highlights the importance of considering sex and intersecting identities when developing future research and policy initiatives within the CAF.
Sources
1. Government of Canada (2025). Statistics of women in the Canadian Armed Forces. 2. Mota et al. (2012). Journal of Psychiatric Research, 46(2), 159-167. 3. Dubourg (2024). Invisible No More: The experiences of Canadian women Veterans. 4. Statistics Canada. Canadian Armed Forces Health Survey (2019).

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