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# COVID-19 READINESS RESOURCE PROJECT

CIPSRT COVID-19 Task Force

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For information in French please see the CRRP  
website. French version of this report to follow.

This project is dedicated to the extraordinary commitment of all public safety personnel in Canada.

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# CHAIR'S MESSAGE

I am proud to share the Final Report from the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment's COVID-19 Readiness Resource Project (CRRP). The Report outlines the products and resources available to all public safety personnel (PSP) across Canada. This initiative is a testament to what is truly possible when passionate people come together with commitment and a short timeline, to support Canadians in times of a deadly crisis.

The Report marks an important milestone in our efforts to support the mental health and well-being of our PSP. The CRRP content was guided by the most up-to-date and evolving public health guidelines, and an intensive review of international literature

on past epidemic and pandemic responses. This was followed by meetings with our diverse group of stakeholders, which included frontline PSP and their leaders. The CRRP's approach was intensive, iterative, and it evolved as the pandemic unfolded. This was especially true in the first ten weeks of the crisis.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the researchers, clinicians, PSP, and other frontline workers who contributed their valuable time and expertise to the

project. I would especially like to thank the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Centre of Excellence on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Related Mental Health Conditions, and the CIPSRT Public Safety Steering Committee for their support. Finally, a special thank-you to my organization, Veterans Affairs Canada, for generously supporting my contribution to this endeavour to benefit our PSP colleagues, a number of whom are Veterans in their second career.

As we move forward, the resources developed are available to all Canadians and can be easily accessed at: [www.cipsrt-icrtsp.ca/en/crrp](http://www.cipsrt-icrtsp.ca/en/crrp).

The CRRP will now enter a maintenance phase where the COVID-19 Leadership Task Force will meet regularly to advise on updates to the website. I invite you to visit the CRRP website and to provide any feedback that you may have, to the COVID-19 Leadership Task Force.



**DR. ALEXANDRA HEBER, MD, FRCPC, CCPE**

Chair, CIPSRT COVID-19 Task Force

Chief of Psychiatry, Veterans Affairs Canada  
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry,  
University of Ottawa





# TESTIMONIALS

*“The COVID-19 Readiness Resource Project provided timely and evidence-based materials to support public safety personnel and frontline workers responding to the Covid-19 pandemic across Canada. The webinar series, in particular, was a great opportunity for information-sharing and discussion. Thank you for your rapid response in developing this project and rolling out these important resources and tools to help Canadians on the frontline of this pandemic.”*

**STEPHANIE PRIEST**

Executive Director, Public Health Agency of Canada

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*“In a time of great uncertainty, the CRRP rapidly brought together members of the public safety and healthcare communities, providing vital support and information through interchange with some of Canada’s leading knowledge brokers, including highly experienced leaders, clinicians, and scientists. Together we are stronger - through the CRRP, Canada’s public safety and healthcare communities have found a home to share common experiences, to problem-solve together, and to hold one another through to the end of the global COVID-19 pandemic.”*

**DR. MARGARET MCKINNON**

Homewood Chair in Mental Health and Trauma; Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Research, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences, McMaster University

*“The COVID-19 Readiness Resource Project (CRRP) developed by the CIPSRT COVID-19 Task Force is a comprehensive and easily accessible set of materials that can help those who serve us all in supporting their own mental health during this global pandemic. Together with our own Moral Injury Guide for Healthcare Workers developed in partnership with Phoenix Australia, the CRRP can play a critical role in supporting the public safety sector, and the resources within have applicability to many sectors. We welcomed the opportunity to be part of this collaborative initiative bringing together the Canadian leadership resources to support all our frontline workers from public safety, to Veterans, healthcare workers, grocery clerks, and all Canadians who are helping others get through this global pandemic.”*

**DR. PATRICK SMITH**

CEO, Centre of Excellence on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Related Mental Health Conditions

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*“The CRRP demonstrates the power of what is possible when people come together and continue to share knowledge and expertise, especially during challenging times. Leveraging existing relationships that we’ve built over several years to better support public safety mental health, was key in being able to reach out beyond traditional networks to obtain help and resources where we needed it most in a timely manner, especially given the rapid changes in response to the pandemic.”*

**LORRAINE DOWNEY**

Paramedic and Peer Support Coordinator,  
Ottawa Paramedic Service



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March - September 8, 2020

## History

In March 2020, the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment designated a COVID-19 Task Force to create an online resource for Canadian public safety personnel working on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The taskforce leveraged generous additional support from Veterans Affairs Canada, other key stakeholders and partners, and PSP with lived experience, to create a knowledge hub - the COVID-19 Readiness Resource Project (CRRP).



