
PREVALENCE OF OPERATIONAL STRESS INJURIES (OSI) IN THE ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE FORCE AND ONTARIO MUNICIPAL POLICE FORCES

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Introduction: The 2012, report 'In the Line of Duty' by the Ontario Ombudsman into the handling of Operational Stress Injuries (OSI) by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and other Ontario police forces recommended that a study of all its officers be conducted to establish the prevalence of OSI. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to establish the current prevalence of OSI within the police forces of Ontario.

Methods: All (approximately 6,500) uniformed police officers, operational civilian employees, and formerly serving members of Ontario police forces are eligible for this study. Participants are contacted by e-mail and invited to complete an anonymous on-line survey that collects information on mood disorders, substance abuse, suicidality, police stress, stigma, and traumatic exposures. OSI is measured with the Post Traumatic Stress List (PCL) adopted for police. Results are analyzed according to police service (OPP or municipal police force), formerly serving members by service, and civilian employees by service.

Results: OSI rates in police forces are compared to the 2012 Canadian military results. OSI rates are controlled for age, gender, general health, chronic conditions, pain and discomfort, physical activity, and childhood experiences. Correlations between stress (traumatic, operational, and organizational) and OSI are reported. Data are currently being analyzed.

Conclusions: Without a grasp on the severity and prevalence of OSI in Ontario police forces it is impossible to put into place programs for prevention and recovery. This is the first and only study of the Ontario police forces and will provide useful methodological and operational information.