



INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
OF FIRE FIGHTERS



EHN CANADA

Behavioural Health Treatment for Canadian Fire Service Professionals • 1-888-301-7876

For Immediate Release

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EHN Canada and IAFF Strike Exclusive Agreement to Offer Specialized Care to Professional Fire Fighters for Post-Traumatic Stress, Addiction and Mental Health

Ottawa, ON, May 17, 2022 – Professional fire fighters suffering from addiction, occupational stress, trauma and other conditions now have access to highly-specialized treatment programs designed to meet the needs of their unique profession.

This exclusive agreement was developed through the collaboration between Edgewood Health Network (EHN Canada), Canada’s leading provider of private behavioural health treatment services, and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). IAFF members seeking trauma-focused treatment will have priority access to **EHN’s Military, Veteran, and First Responders (MVFR) Program**, designed to meet the unique clinical and social needs of their profession. This program is designed to treat occupational trauma with and without occurring addiction. Treatment is delivered in both English and French languages, available through inpatient, outpatient and telehealth programming.

The MVFR trauma-focused program is currently available at three locations: Edgewood in Nanaimo, British Columbia; Clinique Nouveau Départ (CND) in Montreal, Quebec; and Gateway in Peterborough, Ontario. Fire fighters seeking non-trauma focused care in civilian treatment settings also have access to Sandstone in Calgary, Alberta, Ledgehill in Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia, and Bellwood in Toronto, Ontario. Treatment programming will be based on the individual clinical needs of the member. With proven experience treating first responders, EHN will also provide the IAFF’s 26,000 Canadian members with dedicated inquiry lines and access to in-person or telehealth intensive outpatient programs, family programs and aftercare.

Recent studies show that responding to traumatic, often graphic, emergencies – from pulling a child from a crushed automobile to a house fire with multiple victims to a massive terror attack – has an impact on fire fighters. These experiences are causing post-traumatic stress injury (PTSI) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at rates similar to those found in combat veterans. The COVID-19 pandemic and Canada’s overdose crisis have also increased the need to improve access to culturally competent support for fire fighters.

“Working on the frontlines of emergency response can be a challenging and stressful job. The men and women we represent are often exposed to life-threatening situations and traumatic experiences,” says IAFF General President Edward Kelly.

It is estimated that one in five fire fighters struggles with PTSI/PTSD at twice the rate of the general population. Fire fighters with post-traumatic stress also often develop co-occurring clinical conditions, such as addiction, depression, anxiety and substance abuse.

“Fire fighters are subjected to stresses and trauma that can be life-changing, but until recently, mental health issues have largely been in the shadows,” adds Kelly. “Our collaboration with EHN will provide the support, treatment and tools they need to recover and continue to serve their communities. We are excited to partner with the team at EHN Canada who we see as uniquely positioned to provide comprehensive services coast-to-coast in both English and French.”

Thanks to ongoing training made available by the IAFF, EHN Canada facilities will be staffed by highly experienced and specialized teams, including mental health professionals who understand the fire service culture and the complex needs of fire fighters seeking recovery from occupational trauma, addiction and co-occurring conditions.

“We know that fire fighters can be exposed to significant trauma in the line of duty, which can lead to post-traumatic stress injury and other behavioural health issues,” says Joe Manget, CEO of EHN Canada. “With our expertise in treating trauma, addiction recovery and a comprehensive approach to care, EHN Canada is able to fully recognize and meet the needs of IAFF Canadian members to help them get back to the lives and jobs they care about. We are extremely proud to partner with the IAFF in providing care to members.”

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About EHN Canada

EHN Canada is the country’s largest network of recovery centres offering evidence-based mental health treatment from coast to coast. They cover a wide range of needs, from outpatient therapy to short-term detox stays and multi-month residential treatment for mental health and substance use disorders. EHN Canada is dedicated to the best outcomes: long-lasting recovery from mental health disorders, trauma or addiction for both patients and their loved ones. Learn more at <https://www.edgewoodhealthnetwork.com>

About the International Association of Fire Fighters

The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), headquartered in Washington, DC, and Ottawa, Ontario, is the leading advocate in the United States and Canada for the safety, health and training of professional fire fighters and represents more than 326,000 full-time professional fire fighters, including more than 26,000 throughout Canada. The IAFF is the official voice of Canada’s most trusted profession. For more information, visit www.iaff.org or contact the IAFF Canadian Office at 613-567-8988 or canada@iaff.org.