

PTSD Prevention Plans

PSHSA Project

Enabling Mental Illness Prevention
in First Responder Workplaces





Background

- Employers covered by presumptive legislation submit PTSD Prevention Plans to MOL in 2017.
 - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-prevention-plans>
- No requirement to implement or update plans and no evaluation completed.
- Initial review of WSIB claims data showed evidence to support Plans:
 - Shorter claim registration timelines
 - Lower claim durations
 - More RTW plan closures
 - Smaller proportion of total allowed claims
 - PTSD prevention identified as a high priority by sectors and Ministries.



Project Objectives

- Support first responder workplaces in Ontario with PTSD prevention planning and programming.
 - Identify current evidence and best practices
 - Enhance existing resources
 - Work with organizations to update and implement Plans

Phase 1: Current State Analysis

- **Literature Scan** – Reviewed state of the evidence of PTSD/OSI prevention at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
- **Jurisdictional Scan** – Reviewed 40+ mental health support and treatment programs; 61 PTSD Plans; 10 expert opinions obtained.
- **Survey and Interviews** – Feedback from PSPs to understand degree of Plan implementation, barriers and facilitators; 12 interviews; 70 focus group participants.

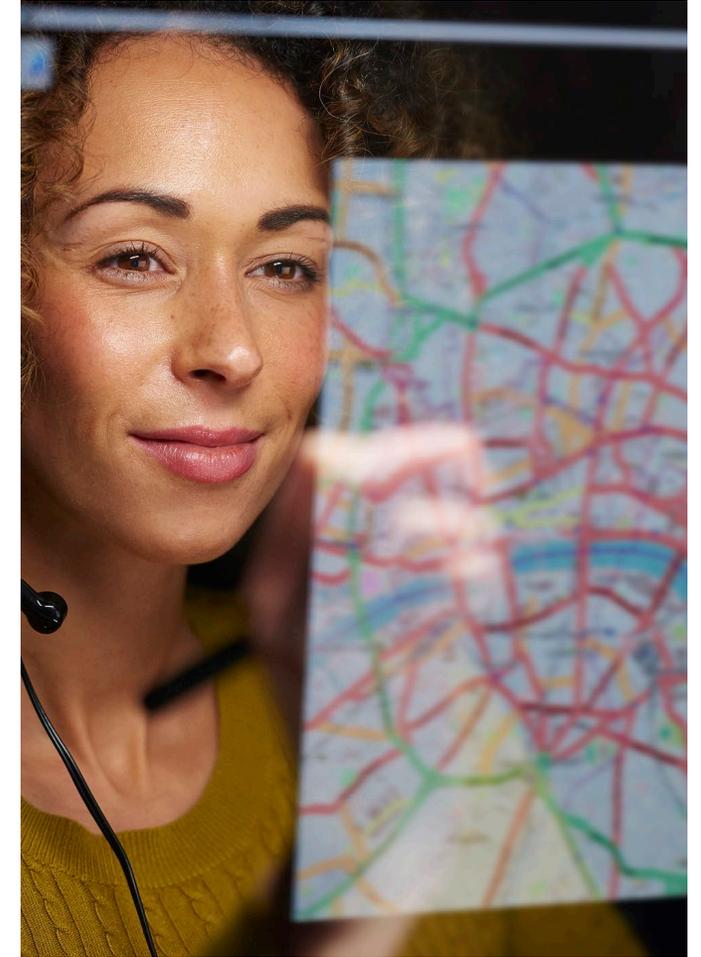
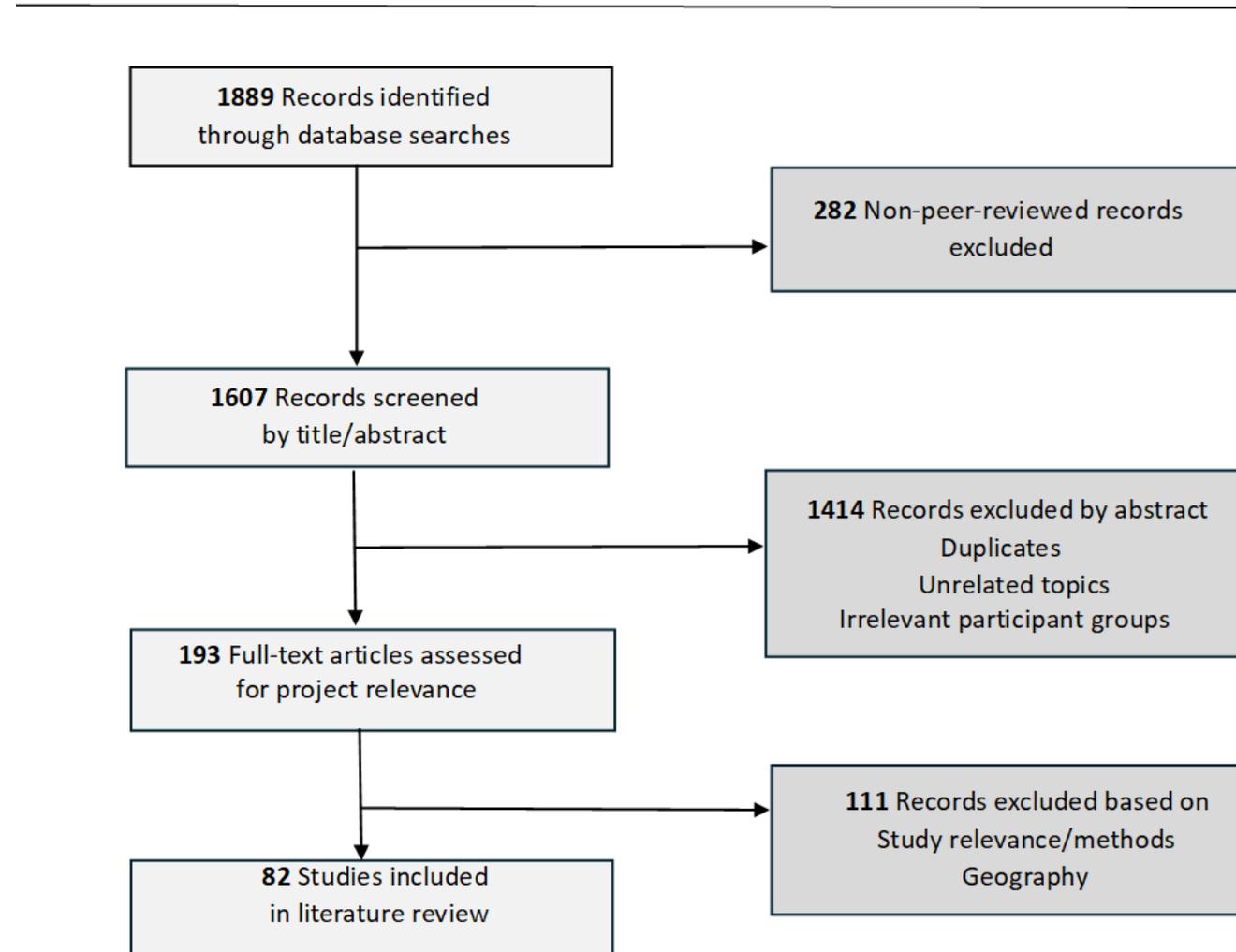




Figure 1. Flowchart of study identification, review and selection

Literature Search - Flowchart



Literature Review Key Findings

- **OSI Risk Factors:**

- Life stress
- Chronic workplace stress
- Stigma
- Barriers to help seeking

- **Higher Risk Groups:**

- Women
- Single/separated/divorced
- Older age, or more years of service
- Lower education levels

- **Workplace factors that increase vulnerability:**

- Low levels of support for workers
- Lack of control over workload
- Interpersonal workplace conflicts

(Alden et al., 2021)

*Organizational factors and support systems have significant impact on first responders and are often the most modifiable factors

(Corthésy-Blondin et al., 2022; Carleton et al, 2018)

