

WELL-BEING AND WELL-DOING:

An Assessment of How
Volunteering Impacts
Canadian Veteran Well-
being

Prepared By

Cicero
Social Impact

MGT



Well-being and Well-doing: An Assessment of How Volunteering Impacts Canadian Veteran Well-being

I. Executive Summary

Introduction

This exploratory research examines the potential of volunteerism to enhance the well-being of Canadian Veterans who engage in volunteer service. While a growing body of evidence links volunteering to significant mental, social, and physical health benefits,¹ Canada has experienced an ongoing acute shortage in volunteer participation.² At the same time, recent findings from Veterans Affairs Canada reveal that Veterans report lower well-being than the general population across several key indicators, including overall health, life satisfaction, and sense of community belonging.³ To our knowledge, this is the first study to investigate the intersection of Veteran well-being and volunteerism in the Canadian context.

Key Findings

- **Canadian Veterans perceive significant benefits from volunteering:** 93% of Canadian Veterans surveyed reported improved overall well-being from volunteering, and 98% would recommend volunteering to peers.
- **Canadian Veteran volunteers face notable well-being challenges, similar to the broader Veteran population:** Among those surveyed, only 40% reported their health as very good/excellent, and just 40% reported having an easy adjustment to civilian life.
- **Mental health and social benefits from volunteering are particularly pronounced:** 86% reported improvements in mental health, sense of purpose, and social connection; 81% saw greater life satisfaction.
- **Volunteering can strengthen relationships:** 79% of Veterans reported volunteering had improved their sense of belonging to a group who shared their beliefs, 62% felt volunteering had moderately improved the occurrence of relationships where their competence and skills were recognized, and 55% felt volunteering improved the occurrence of feeling a strong emotional bond with at least one other person.
- **High volunteer engagement correlates with heightened well-being outcomes:** Veterans who volunteered more than average (200+ hours per year) reported greater well-being than those who volunteered less than average, including easier adjustment to civilian life (+11%), lower stress (-7%), and stronger sense of community / social connections (+25%).
- **Volunteering with and providing service to Non-Veterans amplifies well-being gains:** When studying highly engaged volunteers (those volunteering 200+ hours per year) across different service contexts, volunteering in groups that did not include other Veterans amplified various well-being benefits by up to 22 percentage points. On the other hand, when volunteer efforts

were specifically provided to other Veterans, the well-being impact from volunteering was diminished by as much as 17 percentage points.

- **Veterans’ personal stories highlight transformative experiences, but one size does not fit all:** Qualitative responses revealed recurring themes of restored identity, emotional healing, peer connection, and a renewed sense of purpose through volunteering—but what made volunteering impactful was uniquely personal and specific to the type of volunteer activities and experiences each volunteer had.

Recommendations

- **Heightened efforts should be made by the government and NGOs supporting Veterans to connect Veterans with volunteering opportunities:** Volunteering has a positive impact on transition to civilian life, community connection, and mental health among Veterans, important aspects of well-being that Veterans often score low on.
- **Canadian non-profits and organizations seeking volunteers should actively consider outreach to Veterans:** Canadian Veterans have a high likelihood of recommending volunteering to peers, and evidence from previous research suggests Veterans can help fill volunteering gaps given their affinity for civic engagement.
- **Additional Canada-specific research on volunteering and well-being is needed:** Research is needed to better understand the demographics and nature of Veteran volunteering across Canada, barriers to Veteran volunteering and how to overcome them, and additional ways in which the nature of volunteering activities can maximize well-being outcomes for specific demographics.

II. Background

Previous research from the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR), funded through the CIMVHR True Patriot Love Research Initiative, has highlighted the potential for positive well-being outcomes for Veterans generated by participation in volunteering. However, this research also noted that “No Canadian evidence on volunteering among Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and military members exists to guide local, provincial/territorial, or national volunteer programming and services.”⁴

Volunteerism and Well-being

While this exploratory study may be the first to assess the relationship between Veteran Volunteering and Veteran Well-being in Canada, there is strong evidence of a relationship between volunteerism and well-being among the general population globally (particularly in the United States). A systematic review by Nichol et al. (2023) indicates that volunteering has positive effects on mental, physical, and social health and well-being, particularly reduced mortality, and increased functioning, quality of life, pride, empowerment, motivation, social support, and sense of community.⁵ An older but oft-cited study in the Journal of Gerontological Social Work found that older adults who engage in volunteer activities experience stronger social ties and greater psychological well-being.⁶ Interestingly, the latter study found that the number of organizations for

which the older adults volunteered, the type of organization, or the perceived benefit of the work to others, had no effect on well-being (at least that was detectable on average across the entire population). However, the more recent study from Nichol et al. highlighted that the ‘dosage’ of volunteering is likely important, especially in emotionally demanding volunteering roles, where burnout is a risk.

Volunteerism and Well-being Among Veterans

In the U.S., substantial research has also been conducted highlighting positive benefits from volunteering, specifically among Veterans. A study of 4,069 U.S. Veterans published in *Nature* found that those who regularly provided support to others, such as through volunteering, had significantly lower risks of PTSD, depression, and suicidal ideation, by 22–32% per standard deviation increase in support.⁷ Veterans who both gave and received support experienced the greatest mental health benefits, suggesting that encouraging mutual support may enhance Veteran well-being. Another peer-reviewed study of a six-month volunteer “civic service” program involving 346 post-9/11 U.S. Veterans found significant improvements in health, mental well-being, and social functioning among participating Veterans. PTSD symptoms decreased from 50% to 43%, depression from 23.5% to 15%, and participants reported feeling less isolated and more purposeful.⁸ Furthermore, survey findings from the 2009 “All Volunteer Force” study highlighted the strong desire and willingness (at least among U.S. Veterans) to participate in volunteer service, in connection with significant challenges faced by U.S. Veterans transitioning to civilian life.⁹

Studies outside of the U.S. have provided limited evidence of positive effects from volunteering on Veterans and highlighted some challenges. A 2024 report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Australia found that Australian Veterans are more likely to volunteer than the general population and suggested that volunteering can broaden Veterans’ social networks, enhance their skills, and “promote good mental health” by providing a sense of purpose and reducing social isolation.¹⁰ Another Australian study followed 786 Veteran volunteers for Disaster Relief Australia (DRA) from 2022-2024 and found compelling evidence that volunteering improved Veterans’ well-being. On average, DRA volunteers showed statistically significant improvements in most mental health measures (e.g., life satisfaction, mental wellness), and these gains were sustained long-term. The positive effects were especially pronounced for the most vulnerable Veterans – those struggling with the transition – who reported that the volunteer mission gave them a renewed sense of usefulness and purpose at a critical time.¹¹ Conversely, a 2023 study of 1,562 Veterans in the U.K. found that while 60% had volunteered in the past year and generally reported well-being benefits, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted these effects, with no clear link between volunteering and mental health during that period.¹² The findings suggest that while volunteering usually supports Veteran well-being, its impact is context-dependent and may be diminished by external stressors like lockdowns or overburden.

Poor Reported Well-being Among Canadian Veterans

In Canada, the need for improved Veteran well-being is well documented. According to Veterans Affairs Canada, 36% of Canadian Veterans report chronic pain, and over one-third report mental health issues such as anxiety or depression. The same study found that life satisfaction,

employment rates, and self-reported health are all well below those reported by the general population.¹³ Furthermore, many Veterans experience difficulties transitioning to civilian life, which can negatively impact their sense of identity, purpose, and community connectedness.¹⁴ Previous global research has found similar findings among Veterans, highlighting how Veterans often report a loss of social well-being during the transition from military service to civilian life, and experience high rates of social isolation and loneliness.¹⁵ As for the causes of well-being challenges among Veterans, a study by Coulthard, Sudom, and Born (2022) found that poorer self-reported health and higher psychological distress among recently released Canadian Armed Forces Veterans were significantly associated with chronic physical conditions, childhood adversity, and low social support, but that higher levels of reporting a 'sense of mastery' emerged as a key protective factor promoting better health outcomes and reduced distress. Volunteerism may offer a structured and meaningful pathway for Veterans to improve their well-being by regaining a sense of agency, building relationships, improving their sense of mastery, and reintegrating into civilian society.

Despite promising international research, there is little empirical evidence about the specific impact of volunteering on the well-being of Canadian Veterans, or even the general state of volunteer participation among Veterans. Most existing Canadian studies focus either on the health challenges facing Veterans or on the overall state of volunteerism, but do not explicitly examine the intersection of these two areas.¹⁶ This is a critical gap, particularly in light of the unique demographic and psychosocial profile of Canadian Veterans¹⁷ and the ongoing challenges facing the volunteering sector in Canada.¹⁸

The Canadian Volunteer Gap

Recent government and non-profit publications on volunteerism in Canada highlight a critical shortage of volunteers, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic, and suggest a need to address barriers to volunteerism, such as non-inclusive recruitment practices, underinvestment in volunteer management infrastructure, and inconsistent volunteer screening methods.¹⁹ Global research has shown that Veterans can be a key demographic to help boost volunteering numbers and that Veterans volunteer more often than the general population, at least in the U.S. and Australia, likely due to the nature of their previous military service.^{20 21} A 2024 report from Volunteer Canada specifically highlighted how volunteering is essential for the well-being of Canadian volunteers and Canadian society, and current volunteer barriers and shortages hinder those volunteering and the communities around them from realizing the well-being benefits of volunteering.²²

Measuring Well-being and Volunteerism

It is worth acknowledging that well-being and volunteerism are both difficult topics of study, and their subjective and multifaceted nature makes measurement difficult. Indeed, this may contribute to the current gap in research, especially when adding yet another cross-section in focusing on the Canadian Veteran population (who often faces survey fatigue from the wide variety of Veteran research initiatives). Nonetheless, existing research provides solid footing for measuring well-being and volunteering participation.

Scholars typically conceptualize well-being through frameworks that include emotional, psychological, and social dimensions.²³ Recent research from Veterans Affairs Canada has done the hard work of establishing reliable well-being metrics and applying them to the Veteran population.²⁴ As for volunteering, research suggests that the nature of volunteer work matters: roles that offer autonomy, social interaction, and visible impact tend to yield the greatest benefits,²⁵ but not all volunteer experiences are equally beneficial, and matching Veterans with suitable opportunities may be important for maximizing positive effects.²⁶

Ultimately, this research aims to contribute new insights into the potential for volunteerism to serve as a pathway to improved Veteran well-being in Canada. By synthesizing evidence from both Canadian and international research, combined with firsthand well-being reporting from Canadian Veterans volunteers, it highlights the need for tailored volunteer opportunities that align with the values, experiences, and capacities of Veterans. In doing so, it supports ongoing efforts by governments and community organizations to build a more inclusive and supportive framework for Veteran reintegration.

III. Methodology

Survey Deployment

This study collected data via two surveys provided to Veteran volunteers recruited across seven non-profits throughout Canada. The first survey was provided between March 2024 and January 2025 to Veterans as they first registered to volunteer with each participating non-profit. Participating non-profits were asked to administer the pre-survey before any volunteering activities took place. The second survey was administered between January and April 2025 to Veterans who had been volunteering at each participating non-profit for at least the minimum amount of time deemed necessary by each non-profit in order to have a representative volunteering experience (typically several months). Surveys were distributed via an anonymous survey link, but a unique ID was used to match pre-surveys and post-surveys taken by the same respondents to allow for comparison. Of the 121 completed post-survey responses, 50 had also taken a pre-survey, allowing for limited comparison of well-being between pre- and post-surveys.

In addition to Veterans, participating non-profits were permitted to give the survey to Veteran family members, reserve force members, and currently serving members. The survey collected 37 responses from these individuals, allowing limited analysis of well-being impacts on Veteran-adjacent populations.

