



BETTER WELL-BEING FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



KEY MESSAGE

Veterans have served Canada and were willing to risk their lives to do so. Now it's Canada's turn to support veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and ensure that they and their families have the well-being, care and benefits they deserve.

THE ISSUE

Veterans face challenges in receiving the support they need to have an acceptable quality of life after service.

Transition to civilian life is a big change that can be especially challenging for those who are dealing with illness, injury or trauma. Transferring to the civilian medical system is often marked by difficulty finding family doctors, long waits and incomplete or missing medical records. These challenges can mean that ill or injured veterans are unable to access financial, health and other benefits and services from Veterans Affairs Canada.

Moves are realities of military service that directly impact families too. On retirement, veterans and their loved ones are often far from family support networks. It's important that those who are providing care and support to ill and injured veterans also have access to tools and supports.

Rebuilding trust with veterans is critical. Whether you were a veteran forced to take your own government to court for earned benefits or healing from military sexual trauma, broken trust in the chain of command and in our government is felt by some of today's veterans. Numerous changes to the Minister for Veterans Affairs and payment calculation errors compound this lack of confidence in the system veterans rely on.

Finally, military and veteran women face additional challenges. Women comprise about 16% of the military and there is a goal to have 25% serving by 2025. Yet aspects of military and veterans systems are gender-blind with systemic biases and research gaps.

THE CHALLENGES

Simplify and clarify programs and access to them

- Build on the good work that's been started by the new Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group working together with Veterans Affairs Canada. Make transition seamless, from continuity of medical care and records transfer, to co-ordinated programs and a clear application process, to support to navigate every step.

Effective communication and support

- Government cannot do it all alone. Improve access to information and resources by working on solutions with national service providers, non-profit and community-based organizations. Emphasize and support horizontal communication among government departments and organizations that serve veterans and families.

Equitable care and benefits for all veterans

- Military and veteran women face unique challenges that must be addressed, especially as the government has indicated it plans to increase the percentage of women serving in the military.

THE QUESTIONS

- 1 What is your party's plan to ensure that veterans and their loved ones receive the care, tools and support they need at every step of their journey in serving Canada?
- 2 How will your party ensure ill and injured veterans and their caregivers can achieve financial, physical, emotional and social well-being?
- 3 How will your party reach out to some of the most vulnerable veterans, such as those who are have lost trust in government?
- 4 How will your party ensure Canada addresses the unique needs of military women and female veterans?
- 5 The presence of many veterans groups speaks to long-standing difficulties that many veterans have faced in accessing support over several successive governments. How does your party plan to address this history to improve the future, and to help veterans move forward?