

INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUP

ABOUT THE ATLAS INSTITUTE

The **Atlas Institute for Veterans and Families** (the Atlas Institute) builds strong community networks to create a system of the best possible supports and services for Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Veterans and their Families. We bring people together, collect what we know related to mental health conditions and how to treat them. We share that information widely and ensure our collective knowledge is reflected in the research and practical work we do as a network. As an independent intermediary organization, we prioritize the development of our central network, starting with the establishment of a Strategic Reference Group that provides the Atlas Institute with lived expertise and knowledge.

STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUP

The work of the Atlas Institute is guided by a Strategic Reference Group. The role of the Strategic Reference Group, which consists of around 15 volunteer members, is to provide the Atlas Institute with strategic advice that advances the Atlas Institute's vision, mission and strategic goals. Members provide their independent and objective expertise on specific initiatives and priority areas, while serving as ambassadors on behalf of the Atlas Institute.

The Strategic Reference Group operates under the authority of the Atlas Institute's executive leadership team and has an advisory function only.

The purpose of the Strategic Reference Group is to:

- Offer diverse forms of expertise and/or experience in Veteran mental health promotion, research, practice and policy to support the betterment of the mental health and well-being of Veterans and Veteran Family members

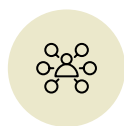
- Guide the work of the Atlas Institute by creating infrastructure for input, feedback and strategic advice from a multidisciplinary and diverse group
- Hold dedicated space for evidence-based knowledge exchange related to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and related conditions
- Encourage and support cross-sector collaborations related to Veteran PTSD and mental health
- Expand the reach and presence of the Atlas Institute by acting as champions for the organization, its mission and mandate across Canada

The Strategic Reference Group's membership includes the perspectives of:



Veterans

Veterans, including from the Regular and Reserve Forces, full- and part-time, retired or former service members who represent a diversity of ranks and experiences, shape and provide input into the work of the Atlas Institute. As our primary stakeholder group, the Veteran perspective is embedded in the Strategic Reference Group, in the vein of “nothing about us, without us.”



Veteran Family members

Family members play a central role in the daily care, support and decision-making related to the mental health of their Veteran Family member. The Strategic Reference group includes Veteran Family members, defined as those whom the Veteran identifies as Family, either biologically, legally or emotionally, such as parents, siblings, partners/spouses and dependent and adult children, as well as carers (related or not), friends and peers.



Service providers

Service providers in our Strategic Reference Group include professionals from across the continuum of care, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, peer supporters, social workers and vocational trainers, among others. They have experience and expertise treating PTSD, moral injury, sanctuary trauma, military sexual trauma and other forms of trauma.



Researchers

Researchers, including early- or mid-career researchers and subject matter experts on a broad array of mental health conditions that affect Veterans and Veteran Families, offer expertise in topics including PTSD and its subtypes, trauma (including combat stress, military sexual trauma and moral injury), depression and substance use.

If you are interested in learning more about the Strategic Reference Group or want information about other ways to contribute to the work we do at the Atlas Institute, visit atlasveterans.ca/get-involved

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