

Are you a first responder or an emergency healthcare worker looking to learn more about post-traumatic stress injuries (PTSI) and potential tools and coping strategies to deal with PTSI using virtual reality?

In partnership with the University of Alberta, the Department of Family Medicine's project management's office is developing a series of virtual reality (VR) modules that will simulate three scuba diving environments which will be leveraged to better understand the psychological support and benefit of VR learning on post-traumatic stress injuries (PTSI). These simulated environments will provide users with PTSI management techniques, such as Cognitive-behavioural Therapy (CBT), mindfulness and breathing exercises. In addition to encouraging teamwork and challenging users with stressful situations that can arise during a dive, the VR application will be used as a pedagogical tool for producing a safe environment to teach first responders and emergency healthcare workers about PTSI, causes and treatments, as well as tools and coping strategies to deal with PTSI in their daily lives, to improve their well-being.

Are you interested in participating in this VR experience? **We are looking for first responders and emergency healthcare workers*** to participate in this research project (up to 150 participants, first come first served). Spend 1-hour exploring the VR scuba seascape and learn about PTSI. For more information, please email Dr. Maddie Venables (Maddie.Venables@uottawa.ca).

Interested ? Email: Maddie.Venables@uottawa.ca

Learn more, read our
[**Letter of Information Consent Form**](#)



* Study inclusion criteria include 1) minimum age of 18 and maximum age of 65; 2) having worked on the front lines during the COVID-19 pandemic (full-time, part-time or casual, working in health care providing in-person publicly-funded services between March 2020 - Present); 3) be within the threshold cut off range on the PCL-5 (11-41 scores) and/or GAD-7 (5-14 scores); 4) absence of a formal diagnosis of PTSD or anxiety disorder; 5) absence of medical disorders (heart disease or high/low blood pressure, neurological disorders, epilepsy); 6) absence of pharmacotherapy that could interfere with the measured data (psychoactive drugs, anti-hypertensive, antidepressants); and 7) no significant visual impairment (normal visual acuity or corrected to normal).