Literature Review Key Findings

- Reduce stigma and increase social support
 - Expand to families and communities
- Prioritize leadership training and support
 - Focus on mental health literacy and skills to create positive org culture
- Provide continuous and tailored mental health resources and supports
 - Culturally and contextually appropriate, accessible, flexible, throughout career course
- Deeper understanding of contributing factors and emerging issues
 - Cumulative trauma, moral injury, and other emerging challenges
- Evaluation and brief mental health screening tools

Jurisdictional Scan

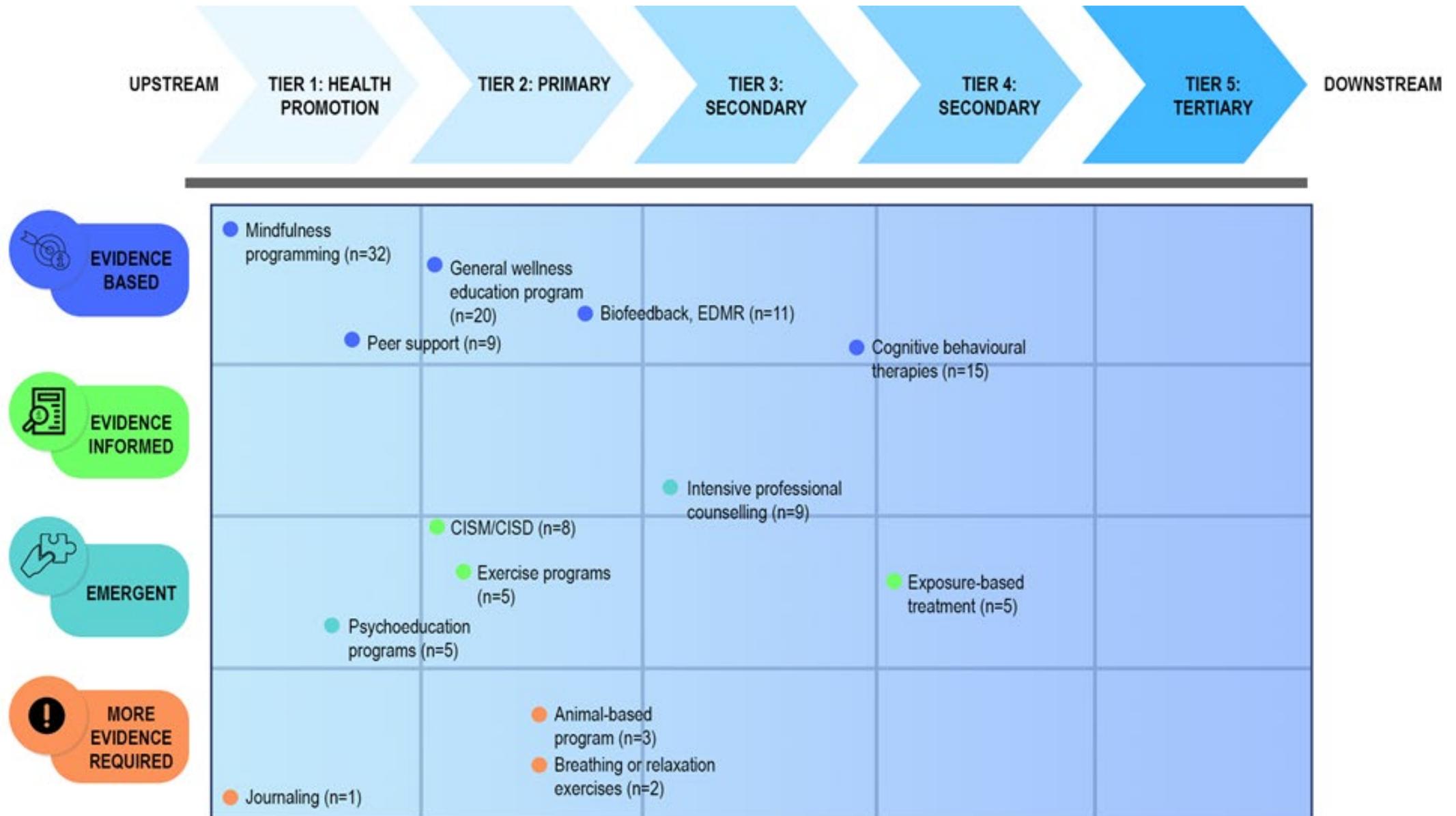
Program Overview:

