



Perley Rideau Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care receives historic \$2 million gift to support research efforts

Gift from Commissionaires Ottawa will accelerate research and innovation in caring for Canada's aging Veterans and seniors

June 15, 2021 – Ottawa, Ontario

Today the Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre Foundation celebrated the largest philanthropic gift in its history, which will give a major boost to the Perley Rideau's growing Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care, the first of its kind in Canada.

The \$2 million gift from Commissionaires Ottawa represents a substantial investment in research and innovation that is crucially needed to guide the care of seniors and Veterans living with frailty, a medical condition. It will empower the Perley Rideau's Centre of Excellence to continue its important work in applied research, knowledge transfer, and the creation of evidence-based best practices that will positively impact the lives of older Canadians at the Perley Rideau and across the country.

"We are incredibly grateful to Commissionaires Ottawa for placing their faith in Perley Rideau with this transformative gift. Commissionaires Ottawa have been an outstanding partner throughout the years and we hope their generosity will inspire others in the community to answer the call and improve quality of life for seniors and Veterans, which the pandemic showed is urgently needed. Together we can realize our vision to transform the care of seniors and Veterans living with frailty while continuing to honour the Perley Rideau's commitment to exceptional care for residents," said Akos Hoffer, CEO, The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre.

The \$2 million gift strengthens the partnership between the Perley Rideau and Commissionaires Ottawa. Previously Commissionaires Ottawa donated \$1 million to the Perley Rideau Seniors Village, where Veterans receive priority access. As a leading private sector employer of former members of the Canadian Armed Forces and RCMP, Commissionaires Ottawa has a proud record of giving back to Veterans, and their families, who have served our country.

"One of the big draws to donate \$2 million toward this critical research was learning that frailty, which affects quality of life and risk of death, is a medical condition and not an inevitable part of aging. We want to do our part to show seniors and Veterans that we value their contributions at every stage of their lives and are invested in medical research to help them live life to the fullest. For years, we have witnessed the Perley Rideau's leadership in providing innovative care for aging loved ones from all walks of life—and today is it an honour to support them as a pioneer of frailty-informed research. We hope others join us in donating to this cause," said Captain (N) Paul A. Guindon (Ret'd), CEO, Commissionaires Ottawa.

The gift was unveiled at a virtual event that featured an expert panel discussion on transforming seniors' care in Canada, moderated by award-winning health columnist André Picard.



It comes at a critical time when the pandemic has drawn significant public attention to the well-being of seniors and the need for better care, particularly in long-term care homes. With Canada's population aging rapidly and pressure mounting on the healthcare system, improving seniors' care is an issue that can no longer be ignored. The gift will help close the knowledge gap in frailty and ensure that seniors and Veterans receive the care they deserve.

In recognition of the gift, the Centre of Excellence Research Chair title will now be known as the Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair in Frailty-Informed Care. This position is held by Dr. Annie Robitaille, an Assistant Professor in the Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences at the University of Ottawa, who has dedicated her career to researching a broad spectrum of issues related to aging.

Under Dr. Robitaille's leadership, the Perley Rideau is actively working to become Canada's first Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care. Established in 2019, the mission of the Centre of Excellence is to optimize quality of life for seniors living with frailty in long-term care through innovative, evidence-based care, education and research. It brings together health practitioners and researchers to better understand how to prevent and manage frailty. Examples of ongoing studies include exploring the psychosocial impacts of COVID-19 visitation and program restrictions, examining the benefits of social visits between university students and long-term care residents with dementia, and testing home-based technologies designed to keep older adults safe and connected.

The gift is part of a larger \$10 million fundraising campaign which aims to transform care for millions of seniors across Canada, while continuing to sustain exceptional care for hundreds of Veterans and seniors living at the Perley Rideau. "Answering the Call" is currently seeking transformative gifts from individuals and organizations who share the campaign's goals and values. These philanthropic investments will fund applied research projects and propel the growth of the Centre of Excellence. Former CBC anchor Peter Mansbridge was recently named Honorary Chair of the campaign.

To learn more about the capital campaign and Centre of Excellence, please visit <https://www.answeringthecall.care/>.

Media Contact

Jay Innes,

Communications Director

The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre

613-526-7171 ext. 2207 | Cell: 613-608-3497

jinnes@prvhc.com

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The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre is one of the largest and most progressive long-term care homes in Ontario. In addition to the 450 long-term care beds for Veterans and members of the public, the Perley Rideau campus includes a Seniors Village with 139 independent-living apartments. It employs a staff of more than 850.

*Together, we improve
the well-being of the people we serve.*

www.PerleyRideau.ca