Survey Development

In both the pre- and post-surveys, Veterans were asked basic demographic information, details about any volunteering they had participated in over the past 12 months, and questions regarding their general well-being. The post-survey contained additional questions asking specifically about the nature of service provided with one of the seven participating non-profit organizations, the

amount of service provided (with the participating non-profits as well as other organizations), and how they perceived their volunteering experience affecting their well-being. Questions about well-being were designed to closely or identically mirror those used in repudiated previous survey work by Veterans Affairs Canada²⁷ regarding Veteran well-being in Canada (see Appendix for a full list of survey questions).

Veteran Volunteer Recruiting

Careful instructions were provided to each participating non-profit to prevent duplicate responses and ensure participants knew their responses were anonymous and confidential. The seven participating organizations were Invictus Games 2025, Team Rubicon Canada, Perley Health, Mood Disorders Society of Canada, Camp Aftermath, Veteran Farm Project, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada. Non-profits were selected through an application process to True Patriot Love Canada; the selected non-profits had to demonstrate that they would be able to recruit as many as 30 Veteran volunteers and received a grant for their participation. The selected non-profits were deliberately chosen to represent a variety of volunteering activities, volunteering formats, and volunteer demographics—some of the selected organizations focused specifically on the Veteran space, while others had recruited few Veterans in the past.

Survey Analysis

Completed surveys were compiled across participating non-profits and screened for incomplete or faulty responses using a strike-out method that considered speeding, gibberish open responses, and straight-lining on grid questions. Multiple violations resulted in a participant's response being removed (13% of the pre-survey and 22% of the post-survey). Results were then tabulated, and data analysis was conducted using Pearson and Spearman statistical tests to identify significant relationships between Veteran well-being, the nature of Veteran volunteer service, and Veteran demographics.

In addition to quantitative survey data, the post-survey included open-ended qualitative questions to gather insights on how Veterans experienced their volunteer service. These responses were reviewed and coded thematically using AI tools to identify common patterns and insights in relation to the nature of the service provided and volunteering impacts on their well-being. Quotes were then extracted to illustrate key themes and the personal impact of volunteering. Furthermore, subgroup analyses were conducted to compare well-being outcomes across different volunteering settings (e.g., volunteering to other Veterans, group vs. individual formats, etc.). By examining the difference in average well-being change between high- (volunteering more than average) and low-engagement (volunteering less than average) cohorts within each setting, the analysis provided insight into how specific types of service amplify or mute the overall benefits of volunteering.

IV. Survey Statistics

Pre-Survey Overview

A total of 276 individuals completed the pre-survey, of whom 214 identified as Veterans and 62 as Non-Veterans. The survey experienced a dropout rate of 12.6%, and the median time to completion was 7 minutes and 37 seconds. A detailed breakdown of Veteran survey participant demographics is provided below; only responses from current Veterans were included in the primary analysis and results of this research; observations from the limited number of surveys collected from Veteran-adjacent populations are called out separately. Among Veteran respondents, 49% reported prior volunteer experience with non-partner organizations (organizations other than one of the seven organizations from which volunteers for this study were recruited) in the last year, contributing an average of 174 hours. In contrast, 10% had previously volunteered with one of the partner organizations of the study in some capacity in the last year, contributing an average of 59 hours. Nearly half (47%) indicated no prior volunteering experience in the last year.

Category	% of Veteran Respondents	Average Hours per Year
Volunteering Experience		
<i>Volunteered Previously with Non-Partners</i>	49%	174
<i>Volunteered Previously with Partner (one of the seven participating non-profits)</i>	10%	59
<i>No Volunteering Experience</i>	47%	-
Place of Residence		
<i>British Columbia</i>	34%	
<i>Ontario</i>	31%	
<i>Nova Scotia</i>	15%	
<i>Alberta</i>	9%	
<i>Other Provinces</i>	11%	

Post-Survey Overview

The post-survey was completed by 168 individuals, including 121 Veterans and 47 Non-Veterans. The dropout rate increased slightly to 19%, and the median survey completion time was 15 minutes and 40 seconds.

Category	% of Veteran Respondents
Place of Residence	
<i>Ontario</i>	43%
<i>British Columbia</i>	32%
<i>Nova Scotia</i>	13%
<i>Other Provinces</i>	12%
Age	
<i>25–34</i>	5%
<i>35–44</i>	14%
<i>45–54</i>	25%

<i>55–64</i>	28%
<i>65 and over</i>	29%
Sex at Birth	
<i>Male</i>	54%
<i>Female</i>	45%

Among Veterans in the post-survey sample, the average number of volunteer hours with partner organizations was 98.5 per year, with a median of 50 hours. When including both partner and non-partner volunteering, the average was 200 hours annually, with a median of 102 hours.

Among Veterans surveyed, 57% volunteered often or almost always in a group with other Veterans; only 20% stated that they volunteered often or almost always in a group without other Veterans. Relatively few Veterans said they volunteered often or almost always alone (25%), and more than half (52%) said they never or rarely volunteered alone.

As for the setting of service provided by volunteers in the sample, Veterans were primarily involved in service that took place in-person, with 82% of respondents indicating they often or almost always volunteered in person, and only 18% indicating they volunteered often or almost always virtually.

Lastly, in regard to the types of individuals served, survey participants most frequently served other Veterans, with 36% indicating they did so often or almost always. Non-Veterans were also a common recipient group (34%), followed by Veteran family members (20%) and currently serving members (17%).

Pre- and Post-survey Matches

A total of 50 Veterans completed both the pre- and post-surveys, enabling limited matched response analysis. Matching was conducted using a unique identifier assigned at the time of survey distribution (both pre- and post-survey) to ensure accurate linkage between responses. The average time between the administration of the pre- and post-surveys was 61 days, with a median interval of 44 days. Among these 50 matched Veterans, the average number of hours volunteered annually was 200, with a median of 96 hours. Of this group, 20 Veterans (40%) reported no prior volunteering experience with either partner or non-partner organizations at the time of the pre-survey. Eight Veterans (16%) had previously volunteered with a partner organization, averaging 131 hours annually (median: 65 hours), while 27 Veterans (54%) had volunteered with a non-partner organization, averaging 226 hours annually (median: 148 hours).

V. Findings

The post-survey of 121 Canadian Veteran volunteers across the seven participating non-profits provided a comprehensive overview of Veterans' experiences and the perceived impacts of their volunteer engagements.

Volunteering experience

A strong majority (97%) of post-survey respondents described their overall experience volunteering with the seven participating partner organizations as somewhat (15%) or very (82%) positive. Similarly, 81% reported experiencing a strong sense of camaraderie and support while volunteering, and 69% of Veterans felt their service was very impactful on the communities or individuals they supported. Overall, 98% of Veterans were somewhat (17%) or very (81%) likely to recommend volunteering to peers as a way to enhance well-being.

Reported Well-being

As for general well-being at the time of post-survey administration, general well-being among Canadian Veterans showed room for improvement, similar to previous Veteran well-being research in Canada. The highest indicators of well-being measured included 81% reporting they are somewhat (50%) or very (31%) satisfied with their relationships with family members, and 74% reporting that they somewhat (40%) or strongly (34%) agree that they have a strong sense of purpose in life. That said, only 40% reported a very (18%) or moderately (22%) easy adjustment to civilian life, and just 40% rated their health in general as very good (31%) or excellent (9%). Reported stress levels were also moderate, with only 33% describing their daily lives as not very (29%) or not at all (3%) stressful.

Impact of Volunteering on Well-being

When asked about how volunteering with one of the seven participating partner organizations impacted their overall well-being, 93% of respondents reported it had a somewhat (35%) or very (58%) positive impact on their well-being. With regards to specific aspects of well-being, Veterans reported that volunteering had a particularly strong impact on their mental health (86% reported a somewhat significant- 45%, or very significant- 41% positive impact), sense of community / social connections (86% reported a somewhat significant – 55%, or very significant – 31% positive impact), sense of purpose (86% reported a somewhat significant – 49%, or very significant – 37% positive impact), and satisfaction with life (81% reported a somewhat significant – 45%, or very significant – 36% positive impact). Physical health, satisfaction with main job, and education / life skills each saw 50% of Veterans reporting a somewhat or significant positive impact from volunteering. Only 11% of Veterans reported positive impacts from volunteering on financial satisfaction, and just 19% reported positive impacts on employment opportunities.

Veterans also noted a multitude of perceived positive impacts from their volunteering experience with the non-profits included in the study, especially as it related to their relationships with others. 79% of respondents agreed that volunteering had moderately (46%) or significantly (32%) improved their sense of belonging within a group sharing their attitudes and beliefs; 62% felt volunteering had moderately (45%) or significantly (17%) improved the occurrence of relationships where their competence and skills were recognized; 61% agreed that volunteering improved the occurrence of

others admiring their talents and abilities moderately (44%) or significantly (17%); and 55% felt volunteering had moderately (30%) or significantly (25%) improved the occurrence of feeling a strong emotional bond with at least one other person.

Comparing Well-Being Impacts by Volunteering ‘Dosage’

Correlation analysis between different well-being parameters and the number of total hours volunteered annually (with partner or non-partner organizations) revealed notable differences in well-being outcomes between Veterans who volunteered more than 200 hours annually (“high-engagement”) and those who volunteered less (“low-engagement”). To allow for apples-to-apples comparison across items measured on Likert scales, results are reported on a scale-normalized basis, expressed as the percentage of the 5-point scale range (i.e., a 0.1 point Likert scale increase equals a 2.5 percentage point increase).

Veterans in the high-engagement cohort rated their adjustment to civilian life 11 percentage points higher on the scale than their lower-engagement counterparts (3.30 vs. 2.87 out of 5). Similarly, they rated their ability to manage stress 7 percentage points higher on average (3.17 vs. 2.88). Differences were especially pronounced in social well-being indicators: sense of community/social connection was 25 percentage points higher among the high engagement group (3.84 vs. 2.82), and their sense of purpose rated 18 percentage points higher (3.71 vs. 3.00). In addition, the high engagement group reported significantly greater sense of belonging to their local community (19 percentage points higher; 3.07 vs. 2.49).

These findings were further reinforced when asked to rate their agreement with relationship-based statements. The proportion of Veterans in the high-engagement group who agreed or strongly agreed to feeling part of a group that shared their attitudes and beliefs was 11 percentage points more than that in the low-engagement group (91% vs. 80%). Similarly, 95% of high-engagement Veterans agreed or strongly agreed that their skills and competence are recognized in relationships, compared to 79% of those with lower engagement, a 16 percentage point increase. Emotional security also improved, with 93% of the high engagement group agreeing or strongly agreeing that they have close relationships that provide emotional well-being (an 11 percentage point increase over the comparison group). Finally, 93% of high-engagement Veterans reported feeling admired for their talents and abilities, compared to 81% among those volunteering less than average, a difference of 12 percentage points.

Together, these results suggest that higher volunteer engagement is associated with meaningful improvements across both individual well-being indicators and relationship-based measures of social connectedness. Veterans consistently rated volunteering as having a strong positive impact on their well-being, suggesting that volunteering can be a valuable and scalable pathway to help improve the broader state of Veteran well-being in Canada.

Well-being Differences Based on the Nature of Volunteer Service

When comparing well-being outcomes between Veterans who volunteered more than average (200 hours annually) and those who volunteered less than average, the difference in average well-being improvement varied depending on the setting in which the volunteering took place.

