

Behind the Badge:

Revealing Escalating Mental Health Injuries Among RCMP Officers – Media Backgrounder



NATIONAL
POLICE
FEDERATION

FÉDÉRATION
DE LA POLICE
NATIONALE

What We Found

RCMP recruits are typically more mentally healthy and resilient than the general population, which aligns with the substantial responsibilities required of them.

- 6.4% of cadets (RCMP recruits in training) screened positively for any current mental disorders compared to 10.1% for the general population.

Members, through the function of their service, are exposed to a variety of potentially psychologically traumatic events while experiencing significant organizational and operational stressors.

- Our Members reported lifetime exposure to an average of 13 different potentially psychologically traumatic events (PPTs) which is higher than the average for all public safety personnel.



The results of frequent exposure to potentially psychologically traumatic events, unique and challenging stressors, and inadequate mental health supports are a high prevalence of mental health disorders and suicidal behaviour.

- Members are six times more likely to screen positive for any mental health disorder than the general population.

When compared to their peers in other public safety professions....

- They are almost twice as likely to screen positively for anxiety and major depression.
- More than twice as likely to screen positively for PTSD and panic disorder.
- Members are more than three times more likely to have contemplated suicide in the past year than the general population and more than five times more likely to have planned a suicide.

RCMP Members Have a Higher Prevalence of Suicidal Behaviors

	2023 RCMP Sample	2018 PSP Sample	2023 General Pop
Contemplated Suicide (Lifetime)	34.1%	27.8%	~12%
Contemplated Suicide (Past Year)	11.4%	10.1%	2.7%
Planned Suicide (Lifetime)	15.9%	13.3%	~4.1%
Planned Suicide (Past Year)	4.6%	4.1%	0.8%

The Prevalence of RCMP Member Mental Health Disorders Has Increased Since 2018

Mental Health Disorder	2018 RCMP Sample	2023 RCMP Sample	% Point Increase
Post Traumatic Stress	30%	47.7%	17.7%
Generalized Anxiety	23.3%	33.5%	10.2%
Major Depressive	31.7%	44.6%	12.9%
Social Anxiety	18.7%	24.1%	4.4%
Panic	12%	21.3%	9.3%
Any	50.2%	64.7%	14.5%

Recommendations

The NPF aims to change the framework of how the RCMP deals with Member mental health. We are asking that they engage and collaborate with the NPF as well as third-party providers to create a comprehensive framework that uses outside providers in consultation with the NPF and mental health specialists.


Additionally, we recommend:

- 1.** The RCMP ensure the full implementation of its Employee Well-being Strategy and apply it consistently across all Divisions. This strategy ought to consider early identification, preventative measures, as well as treatment options and should be available publicly.
- 2.** Immediately address financial and logistical barriers to the full implementation of the RCMP Periodic Psychological Health Screenings (PHS) program.
- 3.** Once the PHS is fully implemented and all Members have received a screening, require Members to get a yearly PHS.
- 4.** Continue to support, prioritize, and expand the RCMP Longitudinal Study of Operation Stress and implement its findings on treatment and prevention of injuries caused by traumatic events.
- 5.** Immediately fully staff all occupational health services offices while continuing to fully implement the Support for Operational Stress Injury Program.
- 6.** Develop and implement a National Policy that supports the Critical Incident Reintegration Program which explicitly states the program be administered nationally and includes mandatory administrative leave for 14 days and impacted Member access to professional psychological outreach as soon as practical but no later than three days after the critical incident.
- 7.** Nationally implement the availability of the Edgewood Health Network's programs for trauma support across all Divisions immediately.
- 8.** Implement mandatory Member Wellness Psychological training.

Media Contact

Sarah Kavanagh
Coordinator, Media Relations
Media@npf-fpn.com
604-842-6864

 npf-fpn.com

 [@npf_fpn](https://www.instagram.com/npf_fpn)

 [@npffpn](https://twitter.com/npffpn)

 [National Police Federation](https://www.facebook.com/NationalPoliceFederation)



**NATIONAL
POLICE
FEDERATION**

**FÉDÉRATION
DE LA POLICE
NATIONALE** TM

