



Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group: Leading the Way for a Smooth Transition

INFOGRAPHIC

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ABSTRACT

Transitioning out of the military can be a difficult time for many veterans and can be especially challenging for members who are ill and/or injured. The Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group (CAF TG) Satisfaction Survey was administered to ill and/or injured Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members who had accessed the services of their local Transition Centre (TC) over a two-year period. At the request of senior leadership in the CAF TG, an infographic was subsequently created to provide CAF members with an overview of some of the key findings. While a full report on the survey methods and results is planned for the near future, the purpose of this paper is to make this infographic and a short narrative more accessible to a broader audience. 749 CAF members completed the survey yielding a response rate of 32%. Nearly three-quarters of respondents reported being satisfied overall with their local TC, and only 11% reported dissatisfaction. In line with this finding, respondents reported that their well-being had significantly increased since accessing TC programs and services. Of the nearly 50% of respondents who reported that they were transitioning out of the CAF, most were aware of the transition services available. Finally, the majority reported being satisfied with the transition services they had used, in that they rated these as relevant, complete, timely, and helpful in preparing them for their transition from the CAF to civilian life. Together, these results demonstrate the value and importance of the programs and services offered by the CAF TG and TCs in providing military members with a smooth transition out of the CAF.

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Transitioning out of the military can be a difficult time for many veterans (Morin, 2011). This move from a military life to a civilian one can be especially challenging for those members who are ill and/or injured (MacLean et al., 2014). Part of the mandate of the Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group (CAF TG) is to deliver support through Transition Centres (TCs) to Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members and their families as they prepare for their reintegration to civilian life (Military Personnel Command, 2019). These TCs provide numerous programs and services designed to help CAF members and their families with casualty support and transition services. *The My Transition Guide: Transitioning from Military to Civilian Life* is provided to all members transitioning out of the CAF and includes a complete overview of all of these programs and services, along with numerous other supports for the member’s well-being (Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group [CAF TG], 2018).

In 2018, the Canadian Department of National Defence commissioned a survey designed to assess CAF TG and TC users’ experiences of and satisfaction with its various programs and services. An infographic was developed with the intent of providing TC staff members with a snapshot of some of the key findings from that survey, in order to inform service delivery. While a full report on the survey methods and results is planned for the near future, given the importance of the topics of support to, and well-being of, transitioning members, the purpose of this paper is to make these top-line findings more accessible to a broader audience.

The CAF TG Satisfaction Survey was administered to ill and/or injured CAF members who had accessed the services of their local TC over a two-year period from 2016 to 2017. The survey was reviewed by the Department of National Defence’s Social Science Research Review Board

(SSRRB File # 1756–2018) and included questions about their experiences and satisfaction with the organization as a whole and with its individual resources and programs (Therrien & Coulthard, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c). Results reflect CAF members’ experiences with the former Joint Personnel Support Unit which existed prior to the stand-up of the CAF TG.

A total of 749 Regular Force and Reserve Force CAF members completed the survey with a response rate of 32%. Nearly three-quarters of respondents reported being satisfied overall with their local TC, with only 11% reporting dissatisfaction (*Figure 1*). In line with this finding, respondents reported that their well-being had significantly increased since accessing TC programs and services.

As seen in *Figure 2*, three of the top four reasons that participants reported not believing that the TC would be a positive source for enhancing their treatment and recovery were external to the individual. Importantly, the negative perception of these barriers is within the control of the organization and can be addressed.

Nearly 50% of the respondents reported that they were transitioning out of the CAF. Of this group, the majority reported being aware of the transition services available and over three-quarters of those that used these services were satisfied (*Figure 3*).

Finally, a small majority reported being satisfied that the transition services they had used were relevant, complete, timely, and helpful in preparing them for their transition from the CAF to civilian life.

Together, these results illustrated in the three figures below demonstrate the value and importance of the programs and services offered by the CAF TG and TCs in providing military members with a smooth transition out of the CAF.