Among Veterans who frequently volunteered to other Veterans, the increase in well-being was muted; sense of community / social connections, sense of belonging to local community, and sense of purpose showed 17, 12, and 15 percentage point lower gains between the two cohorts, respectively, compared to the unfiltered average. Conversely, among those who rarely or never engaged in group volunteering that included other Veterans, the increase in well-being was amplified: increasing 16 percentage points for sense of community / social connections, 17 percentage points for sense of belonging to local community, and 5 percentage points for sense of purpose—suggesting substantial well-being gains. For Veterans who frequently volunteered in group settings not involving other Veterans, sense of purpose saw the largest increase (22 percentage point increase), with an 18 percentage point increase in sense of community / social connections, and an 11 percentage point increase in social belonging to local community. These findings highlight that the degree of participation in specific volunteering situations may play an important role in shaping the extent of well-being improvements. In particular, providing volunteer service with and to Non-Veterans may result in heightened well-being benefits among Veteran volunteers.

Filter: Group Volunteering (Volunteer Activities Not Including Veterans) – Often / Almost always	Sense of Community / Social Connections	Sense of Belonging to Local Community	Sense of Purpose
N-Count	49	49	49
Increase in average well-being when volunteering more than average	25%	19%	18%
Increase in average well-being when volunteering more than average AND often / almost always volunteered in a group <i>not</i> including Veterans	43% (+18%)	30% (+11%)	40% (+22%)

Filter: Group Volunteering (Volunteer Activities Not Including Veterans) – Never/Rarely	Sense of Community / Social Connections	Sense of Belonging to Local Community	Sense of Purpose
N-Count	22	22	22
Increase in average well-being when volunteering more than average	25%	19%	18%
Increase in average well-being when volunteering more than average AND never/rarely volunteered in a group including Veterans	41% (+16%)	36% (+17%)	23% (+5%)

Filter: Volunteered to Veterans - Often / Almost always	Sense of Community / Social Connections	Sense of Belonging to Local Community	Sense of Purpose
N-Count	27	27	27
Increase in average well-being when volunteering more than average	25%	19%	18%
Increase in average well-being when volunteering more than average AND often / almost always volunteered to Veterans	8% (-17%)	7% (-12%)	3% (-15%)

Well-Being vs. Self-Perceived Impact of Volunteering on Well-Being

Analysis of post-survey responses revealed that the self-perceived impact of volunteering on specific well-being domains varied across baseline well-being levels. Veterans who rated their current health as “poor” or “fair” (bottom two categories on the question “Compared to one year ago, how would you say your health is now?”) reported notably lower perceived benefits from volunteering: a 15% lower mean score (scale-normalized) in mental health impact, 12% lower in sense of purpose, and 8% lower in life satisfaction, social connection, and community belonging, relative to the overall average.

Similarly, Veterans who rated their baseline mental health in the bottom two categories reported 8% lower perceived impact on sense of camaraderie and support, and 7% lower perceived satisfaction with life. In contrast, those in the top two categories for mental health reported consistently higher perceived benefits: 9% higher satisfaction with main job, 8% higher mental health, and 8% higher satisfaction with life. A parallel pattern was observed for baseline life satisfaction; Veterans in the bottom two categories reported 11% lower perceived impact on life satisfaction, 9% lower on sense of purpose, and 8% lower on camaraderie and support. These patterns suggest that those beginning with lower baseline well-being may perceive fewer gains from volunteering, even when engaged in similar activities.

Pre- and Post-Survey Comparison

Matched pre- and post-survey responses from 50 Veterans allowed for limited longitudinal comparison. Self-reported adjustment to civilian life and general health ratings remained relatively consistent between the administration of pre- and post-surveys. Though there was a 10 percentage point increase in the number of Veterans who reported that their health was somewhat or much better than one year ago (38% vs. 28%), the proportion of Veterans who described their daily stress as quite a bit or extremely stressful increased by 17 percentage points (37% vs. 20%). Satisfaction with life improved, with a 10 percentage point increase in respondents rating it as very good or excellent (46% vs. 36%). At the same time, declines were recorded in other areas: the number of respondents rating their physical health and mental health as very good or excellent saw 4 (36% vs. 40%) and 8 (30% vs. 38%) percentage point decreases, respectively.

Opportunities for employment (36% vs. 46%) and education/life skills (48% vs. 58%) well-being also declined, with each indicator showing a 10 percentage point drop in the proportion of Veterans rating them very good/excellent . Additionally, Veterans who rated their sense of purpose in the lowest two categories (poor or fair) rose by 12 percentage points, suggesting a downward trend in this area (38% vs. 26%).

Due to the small sample size of matched responses, no statistically significant correlation could be drawn between volunteering hours and change in current-state well-being scores between the pre- and post-surveys, despite volunteers claiming that volunteering had helped them in many ways, and evidence that those who volunteered more than average (in the post-survey) experienced heightened well-being.

Qualitative Analysis (open-ended questions)

Volunteering with partner organizations was described by Veterans as a deeply transformative experience, offering a renewed sense of identity, belonging, and direction after military service. Across two free-response questions included in the survey, participants consistently highlighted how volunteering provided purpose beyond the uniform, allowing them to serve others in meaningful, tangible ways while also fostering personal healing and growth.

Many Veterans shared that volunteering helped them reclaim a sense of worth, especially after facing challenges such as injury, trauma, isolation, or unemployment. Being entrusted with responsibility—whether leading a team, mentoring a youth, or supporting fellow Veterans—was a powerful validation of their ongoing value to society. For others, it created a safe, supportive community that echoed the camaraderie of military life and filled a void that had persisted since leaving service.

Emotional and relational connections were at the heart of many stories. Participants described forming strong bonds—whether with vulnerable youth, aging Veterans, or international athletes—which often led to mutual healing, personal insight, and profound emotional fulfillment. Moments of inspiration, such as witnessing resilience at the Invictus Games or helping a distressed resident regain their dignity, underscored how these acts of service were as impactful for the volunteer as for the recipient.

While most experiences were overwhelmingly positive, a small number of respondents noted issues related to underutilization and coordination, emphasizing the importance of structured, meaningful engagement that aligns with volunteers' skills and expectations.

Q39 - Please briefly describe how volunteering with Partner Org has impacted your life. (Optional)

Theme	Findings	Notable Quote
Renewed Sense of	Many respondents emphasized that volunteering restored their sense of	<i>"The military dropped me and disregarded me as trash... Team Rubicon has use for my</i>

Theme	Findings	Notable Quote
Purpose & Identity	direction, especially after leaving military service. It gave them a renewed identity, opportunities to be useful again, and a meaningful way to contribute.	<i>skills, gives me opportunity to be someone again.”</i> <i>“I feel I have a little more pep in my step. I look forward to interacting with the Veterans each week [at Perley Health]. It’s a sense of purpose. I feel I’m doing something to enrich another person’s life.”</i> <i>“[Camp Aftermath] Provided me with a sense of purpose beyond the uniform.”</i>
Healing & Personal Growth	For several Veterans, volunteering played a therapeutic role, supporting recovery from trauma, emotional wounds, or difficult transitions. This often included increased self-worth, confidence, and emotional well-being.	<i>“Volunteering with Big Brothers Big Sisters was a pivotal experience during my transition out of the CAF. This opportunity allowed me to connect with young people, provide mentorship, and develop crucial communication and support skills. Navigating my own intersectional lived experiences and trauma, furthered my healing and growth.”</i>
Community, Camaraderie & Belonging	Volunteering fostered deep social connections, particularly among those with shared military backgrounds. Many described the experience as reestablishing a sense of brotherhood/sisterhood and community that mirrored their time in service.	<i>“It gave me a sense of community I had been lacking since my release. I felt that I could talk about my OSI without having to explain it. It was an amazing experience and I hope to be an [Invictus Games] athlete in 2027.”</i> <i>“Volunteering added an appreciation for helping others and being in a different environment with new people. This group of like-minded women, with a similar shared background, offer a trusted source for support that I didn’t have prior to Camp Aftermath.”</i>
Contribution to Fellow Veterans & Society	A strong motivation to give back—whether to other Veterans, youth, or the community—was evident. Respondents felt pride in supporting others and saw their roles as impactful.	<i>“Team Rubicon has given me an opportunity to give back to my community. I am looking forward to dedicating more time to Team Rubicon activities once done my schooling in the spring.”</i> <i>“[At Veteran Farm] I have a safe place to go where I can use my skills, exercise and help provide for other Veterans less fortunate than myself.”</i>

Theme	Findings	Notable Quote
Personal Enrichment & Learning	Participants reported acquiring new skills, gaining emotional insight, and experiencing moments of joy, inspiration, and perspective. For some, it served as a channel for continued learning and self-improvement.	<i>"I gained an appreciation of the physical and emotional hardships [Invictus] Games participants have experienced. This has enforced a can-do attitude with tasks I encounter in my daily life."</i> <i>"Volunteering at the Perley is a two-way street. Residents (including Veterans) benefit from my contributions. I also benefit by being a volunteer (improved skills)."</i> <i>"[Mood Disorders Society of Canada] Got me caring about others again."</i>

Q40 - If you feel comfortable, please briefly share a story/experience from your time volunteering with Partner Org and why this experience was meaningful to you. (Optional)

Theme	Findings	Notable Quote
Restoration of Purpose & Self-Worth	Many participants described how volunteering helped them rediscover their sense of usefulness, leadership, and identity post-service. Especially for those struggling with unemployment, injury, or personal loss, being entrusted with responsibility and making an impact served as a profound reaffirmation of their value.	<i>"For some reason, they saw fit to make me a strike team lead [at Team Rubicon]. After spending over a year unemployed, I had a very low sense of value... Having a team that responded to my directions...It validated my leadership skills, made me realise I could ACTUALLY work and be useful, wanted, and valued. It changed my whole way of thinking and perspective. If it weren't for that op, I don't know where I would be."</i>
Healing Through Connection	Volunteering was often described as therapeutic, particularly when engaging with others who shared similar military backgrounds or emotional journeys. These interactions offered comfort, emotional release, and in some cases, personal transformation.	<i>"I have two peer support calls I make weekly [at Mood Disorders Society of Canada] and in the beginning it's about getting to know that person. Now we are comrades."</i> <i>"Building rapport with my mentee [at Big Brothers Big Sisters] took time, especially since she had experienced trauma that made it difficult for her to trust adults. At first, she was reserved and hesitant, but I knew that gaining her trust would require intentional effort and patience..... After some time, she started to share more....She became a chatterbox, excited to talk about everything from her life stresses to the challenges of navigating family and friend"</i>

Theme	Findings	Notable Quote
		<i>relationships.... Over time, I saw her confidence grow as she started to trust me more. This experience had a profound impact on me. Watching her open up and seeing the positive shift in her made me realize how important it is to have supportive relationships, ...and transformative power of connection and support."</i>
Emotional Fulfilment from Service	Respondents shared numerous stories where a simple act of service—whether helping a distressed resident, mentoring a child, or assisting a fellow Veteran—had a deeply moving impact. These moments often solidified why the volunteering experience was so meaningful to them.	<i>"[At Veteran Farm] I enjoyed filling food hampers knowing that all the effort was helping families with food insecurity."</i> <i>"The smiles that the activities I organize [at Perley Health] put on the resident's faces - this makes it all worth the time I give, knowing that I have made their day just a little bit better."</i>
Moments of Inspiration & Perspective	Participation in high-impact events like the Invictus Games exposed many to stories of resilience and courage, often changing their outlook on personal limitations, trauma, or adversity. Observing athletes overcome physical and emotional barriers was cited repeatedly as life-affirming and humbling.	<i>"Watching the Nigerian swim team relay race was so moving & inspirational. The way they struggled to swim with missing limbs, nearly drowning but pushed through to the end, as a team really stressed the importance of these games and reminded me that my challenges and struggles are minor in comparison. I'm very grateful for this reminder of fortitude."</i>
Challenges with Volunteer Management	While the majority of experiences were positive, a small number of respondents expressed frustration with how their time and skills were underutilized. These reflections highlight the importance of meaningful engagement and proper coordination to ensure volunteers feel valued.	<i>"Volunteering at these games was a colossal undercapitalization of my assets, and was a significant negative impact on [me]. I get the whole post event blues, but I left with a sense of worthlessness."</i>

Non-Veteran General Well-Being

Among the 47 non-Veteran respondents, 37 were identified as Veteran-adjacent – currently serving CAF members, reserve force members, or immediate family of Veterans. Within this subgroup, general well-being indicators were moderate: 41% rated their overall health as excellent or very good, and stress levels were high, with 53% experiencing "quite a bit" or "extremely" stressful daily lives. Nevertheless, a majority felt connected to their local community (63%), reported having a

strong sense of purpose (78%), and were satisfied with family relationships (83%). Additionally, 92% would recommend volunteering to Veterans to improve their well-being.