- 40+ mental health support and treatment programs reviewed
- 61 PTSD prevention plans reviewed
- Coverage: Ontario & Canada
- Target Audience: First responders (paramedics, police officers, firefighters), Canadian Armed Forces, Veterans, corrections personnel

Types of Interventions:

- Primary Interventions (18 programs)
- Secondary Interventions (12 programs)
- Tertiary Interventions (10 programs)

Figure 11: Mental Health Programming Framework (CIPSRT, 2023)





Sub-sector Observations from Researchers

All	Police	Paramedics	Fire
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PTSD plans are rarely operationalized• Stigma is still highly prevalent• Lack of trauma-trained providers• Low mental health literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment is at an all-time low• Trust is a significant barrier• Low mental health awareness, “boys club” culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment / enrollment difficulties• Highest mental health literacy• Highest relative RTW rates and single incident claims• Low/no implementation of paramedic specific CSA standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteer and rural firefighters struggle with limited resources, governance structures• More at risk of cumulative trauma• Multiple roles• Personal connections with rural communities

PSHSA - Survey

Purpose:

- Hear directly from PSPs to understand degree of Prevention Plan implementation, barriers and facilitators.

Expected Outcomes:

- Responses will directly influence how we evaluate and enhance PTSD prevention plans and modernized resources that address specific sector challenges and align with best practices.
- **Now LIVE and open until end of November**
- <https://fhs.cac.queensu.ca/WMH/surveys/?s=TNHTDXYRETWXYDWD>



Queen's UNIVERSITY | Public Services Health & Safety Association | **PSHSA.ca**

ARE YOU A FIRST RESPONDER OR PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL WORKING IN ONTARIO?

DOES YOUR WORKPLACE HAVE A PTSD PREVENTION PLAN?

HAVE YOUR SAY!

TAKE OUR SURVEY

THIS SURVEY IS PART OF THE STUDY PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL MENTAL WELLNESS: THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS

Weblink:
<https://fhs.cac.queensu.ca/WMH/surveys/?s=TNHTDXYRETWXYDWD>

You are invited to take part in a research study from Queen's University and the Public Service Health and Safety Association (PSHSA). The purpose of this study is to build an understanding of how PTSD prevention plans have been implemented in Ontario public safety organizations. This study has received ethical approval by the Queen's University Health Sciences and Affiliated Teaching Hospitals Research Ethics Board.

SSHRC  **CRSH**
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

HSREB REH-878-23 Version July 25, 2024

PSHSA - Interviews and Focus Groups

- 12 interviews
- 70 focus group participants
 - November 11, 20 – Paramedics
 - November 13, 21 – Fire
 - November 15, 19 – Police
- Direct feedback from PSPs about their experience with Prevention Plans and mental health initiatives
- Barriers, facilitators and recommendations
- Sign up form: [Sign Up/Consent Form - Webinar & Focus Groups: PSHSA PTSD Prevention Plans Project](#)



Reminder for Training Opportunities

- **Resilience eLearning – R2 the Fundamentals**
- [R2 – The Fundamentals- EMS \(HESELEN1123\)](#)
- [R2 – The Fundamentals- Fire \(HFIELEN1123\)](#)
- [R2 – The Fundamentals- Police \(HPOELEN1123\)](#)

- **Resilience instructor-led course – R2 for Leaders**
- <https://www.pshsa.ca/courses/r2-for-leaders-building-resilient-organizations-distance-learning-program>

- **Managing Mental Health RTW/SAW**
- <https://www.pshsa.ca/courses/mental-health-stay-at-work-return-to-work-for-first-responder-organizations>





Safe Environments.
Healthy Workers.

Thank You!

Jackie Sam
Program Manager
jsam@pshsa.ca

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416.250.2131

1.877.250.7444