# MISSION & MANDATE

## Mission

To develop and launch an online resource to support the mental health and well-being of Canadian PSP on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Mandate

The CRRP is a knowledge hub which:

- Identifies and meets the current challenges of first responders and broader PSP.
- Helps to bring together, distribute, and improve mental health and resilience supports for PSP.

## Description

The CRRP is a project to create a national vehicle for trusted information, guidance, and access to online self-help material. The project is informed by PSP across all sectors including those who are on the frontlines and in leadership.

## Acronyms

<b>CIPSRT</b>	Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment
<b>CoE</b>	Centre of Excellence
<b>CRRP</b>	COVID-19 Readiness Resource Project
<b>CSC</b>	Correctional Service of Canada
<b>FRMHNC</b>	First Responder Mental Health Network Collaboration
<b>HiMARC</b>	Heroes in Mind, Advocacy and Research Consortium
<b>OHRI</b>	Ottawa Hospital Research Institute
<b>OSI</b>	Operational Stress Injury
<b>PHAC</b>	Public Health Agency of Canada
<b>PSP</b>	Public Safety Personnel
<b>PSSC</b>	Public Safety Steering Committee
<b>PTSD</b>	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
<b>RCMP</b>	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
<b>SK</b>	Saskatchewan
<b>VAC</b>	Veterans Affairs Canada





# CRRP KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS



12

1-hour webinars as part of the COVID-19 Readiness Resource Project Virtual Town Hall Series.