Responses on specific well-being domains were mixed, with relatively low proportions rating their physical health (39%), mental health (33%), and sense of community/social connections (31%) as very good or excellent. Moderate ratings were reported for life satisfaction (53%), financial satisfaction (47%), education or life skills (46%), and sense of purpose (44%). These findings suggest that while Veteran-adjacent respondents strongly support the value of volunteering for Veterans, their own well-being reflects room for improvement in key areas similar to Veterans participating in the survey.

Non-Veteran Self-Perceived Impact of Volunteering on their Well-Being

This subgroup reported an average of 154 total volunteering hours annually (median = 80 hours). Veteran-adjacent respondents overwhelmingly reported positive experiences and perceived benefits from volunteering with partner organizations. All respondents (100%) rated their volunteer experience as somewhat or very positive, and 95% indicated that it had a somewhat or very positive impact on their overall well-being. A strong sense of connection was also evident, with 81% reporting a very strong sense of camaraderie and support during their volunteer service, and 68% feeling that their contribution had a very impactful effect on the communities or individuals they served.

When asked to assess how volunteering with the partner organization influenced specific areas of well-being, the majority reported meaningful gains across several domains. Top-two ratings (somewhat or significant positive impact) were highest for sense of purpose (89%), mental health (86%), sense of community/social connections (86%), and satisfaction with life (86%). Notably, though, slightly lower ratings were observed for impacts on physical health (70%) and education/life skills (54%). In contrast, fewer respondents reported positive impacts in employment opportunities (27%) and financial satisfaction (16%), suggesting these were less directly affected by the volunteering experience. Overall, these findings indicate that volunteering with partner organizations was perceived as highly beneficial for social, emotional, and psychological well-being among Non-Veterans closely connected to the military community, similar to positive self-reported well-being effects from Veterans.

Comparing the Well-Being results across Veteran and Veteran-adjacent populations

General well-being outcomes were broadly similar between Veterans (N=121) and Veteran-adjacent (N=37) respondents, with some notable contrasts. Overall health, community belonging, sense of purpose, and satisfaction with family relationships were similar across both groups, but Veteran-adjacent respondents reported higher stress levels (53% reported high stress vs. 33% of Veterans).

Perceptions of the impact of volunteering were overwhelmingly positive for both populations. All Veteran-adjacent respondents (100%) and nearly all Veterans (97%) rated their volunteer

experience as positive, and 95% and 93%, respectively, reported a positive impact on overall well-being. Both groups reported strong perceived benefits on mental health, purpose, social connection, and life satisfaction (ranging from 81% to 89%), with Veteran-adjacent respondents reporting slightly higher gains in physical health (70% vs. 50%) and education/life skills (54% vs. 50%). Financial and employment-related impacts remained low across both groups.

Overall, despite differences in baseline stress, both groups experienced similar general well-being and similarly strong well-being benefits from volunteering, reinforcing its relevance across the broader military-connected population.

VI. Discussion

Although this research provides compelling self-reported evidence from Veteran volunteers regarding positive impacts from volunteering on well-being, the study faced several obstacles and limitations that warrant discussion and future research to explore further. These limitations include variation in demographics between this research and the broader demographics of Veterans and volunteers across Canada, volunteer attrition and potential self-selection bias among volunteers, and limited qualitative data describing what motivates or prevents Veterans from volunteering. Furthermore, data on how different types of volunteering correspond with greater or lesser well-being outcomes for volunteers is limited in this study and deserves further attention.

Comparing the Survey Sample to the Population of Veterans and Volunteers in Canada

While there is not readily available data on the demographics of Canadian Veteran volunteers and the nature of the volunteer service they provide, existing research does provide some insight into the demographics of Veterans in Canada, and separately, the demographics of volunteers in Canada. This data provides a helpful reference point for the demographics of Veterans participating in this research (see Appendix A).

With regard to Veteran demographics, the post-survey administered in this research skewed much less heavily male (61.3%) than the broader demographic of Canadian Veterans (87.5%) as represented in the 2019 Life After Service Survey (LASS)²⁸—the more recent 2022 Canadian Veteran Health Survey (CVHS),²⁹ which replaced the LASS, did not specify a gender breakdown of participants. Educational attainment in the post-survey is higher than in the CVHS, with 31.1% reporting a university degree and 52.9% a post-secondary diploma, compared to 24.6% and 39.4% in the CVHS, respectively. This increased educational profile aligns with a shift in rank distribution and length of service, where officers comprised nearly half (48.8%) of the post-survey sample with 60.3% serving more than 20 years before retirement; this is higher than the portion of officers (17.4%) and Veterans who served 20+ years (54.3%) in the most recent LASS survey. Relatedly, the current annual income distribution of post-survey participants is much lower than the 2019 LASS demographic, with only 28% making over \$100,000 compared to 51.7% respectively.

When comparing Veteran well-being, the post-survey shows similar results as the CVHS, but well-being is slightly lower in some areas. Only 40.5% of post-survey respondents rated their transition to civilian life as easy, compared to 45.1% in the 2019 LASS survey. Self-rated general health was

similar across surveys, with 40.5% rating their health as very good or excellent in the post-survey, slightly above the CVHS (39.0%). However, mental health ratings were notably worse in the post-survey: just 32.8% reported very good or excellent mental health in the post-survey, compared to 49.8% in the 2024 CVHS. Stress levels were higher as well, with 30.8% reporting high stress in the post-survey compared to 21.7% in the CVHS. However, the post-survey sample reports greater community belonging, with 64.2% in the post-survey feeling a strong sense of belonging, compared to 59.2% in the CVHS.

As for general volunteering data in Canada, the 2018 General Social Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating provides an overview of volunteer demographics.³⁰ This research found that the formal volunteer rate among women (44%) is higher than men (38%), which may in part explain the higher female representation in the post-survey compared to the average Canadian population. Although a greater portion of younger generations volunteered (52% for those born after 1996) compared to older generations (32% for those born before 1945), those born before 1945 volunteered much more on average (222 hours per year) compared to those born after 1996 (82 hours per year). The average number of volunteer hours across all 24 million Canadian volunteers (15 and older) in 2018 was approximately 206 hours per year; though this is slightly higher than the average among Veterans in the post-survey (200 hours), it is possible that the average number of hours volunteered has decreased since the Covid-19 pandemic. Interestingly, older generations are much less likely than younger generations to volunteer directly to other individuals (as opposed to volunteer activities that do not require direct interaction with others).

Self-Selection Bias and Overcoming Veteran Volunteering Barriers

Veterans who participated in the research (even for a short period) were those who were in a position to learn about, sign up for, and follow through with volunteering opportunities, and came from a narrow selection of non-profits that were purposefully chosen to represent a variety of volunteering scenarios and ensure Veteran participation was possible; thus Veterans participating and the service provided may not be fully representative of the general Veteran population. There is a need for additional research on the general Veteran population regarding levels of interest and existing participation in volunteering. It would be particularly insightful to compare demographic and well-being characteristics of Veterans who do and do not volunteer, alongside studying barriers to reaching and attracting the Veteran population who choose not to volunteer.

While the nature of volunteer activities needed to address current volunteer shortages may or may not align with Veteran interests, future research should seek to understand in more depth what types of volunteer service are most attractive to Veterans and most likely to lead to well-being outcomes. While this research provides some insights into how the nature of volunteering impacts well-being, sample size limitations and limited qualitative components in this study restrict insights into how Veterans from particular backgrounds or with particular interests can participate in volunteering activities that are more or less impactful on their well-being.

Volunteer Attrition

Another notable barrier to the research was a low ratio of pre- to post-survey matches. Of the 214 Veterans who took the pre-survey, only 50 of those same volunteers took a post-survey (the other 70 individuals who completed a post-survey either started volunteering with the organization

before this study began or never took a pre-survey). Several of the seven partner non-profits recruiting volunteers for this study reported that some Veterans quit volunteering earlier than expected and were unreachable for the post-survey. Accordingly, post-survey results primarily reflect the perspectives of Veterans who remained as volunteers until the post-survey closed.

Though high volunteer turnover is not uncommon for non-profits, it is important in future research to understand what leads to Veteran volunteering attrition. While this study provides evidence that Veterans who volunteer more than average report higher well-being than those who volunteer less than average, those who dropped out of the study early—if due to stress or negative experiences—may have experienced adverse effects on well-being, which should be studied further.

VII. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The survey results of this study provide strong evidence that volunteering positively impacts a variety of well-being aspects among Canadian Veterans who choose to participate in volunteer service. 92% of Veterans surveyed report that volunteering was somewhat or very impactful on their well-being, and Veterans who volunteered more than average reported higher well-being across a variety of factors compared to those who volunteered less than average.

The aspects of well-being that are most impacted by volunteering are related to social connection, sense of purpose, and mental health; areas in which Veterans in Canada report relatively low levels of well-being. Qualitative data supports that while the well-being benefits that Veterans experience from volunteering often relate to finding purpose and community, the mechanisms through which volunteering impacts Veterans are highly personal. Nonetheless, on average, among Veterans studied who are highly engaged in volunteering, volunteering with groups of Non-Veterans and serving Non-Veterans resulted in heightened well-being benefits.

These findings emphasize the important role volunteering can play in promoting improved well-being and transition to civilian life among Canadian Veterans, who, on average, report lower well-being than the general population. With 98% of Veterans studied reporting they would be highly likely to recommend volunteering to peers, this research also highlights the potential for Veterans to be part of the solution in addressing the ongoing volunteering shortage in Canada.

Recommendations

To enhance Veteran well-being and address ongoing gaps in volunteer participation, government agencies and NGOs should increase efforts to connect Veterans with meaningful volunteer opportunities. Volunteering has been shown to support Veterans' transition to civilian life, strengthen mental health, and foster community connection—areas where Veterans often report lower well-being compared to the general population. Canadian non-profits and volunteer-based organizations are also encouraged to actively engage Veterans in their outreach efforts, as this research and prior research indicate Veterans demonstrate a strong sense of civic responsibility

and are highly likely to recommend volunteering to their peers. Finally, further Canada-specific research is recommended to better understand the demographics of Veteran volunteers, to identify and address barriers to participation, and to explore how different types of volunteer opportunities can be structured to maximize engagement and well-being outcomes for diverse Veteran populations.

