



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Government of Canada and Alberta Health Services Open Edmonton Operational Stress Injury Clinic

Edmonton, AB – Member of Parliament, Laurie Hawn, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, representative of The Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture), together with Ken Hughes, Board Chair, Alberta Health Services, today officially opened Canada’s newest clinic dedicated to the treatment and support of Veterans, Canadian Forces and RCMP servicemen and women and their families living with operational stress injuries.

“Our government recognizes the stresses associated with military operations and we are committed to strengthening the support offered to those affected by operational stress injuries,” said MP Hawn. “Responding to our Veterans needs is a top priority.”

Minister Blackburn said the opening is good news for the military community in the Edmonton area. “We have come a long way since operational stress injuries were not recognized, and our Veterans could not benefit from the help they needed to get well. Our work with Alberta Health Services and other regional health partners across the country is providing much-needed assistance to our Veterans and their families. Through clinics such as this, we can help our Veterans cope with some of the most insidious injuries.”

The Edmonton clinic has an operating budget of approximately \$2.4 million for 2010-11. It is funded by Veterans Affairs Canada and managed by Alberta Health Services. It provides specialized addiction and mental health services to Veterans, Canadian Forces members and eligible members of the RCMP, as well as their families, living with operational stress injuries — including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorders, depression or addiction. The clinic offers diagnosis, standardized assessment, treatment, prevention and support services as well as educational programs and individual, group and family counseling services.

“This clinic builds upon the long-standing partnership and shared commitment to the care of our veterans between the health care community and the Government of Canada,” said Hughes.

The Edmonton clinic is the last of five new operational stress injury (OSI) clinics funded by the Government of Canada. It is part of a coast-to-coast network of ten such clinics, funded by Veterans Affairs, which complements the five operational trauma and stress support centres operated by the Department of National Defense.

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