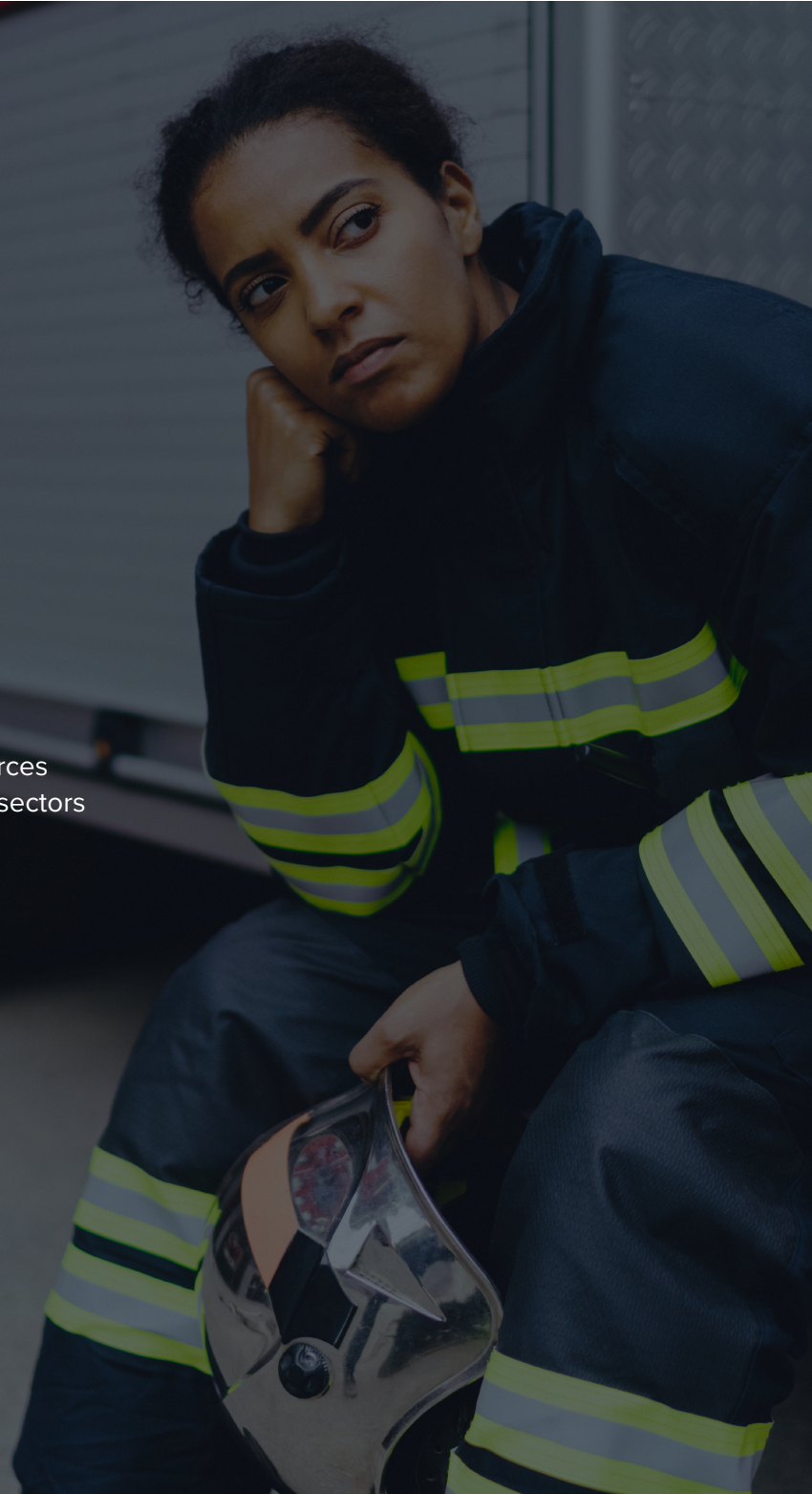
20+

Categories of trusted information and online resources created for frontline and PSP leadership across all sectors available in both French and English.



8

Bilingual mindfulness audio recordings and “Help Us Help You” videos.





# CRRP KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

The following individuals and organizations engaged in knowledge exchange with the CRRP:

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, AND FEDERALLY FUNDED ORGANIZATIONS

- Veterans Affairs Canada  
- Drs. Alexandra Heber  
and Cyd Courchesne
- Public Safety Canada
- Public Health Agency of Canada  
- Stephanie Priest
- Correctional Service of Canada  
- Meghan Provost
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Health Canada - Marie-Anik Gagné
- Institute of Neurosciences,  
Mental Health and Addiction,  
Canadian Institutes of Health  
Research - Dr. Samuel Weiss
- Centre of Excellence on  
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder  
and Related Mental Health  
Conditions - Dr. Patrick Smith

## FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECTS

- Wellness Together Canada  
- Marie-Anik Gagné, Stephanie Priest,  
and Dr. Peter Cornish  
(Stepped Care Solutions)

## PUBLIC SAFETY ORGANIZATIONS

- Paramedic Chiefs of Canada  
- President, Chief Randy Mellow
- Ottawa Fire Service - Capt. Alain  
Pellegroms and Lt. Scott Patey
- Ottawa Professional Fire Fighters  
Association - Lt. Scott Patey and  
Capt. Alain Pellegroms
- Ottawa Paramedic Service  
- Commander Shannon Leduc  
and Lorraine Downey
- Ottawa Police Service - Cst. Amy  
Gagnon and Sgt. Brent MacIntyre

## UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTES

- University of Regina  
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- Homewood Research Institute  
- Dr. Margaret McKinnon
- McMaster University  
- Dr. Margaret McKinnon
- Western University - Dr. Ruth Lanius
- Heroes in Mind, Advocacy and  
Research Consortium (HiMARC),  
University of Alberta - Drs. Suzette  
Brémault-Phillips and  
Lorraine Smith-MacDonald

- Memorial University of Newfoundland  
- Dr. Rosemary Ricciardelli
- Ottawa Hospital Research Institute  
- Dr. Simon Hatcher and Valerie Testa
- University of Ottawa  
- Drs. Alexandra Heber and Simon  
Hatcher, and Valerie Testa

## COMMITTEES

- Federal Interdepartmental  
Committee on Mental Health
- Military Sexual Trauma  
Community of Practice
- First Responder Mental Health  
Network Collaboration
- CIPSRT Public Safety Steering  
Committee
- Disaster Psychiatry Canada  
- Dr. Frank Sommers