VIII. Appendix

A. Post-Survey Vs. Previous VAC Surveys

DEMOGRAPHICS

SEX_Q01: What was your sex at birth? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
Male	61.3%	NA	87.5%	87.8%	87.5%	88.5%
Female	38.7%	NA	12.5%	12.2%	12.5%	11.5%

INC_Q013 & INC_Q014: What is your best estimate of your total personal income annually? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
\$0 to <\$50,000	14.0%	NA	10.5%	13.2%	9.5%	15.6%
\$50,000 to <\$100,000	57.9%	NA	37.7%	38.0%	39.4%	40.1%
\$100,000+	28.0%	NA	51.7%	48.9%	51.1%	44.4%

EHG1_Q01: What is the highest certificate, diploma or degree that you have completed? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
Less than high school	0%	9.6%	4.4%	4.1%	5.3%	6.9%

High school graduation	16.0%	26.4%	37.2%	41.7%	44.5%	42.2%
Post-secondary graduation	52.9%	39.4%	40.4%	37.0%	35.0%	36.2%
University degree	31.1%	24.6%	18.0%	17.3%	15.2%	14.7%

Rank

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
Officer	48.8%	NA	17.4%	17.3%	17.1%	17.6%
Senior NCM	23.1%	NA	30.2%	30.5%	30.6%	33.4%
Junior NCM	28.1%	NA	52.3%	52.2%	52.3%	49.0%

Length of service

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
<10 years	16.5%	NA	27.2%	30.7%	28.2%	22.3%
10-19 years	23.1%	NA	18.5%	15.5%	13.9%	15.3%
20+ years	60.3%	NA	54.3%	53.9%	58.0%	62.4%

DEPX_Q01: During your military service, did you ever deploy? (Include international or domestic deployments, exclude training exercises) (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
Deployment during military service	77.3%	NA	76.3%	73.8%	NA	70.3%

SELF-RATED HEALTH

GEN1_Q01: In general, how has the adjustment to civilian life been since you were released from the Canadian Armed Forces? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010

Very or Moderately Easy	40.5%	NA	45.1%	52.4%	54.3%	59.5%
Neither Easy Nor Difficult	19.0%	NA	16.2%	15.2%	16.1%	12.8%
Very or Moderately Difficult	40.5%	NA	38.7%	32.4%	29.6%	27.7%

GEN_Q01 : In general, would you say your health is...? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
Very Good or Excellent	40.5%	39.0%	39.2%	45.5%	48.9%	52.0%
Good	33.1%	33.7%	32.1%	31.4%	31%	28.1%
Fair or Poor	26.4%	27.3%	28.6%	23.1%	20.1%	19.9%

GEN1_Q04: How satisfied are you with your relationships with family members? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
Satisfied or Very Satisfied	81.0%	NA	81.5%	86.5%	NA	87.4%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	10.7%	NA	11.0%	7.4%	NA	6.2%
Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	8.3%	NA	7.4%	6.0%	NA	6.5%

GEN_Q07: Thinking about the amount of stress in your life, how would you describe that most days are? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
Not at all or Not very stressful	32.5%	39.7%	34.8%	32.1%	36.9%	36.4%
A bit	36.7%	38.6%	39.2%	43.9%	40.2%	42.0%
Extremely or quite a bit stressful	30.8%	21.7%	26.0%	24.1%	23.0%	21.6%

GEN_Q02C: In general, would you say your mental health is...? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010

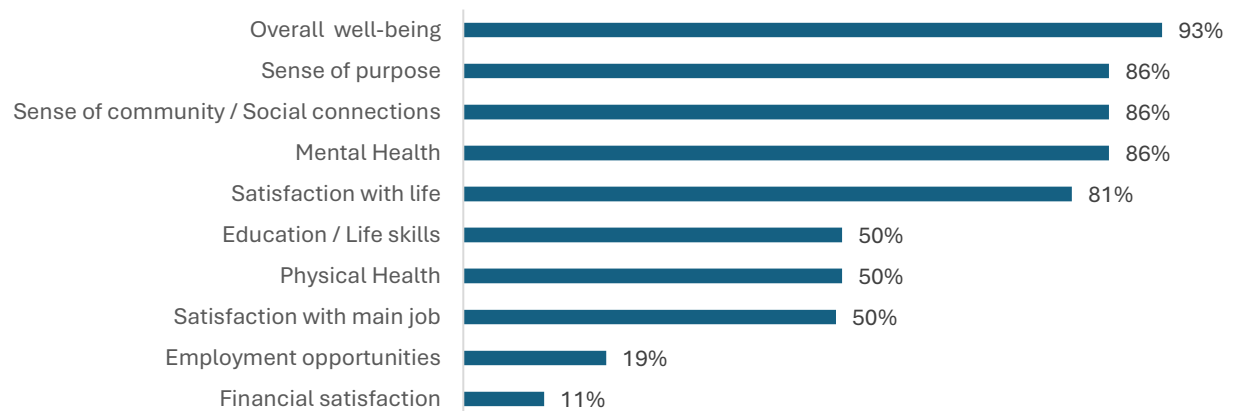
Very Good or Excellent	32.8%	49.8%	48.3%	55.6%	59.9%	64.9%
Good	38.7%	29.7%	23.4%	23.3%	23.1%	19.8%
Fair or Poor	28.6%	20.5%	28.2%	21.1%	17.0%	15.3%

GEN_Q10: How would you describe your sense of belonging to your local community? Would you say it is...? (Veteran-only data for Post-survey)

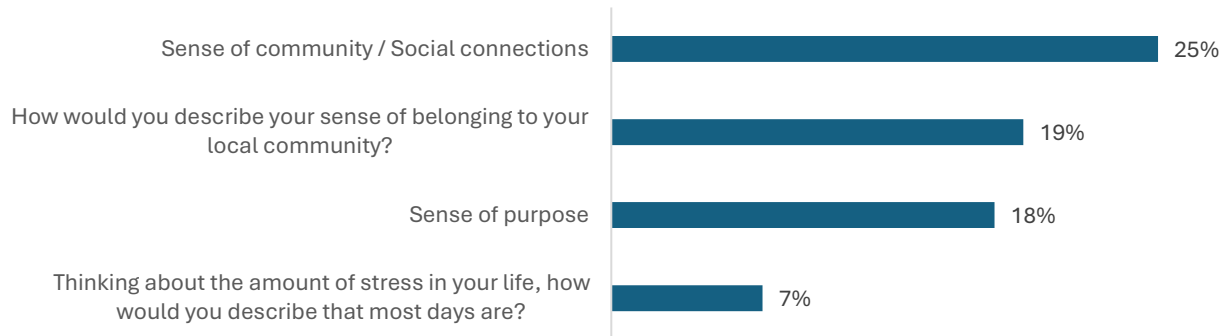
	Post-survey	CVHS	LASS			
	2024	2022	2019	2016	2013	2010
Very or Somewhat Strong	64.2%	59.2%	53.3%	57.4%	57.6%	59.0%
Very or Somewhat Weak	35.8%	40.8%	46.7%	42.6%	42.4%	41.1%

B. Post-survey Results: Key Graphs

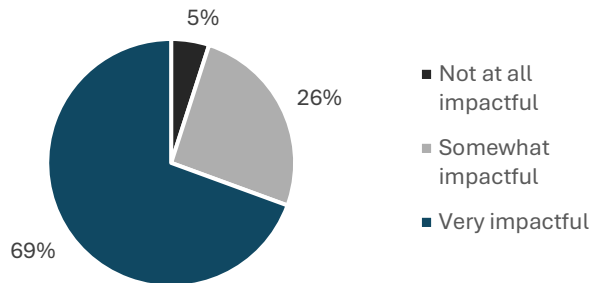
How do you feel your participation in volunteer service with Partner Org impacted your well-being in the following areas? - Somewhat/Significant Positive Impact



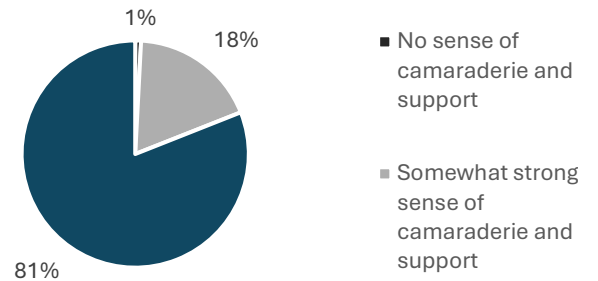
Scale Normalized % Increase in Well-Being When Volunteering More Than Average (200 hours annally)



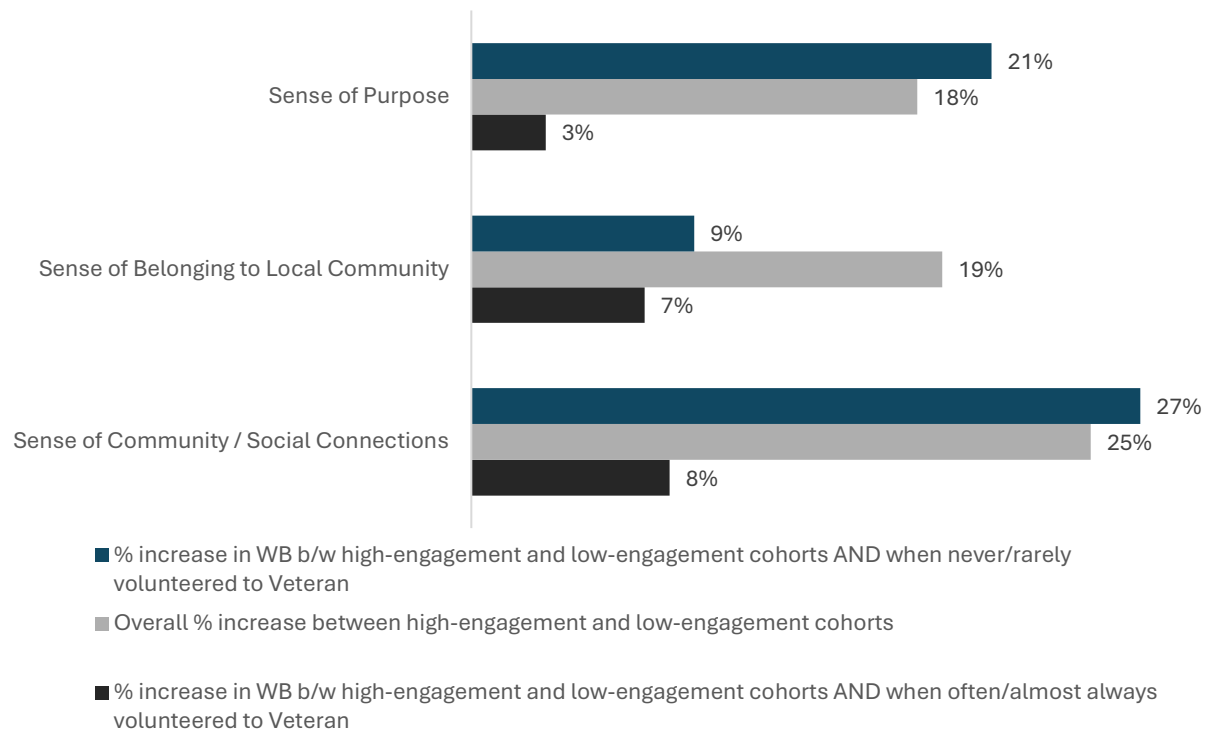
How do you perceive the impact of your volunteer service with Partner Org on the community or individuals you assisted?



