

## **Joint Federal Research Funding Program for Military personnel and Veterans**

### **Funding opportunity:**

A comprehensive literature review of Pelvic Floor Dysfunction (PFD) in Canadian Armed Forces' (CAF) women

### **Anticipated timeline and budget**

Application Deadline: 12 February 2024

Estimated Project End Date: 31 March 2025

Grant funding available in 2023/2024: \$20,000

Grant funding anticipated in 2024/2025: \$20,000

### **Acronyms**

CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
DND	Department of National Defence
DRDC	Defence Research and Development Canada
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PFD	Pelvic Floor Dysfunction
VAC	Veterans Affairs Canada

### **Background**

In support of the CAF, DND invites researchers from relevant fields to submit proposals to undertake a literature review of PFD in CAF women. The CAF is committed to identifying and addressing systemic healthcare issues in its female population. By addressing the problem of PFD, the CAF continues its effort to improve the physical and mental well-being, as well as the occupational readiness, of its female uniformed members.

PFD is a condition that affects one's ability to control their pelvic floor muscles. It involves either the hyper- or hypotonicity of pelvic floor musculature and can lead to, but is not limited to, urinary incontinence (stress, urge or mixed), fecal incontinence, constipation, vaginal or uterine prolapse and pelvic pain.

The goal of this project is to understand the prevalence rate and nature of pelvic floor issues in military populations; and determine the risk level of PFD in women of various military occupations.

The review should include the mental, physical, and operational impacts of PFD on uniformed women. Although the focus of the final report should be on female military populations, it should also include the prevalence of PFD in civilian populations. The report should also highlight the differences in the nature and rates of PFD, if any, between these two populations.

### **Research objectives**

The Joint Federal Research Funding program is seeking submissions to conduct a literature review of PFD in female military populations to get a better understanding of the problem and possible solutions

that could be implemented in the future. Information from CAF military personnel and relevant findings of PFD from other NATO military members and non-military populations should be included in this review. In addition to a comprehensive review of the scientific literature, this report should also rely on information derived from national military health surveys and international military reports.

**The final report should include:**

- The prevalence of PFD in military populations, and in other relevant non-military populations.
- The most common PFDs encountered in military and civilian populations.
- The factors that could trigger or aggravate PFD, and could potentially make women in certain CAF trades more at risk of PFD.
- The health-related issues of PFD that could potentially hinder CAF women operationally.
- Scientifically proven medical and non-medical solutions for PFD that could improve the health and well-being of CAF women, and further, could potentially improve the operational readiness of military populations.
- When appropriate, the review should distinguish all demographic information by age, sex, gender, ethnicity, indigeneity, family status and any other life circumstances that need to be considered for CAF women with PFD.
- Any additional considerations to help develop and implement a future healthcare strategy to help women in the CAF with PFD.

**Phases of progress**

Quarterly meetings between the project sponsor, the scientific authority and the principal investigator to will place starting at the end of March 2024 and continue until the end of March 2025.

**Desired outputs**

- A final research report that includes the information outlined above.
- A full set of references used to produce the final report.
- A virtual presentation on key findings relevant to the CAF. This presentation will be given to the project sponsor and the scientific authority and must take place prior to the project end date (31 March 2025).
- Documents and all other outputs must be submitted in the English language.

**Applicant qualifications and requirements for selection**

- Research project must be led by a senior investigator with a PhD in a relevant field, such as physiology, epidemiology, health sciences, medicine, or another related degree.
- The senior investigator may direct their research team to contribute to the literature review.
- The senior investigator must have at least one publication and/or research grant as a proven record of conducting genitourinary research.
- The research team must have direct access to a variety of health-related publication databases and have knowledge of searching for military surveys and reports.

**Collaborative agreement**

N/A

## **Intellectual property (IP) ownership**

The award recipient will own any foreground IP created by virtue of the funding agreement. The sponsor may request permission to use such intellectual property for their own purposes. Funding agreement with award recipient will stipulate that award recipients will not unreasonably withhold such permission.

## **Application deadline**

Please download and submit the [Research Funding Application form](#) via email to [research-recherche@veterans.gc.ca](mailto:research-recherche@veterans.gc.ca).

## **Enquiries**

Questions about this funding opportunity can be sent to the VAC Research office at [research-recherche@veterans.gc.ca](mailto:research-recherche@veterans.gc.ca) or the DRDC Program Manager at [lisa.carnduff@forces.gc.ca](mailto:lisa.carnduff@forces.gc.ca).