# CRRP VIRTUAL TOWN HALL SERIES

## Managing the Pandemic: Promoting the well-being of public safety personnel and their families

*Dr. James Thompson*

## Moral Dilemmas and Moral Injury: Confronting wicked problems, tricky questions, and tough decisions

*Drs. Alexandra Heber &  
Suzette Brémault-Phillips*

## Risk and Resilience to Moral Injury Among Public Safety Personnel and Healthcare Providers

*Drs. Ruth Lanius &  
Margaret McKinnon*

## Coping with the Stress of COVID-19 for Public Safety Personnel

*Dr. Jeff Sych*

## PSP Leadership and Mental Health

*Dr. Ron Camp II & Randy Mellow*

## My parent is a First Responder: How do I feel about that?

*Drs. Kristi Wright &  
Andrea Stelnicki*

## How to Help Your Child Through the Pandemic: What should you know and what should you do?

*Drs. Kristi Wright &  
Andrea Stelnicki*

## Stress in Emergency Management

*Dr. Jeff Sych*

## PSP Leadership and Mental Health: Part 2

*Dr. Ron Camp II, Randy Mellow,  
& Ken McMullen*

## What the SARS outbreak taught us about the psychological needs of healthcare workers

*Dr. Ken Balderson*

## Self-Care During Times of Crisis and Change

*Meghan Provost*

## Wellness Together Canada: Basic mental health care your way, when you want it

*Dr. Peter Cornish*



# PUBLICATIONS

## Published

Heber, A., Testa, V., Smith-MacDonald, L., Brémault-Phillips, S., & Carleton, R.N. Rapid response to COVID-19: addressing challenges and increasing the mental readiness of public safety personnel.

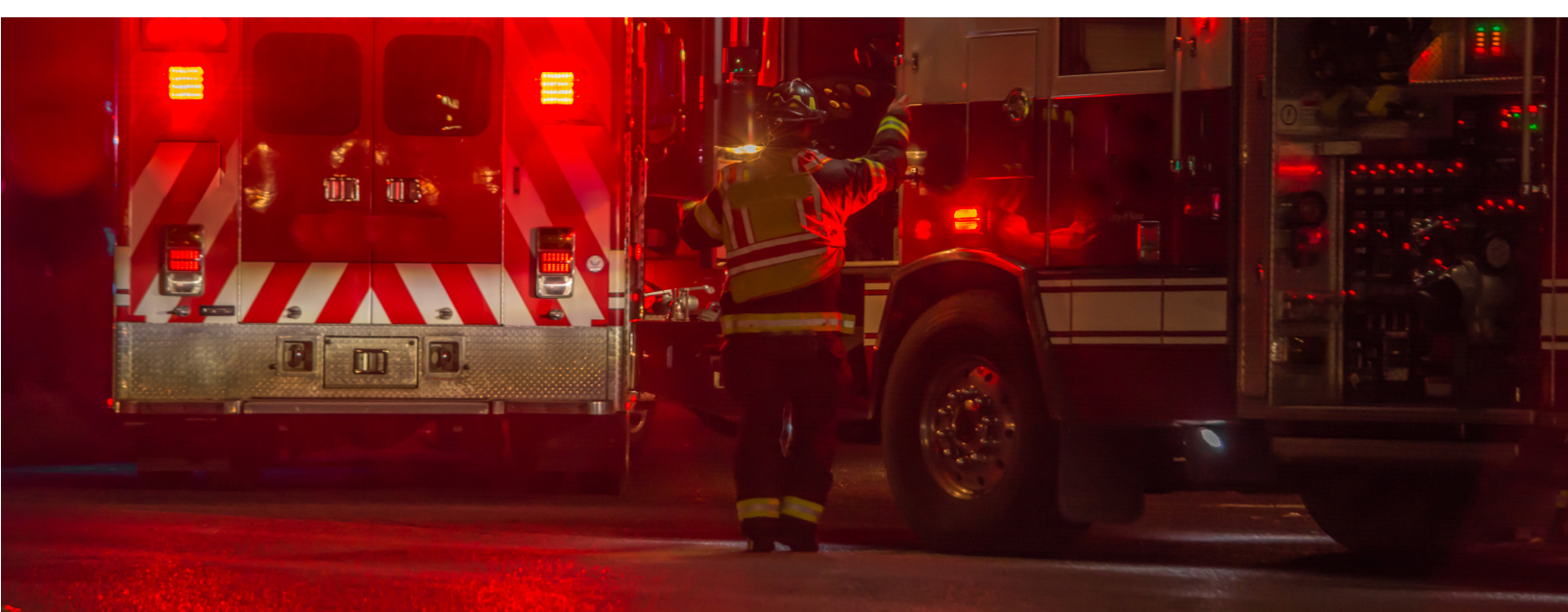
*Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention in Canada.*  
2020;40:11/12. Published online 2020 Sep. 09.