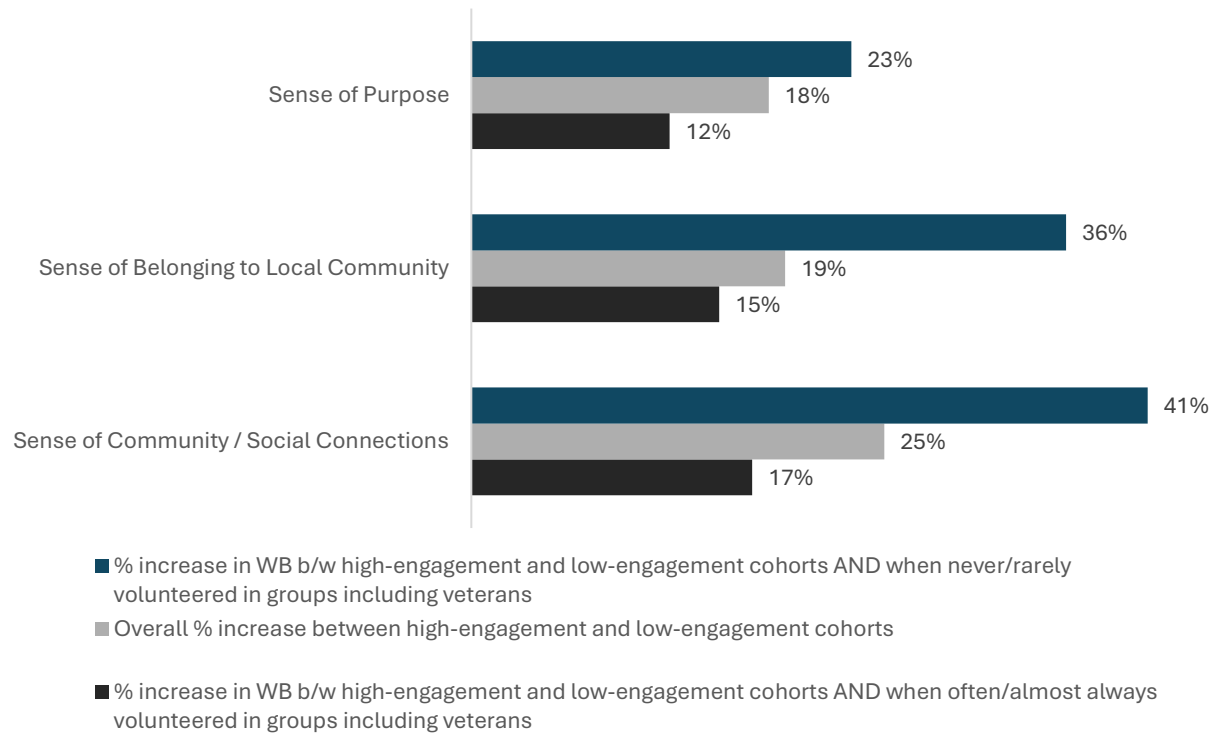
How strongly do you feel a sense of camaraderie and support when volunteering with Partner Org?



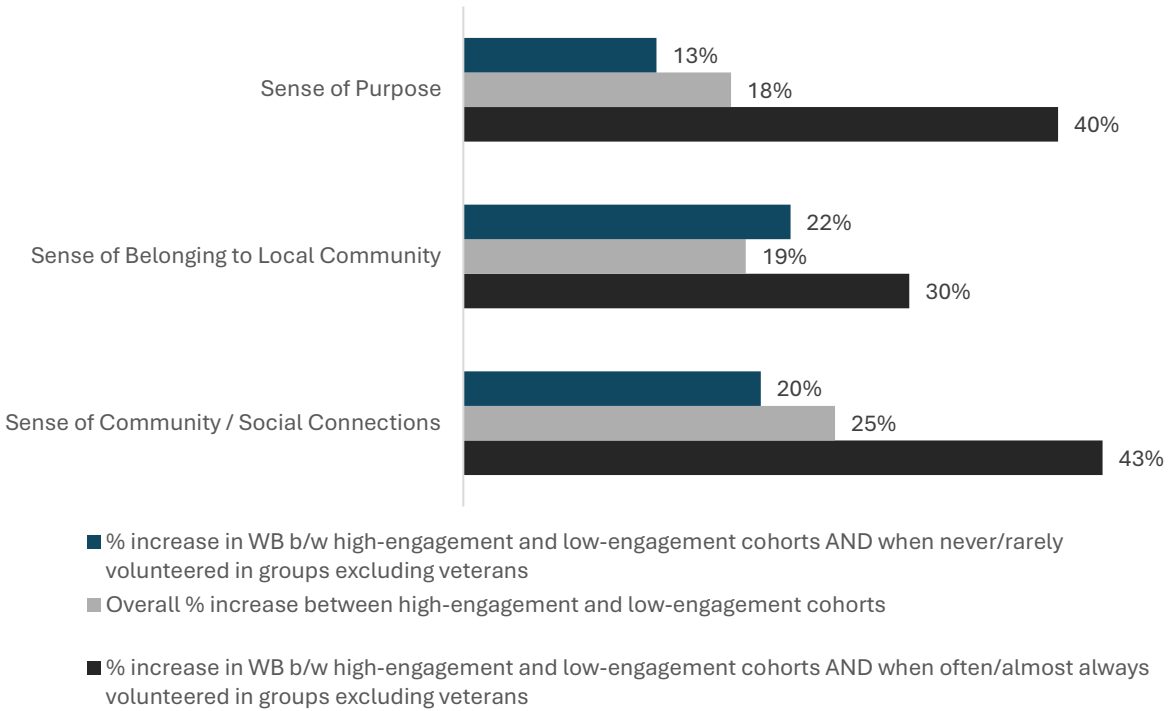
Effect of Volunteering To Other Veterans on % Increase in Well-Being Between High-Engagement and Low-Engagement Cohorts



Effect of Volunteering in Groups *Including Veterans* on % Increase in Well-Being Between High-Engagement and Low-Engagement Cohorts



Effect of Volunteering in Groups *Excluding* Veterans on % Increase in Well-Being Between High-Engagement and Low-Engagement Cohorts



C. Key Statistical Tables

Well-Being Indicators		(Spearman's rho) Total hours spent volunteering in past 12 months across partner and non- partner organizations	(Pearson) Total hours spent volunteering in past 12 months across partner and non-partner organizations
Q27 - In general, how has the adjustment to civilian life been since you were released from the Armed Forces?	Correlation Coefficient	.201*	.256**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.027	0.005
	N	121	121
Q28 - Thinking about the amount of stress in your life, how would you describe that most days are?	Correlation Coefficient	.230*	.208*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.011	0.023
	N	120	120

Q29 - How would you rate your health, in general?	Correlation Coefficient	0.119	0.106
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.193	0.249
	N	121	121
Q30 - Compared to one year ago, how would you say your health is now? Is it...	Correlation Coefficient	-0.115	-0.044
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.209	0.635
	N	121	121
Q31_r1 - Physical health	Correlation Coefficient	0.138	0.119
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.133	0.194
	N	120	120
Q31_r2 - Mental health	Correlation Coefficient	0.176	0.163
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.055	0.076
	N	119	119
Q31_r3 - Satisfaction with main job	Correlation Coefficient	0.056	0.101
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.621	0.374
	N	80	80
Q31_r4 - Satisfaction with life	Correlation Coefficient	0.168	0.136
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.065	0.138
	N	121	121
Q31_r5 - Financial satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.186*	.186*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.042	0.042
	N	120	120
Q31_r6 - Sense of community / Social connections	Correlation Coefficient	.464**	.412**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	120	120
Q31_r7 - Education / Life skills	Correlation Coefficient	.287**	.238**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0.009
	N	119	119
Q31_r8 - Employment opportunities	Correlation Coefficient	0.131	0.127
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.234	0.249
	N	84	84
Q31_r9 - Sense of purpose	Correlation Coefficient	.350**	.344**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	120	120

Q32 - Do you feel you have a strong sense of purpose or meaning in life?	Correlation Coefficient	.343**	.309**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.001
	N	121	121
Q33 - How would you describe your sense of belonging to your local community?	Correlation Coefficient	.356**	.340**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	120	120
Q34 - How satisfied are you with your relationships with family members?	Correlation Coefficient	0.116	0.066
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.205	0.474
	N	121	121
Q35_r1 - I feel a strong emotional bond with at least one other person.	Correlation Coefficient	-0.001	-0.124
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.990	0.178
	N	120	120
Q35_r2 - I feel part of a group of people who share my attitudes and beliefs.	Correlation Coefficient	.259**	0.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0.219
	N	118	118
Q35_r3 - I have relationships where my competence and skill are recognized.	Correlation Coefficient	.327**	.311**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.001
	N	119	119
Q35_r4 - I have close relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being.	Correlation Coefficient	.215*	0.154
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.019	0.093
	N	120	120
Q35_r5 - There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it.	Correlation Coefficient	0.180	0.154
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.051	0.094
	N	119	119
Q35_r6 - There are people who enjoy the same social activities I do.	Correlation Coefficient	.200*	0.157
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.028	0.085
	N	121	121
Q35_r7 - There is someone I could talk to about important decisions in my life.	Correlation Coefficient	0.070	0.044
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.449	0.636
	N	120	120
Q35_r8 - There is a trustworthy person I could turn to for advice if I were having problems.	Correlation Coefficient	-0.030	-0.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.747	0.704
	N	120	120

Q35_r9 - There are people who admire my talents and abilities.	Correlation Coefficient	.227*	.184*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.015	0.049
	N	115	115
Q35_r10 - There are people I can count on in an emergency.	Correlation Coefficient	0.138	0.144
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.134	0.117
	N	119	119

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

D. Post-Survey Questionnaire

[Intro] Thank you for taking the time to complete this 10-minute survey.

We respect your privacy. No personally identifiable information is collected in this survey, so your answers are completely anonymous.

Please click 'Next' below to continue.

If you are a Veteran/military member and are in distress, call the Member Assistance Program at 1-800-268-7708

If you are worried about your family member, call the Family Information Line at 1-800-866-4546

Other resources:

CAF's Mental Health Resources:

Canada Drug Rehab Addiction Services Directory: 1-866-462-6362

Crisis Support Canada: 418-529-1899

Canadian Crisis Hotline: 1-888-353-2273

Canadian Forces Health Information Line: 1-877-633-3368

Canadian Mental Health Association: 416-646-5557

Canadian Psychological Association: 1-888-472-0657

Centre for Suicide Prevention: 1-833-456-4566

Crisis Services Canada: 1-833-456-4566

Mood Disorders Society of Canada: 1-613-921-5565

Family Force:

First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310

National Eating Disorder Information Centre: 1-866-633-4220

Operational Stress Injury Support Services (OSSIS): 1-800-883-6094

Provincial Helpline for Victims of Sexual Assault: 1-888-933-9007
SOS Spousal Violence: 1-800-363-9010

---Page Break---

Section 1: Veteran Background

Demographics

1. Please create an anonymous code by answering the questions below.

NOTE: This code is used to anonymously link this survey response to a previous volunteering survey you may have taken, or future volunteering surveys you may take.

[open end] [Limited characters for each input]

Example: For Jane born in April in Toronto, the inputs would be "E, 04, TO" (Letters can be upper or lower case)

The last letter of your first name _____

Your birth month (numeric) _____

The first two letters of your birth city _____

---Page Break---

2. What is your relationship with the Canadian Armed Forces?

NOTE: If you completed basic training, and are no longer serving in the CAF, please indicate that you are a Veteran.