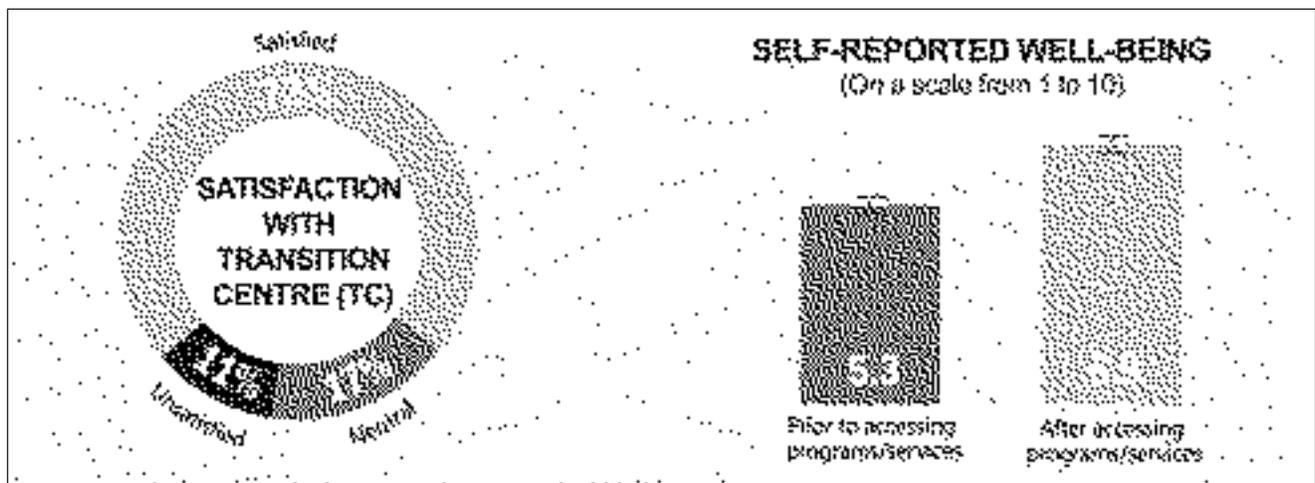


Figure 1 Users’ Overall Satisfaction with their Transition Centre and Self-reported Well-being.

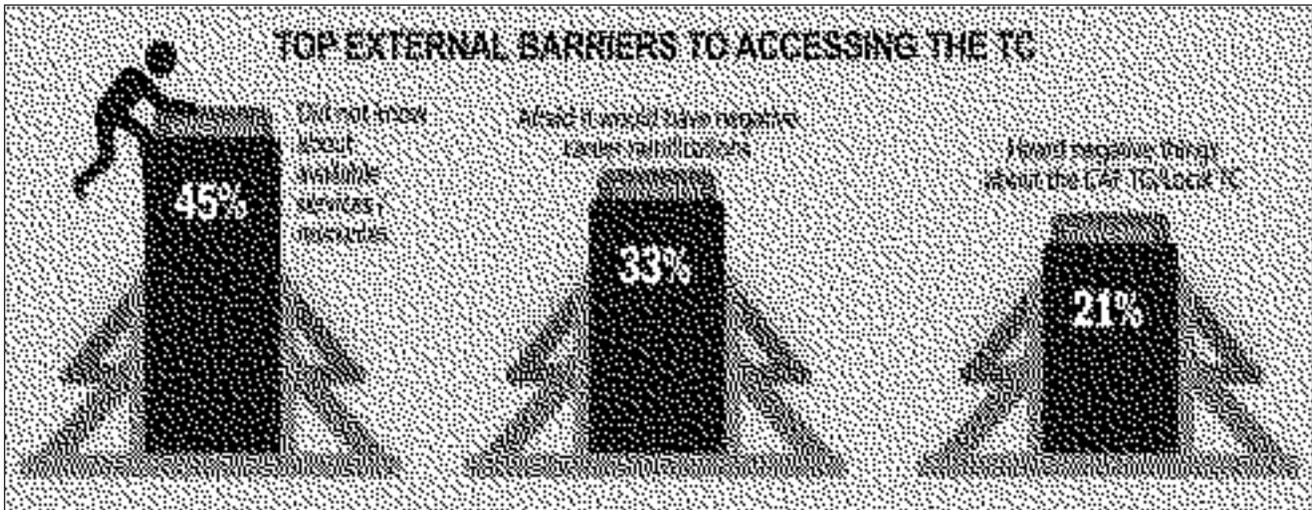


Figure 2 Reported Barriers to Accessing Transition Centres.

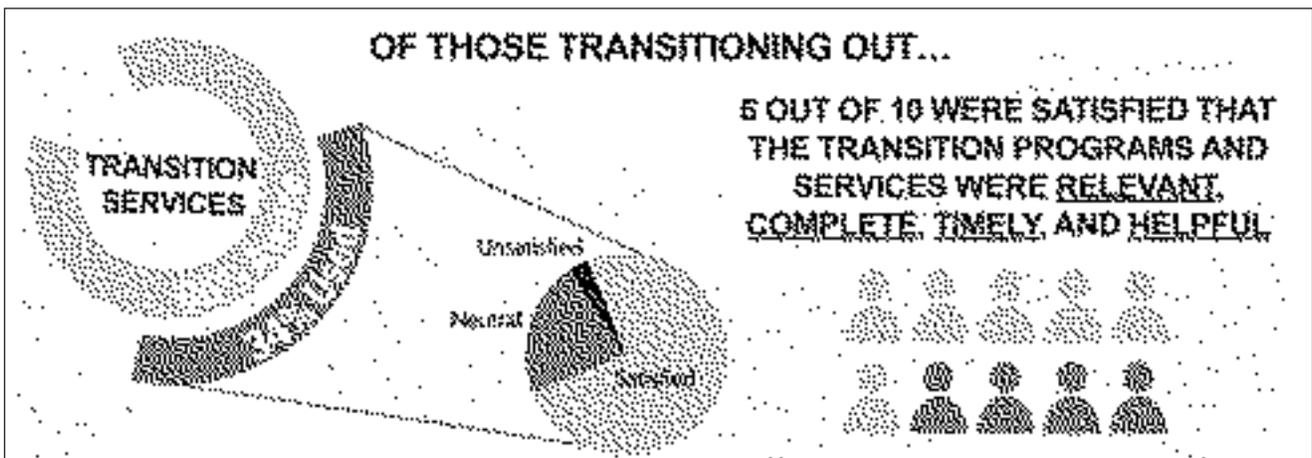


Figure 3 Awareness of, and Satisfaction with, the Transition Services.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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