<https://doi.org/10.24095/hpcdp.40.11/12.04>.

## Submitted for Publication

Two pitches have been submitted for consideration to  
The Conversation ([www.theconversation.com/ca](http://www.theconversation.com/ca)):

- *Proposed Article Title: “Public Safety Personnel and COVID-19: Addressing New Challenges”*
- *Proposed Article Title: “The COVID-19 Readiness Resource Project (CRRP): Modelling Future Directions in Pandemic Response”*







# ONLINE MATERIAL

## Synthesis of Website Content

The Centre of Excellence (CoE) on PTSD and Related Mental Health Conditions partnered with the CRRP Leadership Task Force to facilitate knowledge translation. The CoE provided in-kind support to hire a marketing and communications company, Ascribe Marketing Communications Inc., to synthesize the COVID-19 related content. The material is more accessible and acceptable to a public safety audience who require quick access to information.

**English:** [www.cipsrt-icrtsp.ca/en/crrp](http://www.cipsrt-icrtsp.ca/en/crrp)

**French:** [www.cipsrt-icrtsp.ca/fr/crrp](http://www.cipsrt-icrtsp.ca/fr/crrp)

## Help Us Help You

In collaboration with PSP partners across Canada, the CRRP produced public videos on what the general Canadian population can do to help support PSP on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic entitled “Help Us Help You.” In response to current public health guidelines and feedback from PSP partners, Version 2 was created to reflect the most up-to-date guidelines from the Public Health Agency of Canada. Version 2 will launch in September 2020.

**English:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=CajVHLCBCIk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CajVHLCBCIk)

**French:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ex7CVUemn18](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ex7CVUemn18)

## Mindfulness

While the concept of mindfulness is simple - paying attention to the now no matter what the now may bring - putting it into action takes patience and practice.

Mindfulness can be cultivated by dedicating even short amounts of time to pay attention to present-moment experiences as they arise and pass. Four audio recordings in French and English were created to offer brief guided meditations designed to help PSP practise mindfulness.

**English:**  
[3-minute - Breathing Space](#)  
[10-minute - Body Scan](#)

**French:**  
[Trois minutes - La pleine conscience](#)  
[Dix minutes - La pleine conscience](#)

# PROJECT TRANSITION

## Transition

The CRRP is being transitioned to a maintenance phase, effective September 9, 2020. Ongoing maintenance of the CRRP website will be conducted by administrative staff within the CIPSRT Knowledge Hub. The project will continue to be directed by the current CIPSRT COVID-19 Leadership Task Force.

## Updated Information

Additional information will continue to be updated on the CRRP website on an as-needed basis as new information and/or guidelines become available that are relevant to PSP. The website will be updated monthly. All CRRP material developed prior to September 9, 2020, will be re-distributed and packaged in order to respond to future challenges that PSP encounter in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Communication of Information & Transition

The transition of the CRRP will be prominently stated on the website so that the project's mandate is evident to all individuals who access the material. In addition, the website will include current and up-to-date acknowledgements of all contributing members and the COVID-19 Leadership Task Force, who contributed significant intellectual property, and organizations who provided in-kind support towards the project development and implementation up until the transition period. The update regarding the CRRP's transition will clearly convey what material is accessible and how to contact CIPSRT for further information.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the generous support and efforts of all public safety personnel, researchers, clinicians, graduate students, and partnering organizations who collaborated on this initiative.

The COVID-19 Leadership Task Force is extremely grateful to the many contributors who assisted in the development and creation of material for the CRRP. A special thank-you to Veterans Affairs Canada for their generous additional in-kind support.