[Single-select, Required]

☐ ₁ Currently Serving Member

☐ ₂ Reserve Force Member

☐ ₃ Veteran

☐	4	Immediate family member of a Veteran or currently serving member (and NOT a Veteran or currently serving member yourself)
☐	5	None of the above relationships to the Canadian Armed Forces

---Page Break---

3. Where do you reside? [Single-select, Required]		
☐	1	Newfoundland and Labrador
☐	2	Prince Edward Island
☐	3	Nova Scotia
☐	4	New Brunswick
☐	5	Quebec
☐	6	Ontario
☐	7	Manitoba
☐	8	Saskatchewan
☐	9	Alberta
☐	10	British Columbia
☐	12	Nunavut
☐	13	Northwest Territories
☐	14	Yukon Territory

---Page Break---

4. What is your age?

[Single-select, Required]

☐ ₁	18-24 years old
☐ ₂	25-34 years old
☐ ₃	35-44 years old
☐ ₄	45-54 years old
☐ ₅	55-64 years old
☐ ₆	65+ years old

---Page Break---

5. What has been your main activity in the past 12 months?

[Single-select, Required] <EMH1_Q004>

☐ ₁	Worked at a job or ran a business [Employed]
☐ ₂	Worked in the CAF [Employed]
☐ ₃	Worked in the Reserve Forces [Employed]
☐ ₄	Retired and not looking for work [Unemployed, Not in Workforce]
☐ ₅	Attended school or training [Unemployed, Not in Workforce]
☐ ₆	Looked for work [Unemployed]
☐ ₇	Cared or nurtured a family member or partner [Unemployed, Not in Workforce]
☐ ₈	Was disabled or on disability [Unemployed, Not in Workforce]
☐ ₇₇	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ ₉₉	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

6. What was your sex at birth?

[Single-select, Required] <SEX_Q01>

☐ ₁	Male
☐ ₂	Female
☐ ₇₇	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ ₉₉	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

7. What is your best estimate of your total personal income annually?

[Single-select, Required] <INC_Q013 + INC_Q014>

☐ ₁	Less than \$5,000
☐ ₂	\$5,000 to less than \$10,000
☐ ₃	\$10,000 to less than \$15,000
☐ ₄	\$15,000 to less than \$20,000
☐ ₅	\$20,000 to less than \$25,000
☐ ₆	\$25,000 to less than \$30,000
☐ ₇	\$30,000 to less than \$40,000
☐ ₈	\$40,000 to less than \$50,000
☐ ₉	\$50,000 to less than \$60,000
☐ ₁₀	\$60,000 to less than \$70,000
☐ ₁₁	\$70,000 to less than \$80,000

☐	12	\$80,000 to less than \$90,000
☐	13	\$90,000 to less than \$100,000
☐	14	\$100,000 and over
☐	77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐	99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

8. What is the highest certificate, diploma or degree that you have completed? [Single-select, Required] <EHG1_Q01>		
☐	1	Less than high school diploma or its equivalent
☐	2	High school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate
☐	3	Trade certificate or diploma
☐	4	College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma (other than trades certificates or diplomas)
☐	5	University certificate or diploma below the bachelor's level
☐	6	Bachelor's degree (e.g. B.A., B.Sc., LL.B.)
☐	7	University certificate, diploma, degree above the bachelor's level
☐	77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐	99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

Service details

DISPLAY SERVICE DETAILS (Q8-Q12) SECTION ONLY IF Q1_3 IS SELECTED

Thank you for your responses. The following questions ask about your military service.

9. What branch of the Canadian Armed Forces did you serve in?
--

[Single-select, Required]

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ☐ ₁ | Canadian Army |
| ☐ ₂ | Royal Canadian Navy |
| ☐ ₃ | Royal Canadian Air Force |
| ☐ ₄ | Canadian Special Forces Command |

---Page Break---

10. What was your highest rank achieved during your military service?

[Single-select, Required]

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ☐ ₁ | Senior Officer [Officer] |
| ☐ ₂ | Junior Officer [Officer] |
| ☐ ₃ | Senior NCO [Senior NCM] |
| ☐ ₄ | Junior NCO [Junior NCM] |
| ☐ ₅ | Junior NCM [Junior NCM] |

---Page Break---

11. How long did you serve in the Canadian Armed Forces?

[Numeric, Required]

____ Years of Service

---Page Break---

12. When did you leave military service?

[Numeric, Required]

_____ (year)

---Page Break---

13. During your military service, did you ever deploy? (Include international or domestic deployments, exclude training exercises) [Single Select, Required] <DEPX_Q01>	
1	Yes
2	No
77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

Section 2: Volunteer Service Details

[Text] The following questions ask about the volunteering activities you participated in.

---Page Break---

14. For which organization(s) have you volunteered over the last 12 months? <i>Select all that apply.</i> [Multi select, Randomize, Required]	
1	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada
2	Camp Aftermath
3	Veteran Farm Project
4	Team Rubicon Canada
5	Perley Health

☐ ₆	Mood Disorders Society of Canada
☐ ₇	Invictus Games 25 (IG25)
☐ ₈₈	None of the Above [exclusive, anchor] [Terminate]

DISPLAY Q14-Q22 FOR EACH ORGANIZATION SELECTED IN Q14

---Page Break---

15. How many total hours (approximately) did you spend volunteering with [insert Q14 organization name] in the past 12 months? [Numeric, Required]
Hours

---Page Break---

16. When did you (approximately) first start volunteering with [insert Q14 organization name]? [Dropdown] [Required] [DISPLAY IF Q22_1=1]
[Dropdown of years] [Drop down months]

---Page Break---

17. During your volunteer activities with [insert Q14 organization name]: How often did you provide volunteer service to each of the following groups? [Single-select, Required]
--

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always	Don't Know
Veterans	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉
Veteran family members	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉
Currently serving members	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉
Non-Veterans	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉

---Page Break---

18. During your volunteer activities with [insert Q14 organization name]:

How often was your volunteer service carried out in each of the following settings?
[Single-select, Required]

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always	Don't Know
Virtually	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉
In-person	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉

---Page Break---

19. During your volunteer activities with [insert Q14 organization name]:

How often was your volunteer service carried out in each of the following settings?
[Single-select, Required]

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always	Don't Know
In a group <i>including</i> other Veteran(s) or currently serving volunteers	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉
In a group that <i>did not include</i> Veteran(s) or currently serving volunteers	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉
Individually, without other volunteers present	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₉₉

---Page Break---

20. How do you perceive the impact of your volunteer service with [insert Q14 organization name] on the community or individuals you assisted?

[Single select, Required]

☐ ₁	Not at all impactful
☐ ₂	Somewhat impactful
☐ ₃	Very impactful

---Page Break---

21. How strongly do you feel a sense of camaraderie and support when volunteering with [insert Q14 organization name]?

[Single select, Required]

☐ ₁	No sense of camaraderie and support
☐ ₂	Somewhat strong sense of camaraderie and support
☐ ₃	Very strong sense of camaraderie and support

---Page Break---

22. Overall, how would you rate your experience as a volunteer with [insert Q14 organization name]?

[Single select, Required]

☐ ₁	Very Negative
☐ ₂	Somewhat Negative
☐ ₃	Neutral
☐ ₄	Somewhat Positive

☐	5	Very Positive
-----------------------	---	---------------

---Page Break---

23. In the past 12 months, have you regularly volunteered with any organization besides the one(s) you selected previously? [Single-select, Required]		
☐	1	Yes
☐	2	No

---Page Break---

24. Please briefly list the names of these organization(s): <i>NOTE: You may list up to 3.</i> [Multi-select, Required] [DISPLAY IF Q23_1=1]		
☐	1	[Insert text]
☐	2	[Insert text]
☐	3	[Insert text]

---Page Break---

Show Questions 25-26 for each organization listed in Q24.

25. Over the past 12 months, approximately how many hours have you volunteered with [insert Q24 organization name]? [Numerical] [Required] [DISPLAY IF Q23_1=1]	
---	--

	Hours
----------------------	-------

---Page Break---

26. When did you (approximately) first start volunteering with [insert Q23 organization name]? [Dropdown] [Required] [DISPLAY IF Q23_1=1]
[Dropdown of years] [Drop down months]

---Page Break---

Section 3: Measuring Well-Being

[Text] You are more than halfway through the survey. The purpose of the following questions is to gather anonymous data on volunteer well-being. As a reminder, all information you provide is NOT personally identifiable, so we kindly ask that you respond openly and honestly.

Please click 'Next' to continue.

---Page Break---

General Veteran Well-Being

General Well-Being

27. In general, how has the adjustment to civilian life been since you were released from the Canadian Armed Forces? [Single select, Required] [DISPLAY IF "Veteran" Selected on Q2] <GEN1_Q01>				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> ☐ ₁ </td> <td>Very difficult</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"> ☐ ₂ </td> <td>Moderately difficult</td> </tr> </table>	☐ ₁	Very difficult	☐ ₂	Moderately difficult
☐ ₁	Very difficult			
☐ ₂	Moderately difficult			

☐	3	Neither easy nor difficult
☐	4	Moderately easy
☐	5	Very easy
☐	77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐	99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

28. Thinking about the amount of stress in your life, how would you describe that most days are? [Single select, Required] <GEN_Q07>		
☐	1	Extremely stressful
☐	2	Quite a bit stressful
☐	3	A bit stressful
☐	4	Not very stressful
☐	5	Not at all stressful
☐	77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐	99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

29. How would you rate your health, in general? [Single select, Required] <GEN_Q01>		
☐	1	Poor
☐	2	Fair
☐	3	Good
☐	4	Very Good
☐	5	Excellent

☐ 77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ 99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

30. Compared to one year ago, how would you say your health is now? Is it... [Single select, Required] <GEN_Q02A>	
☐ 1	Much worse now (than 1 year ago)
☐ 2	Somewhat worse now (than 1 year ago)
☐ 3	About the same as 1 year ago
☐ 4	Somewhat better now (than 1 year ago)
☐ 5	Much better now than 1 year ago
☐ 77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ 99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

31. In general, how would you rate your overall well-being in the following areas? [Single-select, Required]							
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Prefer not to say	Don't Know
Physical Health	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99
Mental Health <GEN_Q02C>	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99
Satisfaction with main job <EMH1_Q005>	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99
Satisfaction with life	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99
Financial satisfaction <INC1_Q03>	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99
Sense of community / Social connections	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99

Education / Life skills	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99
Employment opportunities	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99
Sense of purpose	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 77	☐ 99

---Page Break---

Purpose

32. Do you currently feel you have a strong sense of purpose or meaning in life? [Single select, Required]	
☐ 1	Strongly disagree
☐ 2	Somewhat disagree
☐ 3	Neutral
☐ 4	Somewhat agree
☐ 5	Strongly agree

---Page Break---

Social Integration

33. How would you describe your sense of belonging to your local community? [Single select, Required] <GEN_Q10>	
☐ 1	Very weak
☐ 2	Somewhat weak
☐ 3	Somewhat strong
☐ 4	Very strong
☐ 77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ 99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

34. How satisfied are you with your relationships with family members?

[Single select, Required] <GEN1_Q04>

☐ 1	Very dissatisfied
☐ 2	Dissatisfied
☐ 3	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
☐ 4	Satisfied
☐ 5	Very satisfied
☐ 77	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ 99	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

35. The next questions are about your current relationships with friends, family members, co-workers, community members, and so on. To what extent does each statement below describe your current relationships with other people?

[Grid, Required] <SPS_R01>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	Don't know
I feel a strong emotional bond with at least one other person.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
I feel part of a group of people who share my attitudes and beliefs.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
I have relationships where my competence and skill are recognized.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
I have close relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There are people who enjoy the same social activities I do.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There is someone I could talk to about important decisions in my life.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There is a trustworthy person I could turn to for advice if I were having problems.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99

There are people who admire my talents and abilities.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There are people I can count on in an emergency.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99

---Page Break---

Perceived effect of volunteering on Veteran Well-Being

[Text] You are almost done. The final questions of this survey will ask you about what impact participation in volunteering had on you.

Please click 'Next' to continue.

---Page Break ---

Repeat Questions 36-41 for each organization selected on Q14.

