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Canadian Psychological Association Applauds Investment in Military Mental Health

OTTAWA, Sept. 12, 2012 /CNW/ - The Canadian Psychological Association is pleased by today's announcement that the Government of Canada will invest an additional 11.4 million to enhance the Canadian Forces' mental health system by hiring over fifty new mental health practitioners which includes thirteen or more psychologists.

The recruitment and retention of psychologists to work within federal departments has been a pressing issue. In May 2012, the Ottawa Citizen released an internal report stating that the mental health treatment system in the military is in crisis with soldiers waiting four months before a psychologist is available to treat them. After the release of this report, General Natynczyk made a public appeal for psychologists to come to the Canadian Forces to improve the mental health care provided to soldiers.

In response to this call to action, the Canadian Psychological Association held a productive meeting with the department about recruitment and retention issues and recommended a number of workable solutions that include putting psychologists in uniform and creating a residency training program.

"We are very glad to hear Minister MacKay's statements today that the Government of Canada reaffirms its commitment to the mental health care of our men and women in uniform. We look forward to learning more about the Minister's announcement and to helping government meet the mental health needs of the members of the Canadian Forces." said Dr. Karen Cohen, Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Psychological Association.

"Canada's governments must do everything they can to ensure that men and women in uniform and veterans can access the psychological care they need. Psychological treatments are among the most effective for the kinds of mental health problems, like depression and post-traumatic stress, experienced by soldiers and veterans."

The Canadian Psychological Association is the national association for the science, practice and education of psychology in Canada. With over 6600 members and affiliates, CPA is Canada's largest professional association for psychology.

SOURCE: CANADIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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