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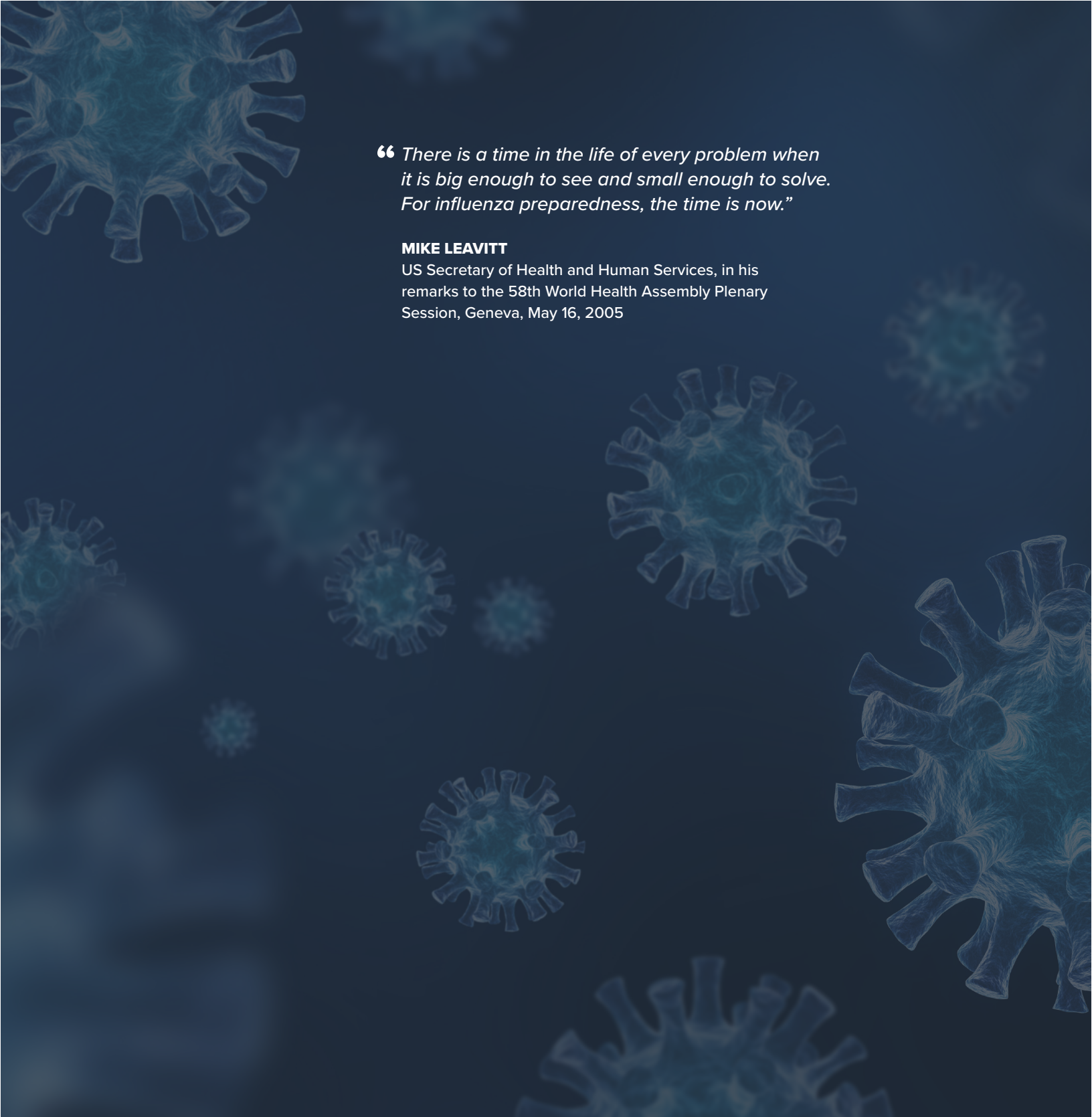
Veterans Affairs Canada  
Generous - In-kind support

Public Safety Canada

Centre of Excellence on Post-Traumatic  
Stress Disorder and Related Mental  
Health Conditions - In-kind support

Anxiety Treatment Research Centre,  
St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton  
- In-kind support

Homewood Research Institute  
- In-kind support



*“ There is a time in the life of every problem when  
it is big enough to see and small enough to solve.  
For influenza preparedness, the time is now.”*

**MIKE LEAVITT**

US Secretary of Health and Human Services, in his  
remarks to the 58th World Health Assembly Plenary  
Session, Geneva, May 16, 2005