36. How do you feel your participation in volunteer service with [insert Q14 organization name] impacted your well-being in the following areas? [Grid, Required]					
	Significant negative impact	Somewhat negative impact	No impact	Somewhat positive impact	Significant positive impact
Physical Health	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Mental Health	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Satisfaction with main job	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Satisfaction with life	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Financial satisfaction	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Sense of community / Social connections	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Education / Life skills	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Employment opportunities	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Sense of purpose	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

---Page Break---

37. In your opinion, how has volunteering with [insert Q14 organization name] impacted your overall well-being? [Single select, Required]

☐ ₁	Very negatively
☐ ₂	Somewhat negatively
☐ ₃	No impact
☐ ₄	Somewhat positively
☐ ₅	Very positively

---Page Break---

38. To what extent did participating in volunteer service with <u>[insert Q14 organization name]</u> affect your relationships in each of the following areas? [Grid, Required]					
	Significantly worsened by volunteering	Moderately worsened by volunteering	No impact from volunteering	Moderately improved by volunteering	Significantly improved by volunteering
I feel a strong emotional bond with at least one other person.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
I feel part of a group of people who share my attitudes and beliefs	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
I have relationships where my competence and skill are recognized.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
I have close relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
There are people who enjoy the same social activities I do.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
There is someone I could talk to about important decisions in my life.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
There is a trustworthy person I could turn to for advice if I were having problems.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
There are people who admire my talents and abilities.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅
There are people I can count on in an emergency.	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅

---Page Break---

IMPORTANT NOTE: Your responses to the below questions may be shared publicly, so please do not provide any personally identifying information in order to ensure your response remains anonymous.

39. Please briefly describe how volunteering with [insert Q14 organization name] has impacted your life. (Optional)

[open end, Optional]

[Text input]

40. If you feel comfortable, please briefly share a story/experience from your time volunteering with [insert Q14 organization name] and why this experience was meaningful to you. (Optional)

[open end, Optional]

[Text input]

---Page Break---

41. How likely would you be to recommend volunteering to other Veterans as a way to improve their well-being?

[Single select, Required]

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ☐ ₁ | Very unlikely |
| ☐ ₂ | Somewhat unlikely |
| ☐ ₃ | Neither likely nor unlikely |
| ☐ ₄ | Somewhat likely |
| ☐ ₅ | Very likely |

Complete

You have successfully completed the survey. Thank you for your time!

Terminate

Thank you for your time. We have unfortunately filled the quotas for responses with this profile. We appreciate your interest in participating.

---End Survey---

E. Pre-Survey Questionnaire

[Intro] Thank you for taking the time to complete this 5-minute survey.

We respect your privacy. No personally identifiable information is collected in this survey, so your answers are completely anonymous.

Please click 'Next' below to continue.

If you are a Veteran/military member and are in distress, call the Member Assistance Program at 1-800-268-7708

If you are worried about your family member, call the Family Information Line at 1-800-866-4546

Other resources:

CAF's Mental Health Resources:

Canada Drug Rehab Addiction Services Directory: 1-866-462-6362

Crisis Support Canada: 416-529-1899

Canadian Crisis Hotline: 1-888-353-2273

Canadian Forces Health Information Line: 1-877-633-3368

Canadian Mental Health Association: 416-646-5557

Canadian Psychological Association: 1-888-472-0657

Centre for Suicide Prevention: 1-833-456-4566

Crisis Services Canada: 1-833-456-4566

Mood Disorders Society of Canada: 1-613-921-5565

Family Force:

First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310

National Eating Disorder Information Centre: 1-866-633-4220

Operational Stress Injury Support Services (OSSIS): 1-800-883-6094

Provincial Helpline for Victims of Sexual Assault: 1-888-933-9007

SOS Spousal Violence: 1-800-363-9010

---Page Break---

Section 1: Simple Background

1. Please create an anonymous code by answering the questions below.

NOTE: This code is used to anonymously link this survey response to a previous volunteering survey you may have taken, or future volunteering surveys you may take.

[open end] [Limited characters for each input]

Example: For Jane born in April in Toronto, the inputs would be "E, 04, TO" (Letters can be upper or lower case)

The **last letter** of your **first name** ____

Your **birth month** (numeric) ____

The **first two letters** of your **birth city** ____

---Page Break---

2. What is your relationship with the Canadian Armed Forces?

NOTE: If you completed basic training, and are no longer serving in the CAF, please indicate that you are a Veteran.

[Single-select, Required]

☐ ₁	Currently Serving Member
☐ ₂	Reserve Force Member
☐ ₃	Veteran
☐ ₄	Immediate family member of a Veteran or currently serving member (and NOT a Veteran or currently serving member yourself)
☐ ₅	None of the above relationships to the Canadian Armed Forces

---Page Break---

3. Where do you reside?
[Single-select, Required]

☐	1	Newfoundland and Labrador
☐	2	Prince Edward Island
☐	3	Nova Scotia
☐	4	New Brunswick
☐	5	Quebec
☐	6	Ontario
☐	7	Manitoba
☐	8	Saskatchewan
☐	9	Alberta
☐	10	British Columbia
☐	11	Nunavut
☐	12	Northwest Territories
☐	13	Yukon Territory

---Page Break---

4. With which organization(s) will you be volunteering?
Select all that apply.
[Multi select, Randomize, Required]

☐	1	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada
☐	2	Camp Aftermath
☐	3	Veteran Farm Project
☐	4	Team Rubicon Canada

☐	5	Perley Health
☐	6	Mood Disorders Society of Canada
☐	7	Invictus Games 25 (IG25)
☐	8	None of the Above [exclusive, anchor] [Terminate]

---Page Break---

REPEAT Q4-Q7 for each organization selected in Q3.

5. How did you learn about the volunteering opportunity with [insert Q4 organization name]? [Single select, Required]		
☐	1	Referral from another Veteran, friend or organization
☐	2	Online search (website, social media, etc.)
☐	3	Community event or fair
☐	4	Newspaper or magazine article
☐	5	Poster or flyer
☐	6	Contacted an organization directly
☐	7	Others (please specify): [Text, Anchor]

---Page Break---

6. Have you previously participated in volunteer service with [insert Q4 organization name]? NOTE: Select "No" if you have only participated in training/onboarding thus far. [Single select, Required]		
☐	1	Yes, I have already volunteered with this organization
☐	2	No, I have not yet volunteered with this organization

---Page Break---

7. When did you (approximately) first start volunteering with [insert Q4 organization name]?
[Dropdown, Required] [DISPLAY IF Q6_1=1]

[Dropdown of years] [Drop down months]

8. How many total hours (approximately) have you spent volunteering with [insert Q4 organization name] in the past 12 months?
[Single-select, Required] [DISPLAY IF Q6_1=1]

	Hours
----------------------	-------

---Page Break---

9. In the past 12 months, have you regularly volunteered with any organization besides the one(s) you selected previously?
[Single-select, Required]

☐ ₁	Yes
☐ ₂	No

---Page Break---

10. Please briefly list the names of these organization(s):
NOTE: Please list no more than 3.
[Multi-select, Required] [DISPLAY IF Q9_1=1]

☐ _1	[Insert text]
☐ _2	[Insert text]
☐ _3	[Insert text]

---Page Break---

Show Questions 11-12 for each organization listed in Q10.

11. Over the past 12 months, approximately how many hours have you volunteered with [insert Q10 organization name]? [Single-select, Required] [DISPLAY IF Q9_1=1]	
	Hours

---Page Break---

12. When did you (approximately) first start volunteering with [insert Q10 organization name]? [Dropdown, Required] [DISPLAY IF Q9_1=1]	
[Dropdown of years] [Drop down months]	

---Page Break---

Section 3: Measuring Well-Being

[Text] The purpose of the following questions is to gather anonymous data on Veteran well-being. All information you provide will be kept strictly anonymous and is NOT personally identifiable.

---Page Break---

General Veteran Well-Being

General Well-Being

13. In general, how has the adjustment to civilian life been since you were released from the Armed Forces?

[Single select, Required] [DISPLAY IF "Veteran" Selected on Q2] <GEN1_Q01>

☐ ₁	Very easy
☐ ₂	Moderately easy
☐ ₃	Neither easy nor difficult
☐ ₄	Moderately difficult
☐ ₅	Very difficult
☐ ₇₇	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ ₉₉	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

14. Thinking about the amount of stress in your life, how would you describe that most days are?

[Single select, Required] <GEN_Q07>

☐ ₁	Not at all stressful
☐ ₂	Not very stressful
☐ ₃	A bit stressful
☐ ₄	Quite a bit stressful
☐ ₅	Extremely stressful
☐ ₇₇	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ ₉₉	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

15. How would you rate your health, in general?

[Single select, Required] <GEN_Q01>

☐ ₁	Excellent
☐ ₂	Very Good
☐ ₃	Good
☐ ₄	Fair
☐ ₅	Poor
☐ ₇₇	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ ₉₉	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

16. Compared to one year ago, how would you say your health is now?

Is it...

[Single select, Required] <GEN_Q02A>

☐ ₁	Much better now than 1 year ago
☐ ₂	Somewhat better now (than 1 year ago)
☐ ₃	About the same as 1 year ago
☐ ₄	Somewhat worse now (than 1 year ago)
☐ ₅	Much worse now (than 1 year ago)
☐ ₇₇	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ ₉₉	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

17. In general, how would you rate your overall well-being in the following areas?

[Single-select, Required]

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Prefer not to say	Don't Know
Physical Health	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉
Mental Health <GEN_Q02C>	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉
Satisfaction with main job <EMH1_Q005>	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉
Satisfaction with life	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉
Financial satisfaction <INC1_Q03>	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉
Sense of community / Social connections	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉
Education / Life skills	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉
Employment opportunities	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉
Sense of purpose	☐ ₁	☐ ₂	☐ ₃	☐ ₄	☐ ₅	☐ ₇₇	☐ ₉₉

---Page Break---

Purpose**18. Do you feel you have a strong sense of purpose or meaning in life?**

[Single select, Required]

☐ ₁	Strongly Agree
☐ ₂	Somewhat agree
☐ ₃	Neutral
☐ ₄	Somewhat disagree
☐ ₅	Strongly disagree

---Page Break---

Social Integration**19. How would you describe your sense of belonging to your local community?**

[Single select, Required] <GEN_Q10>	
☐ ₁	Very strong
☐ ₂	Somewhat strong
☐ ₃	Somewhat weak
☐ ₄	Very weak
☐ ₇₇	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ ₉₉	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

20. How satisfied are you with your relationships with family members?	
[Single select, Required] <GEN1_Q04>	
☐ ₁	Very satisfied
☐ ₂	Satisfied
☐ ₃	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
☐ ₄	Dissatisfied
☐ ₅	Very dissatisfied
☐ ₇₇	Prefer not to say [exclusive, anchor]
☐ ₉₉	Don't Know [exclusive, anchor]

---Page Break---

21. The next statements are about your current relationships with friends, family members, co-workers, community members, and so on. To what extent does each statement below describe your current relationships with other people?						
[Grid, Required] <SPS_R01>						
	Strongly disagree	disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	Don't know

I feel a strong emotional bond with at least one other person.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
I feel part of a group of people who share my attitudes and beliefs.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
I have relationships where my competence and skill are recognized.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
I have close relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There are people who enjoy the same social activities I do.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There is someone I could talk to about important decisions in my life.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There is a trustworthy person I could turn to for advice if I were having problems.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There are people who admire my talents and abilities.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99
There are people I can count on in an emergency.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 77	☐ 99

---Page Break---

Perceived effect of volunteering on Veteran Well-Being

22. How likely would you be to recommend volunteering to other Veterans as a way to improve well-being? [Single select, Required]	
☐ 1	Very likely
☐ 2	Somewhat likely
☐ 3	Neither likely nor unlikely
☐ 4	Somewhat unlikely
☐ 5	Very unlikely

---Page Break---

Complete

You have successfully completed the survey. Thank you for your time!

Terminate

Thank you for your time. We have unfortunately filled the quotas for responses with this profile. We appreciate your interest in participating.

---End Survey---

IX. Citations

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https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/197678919/jmvfh_2022_0056.pdf
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