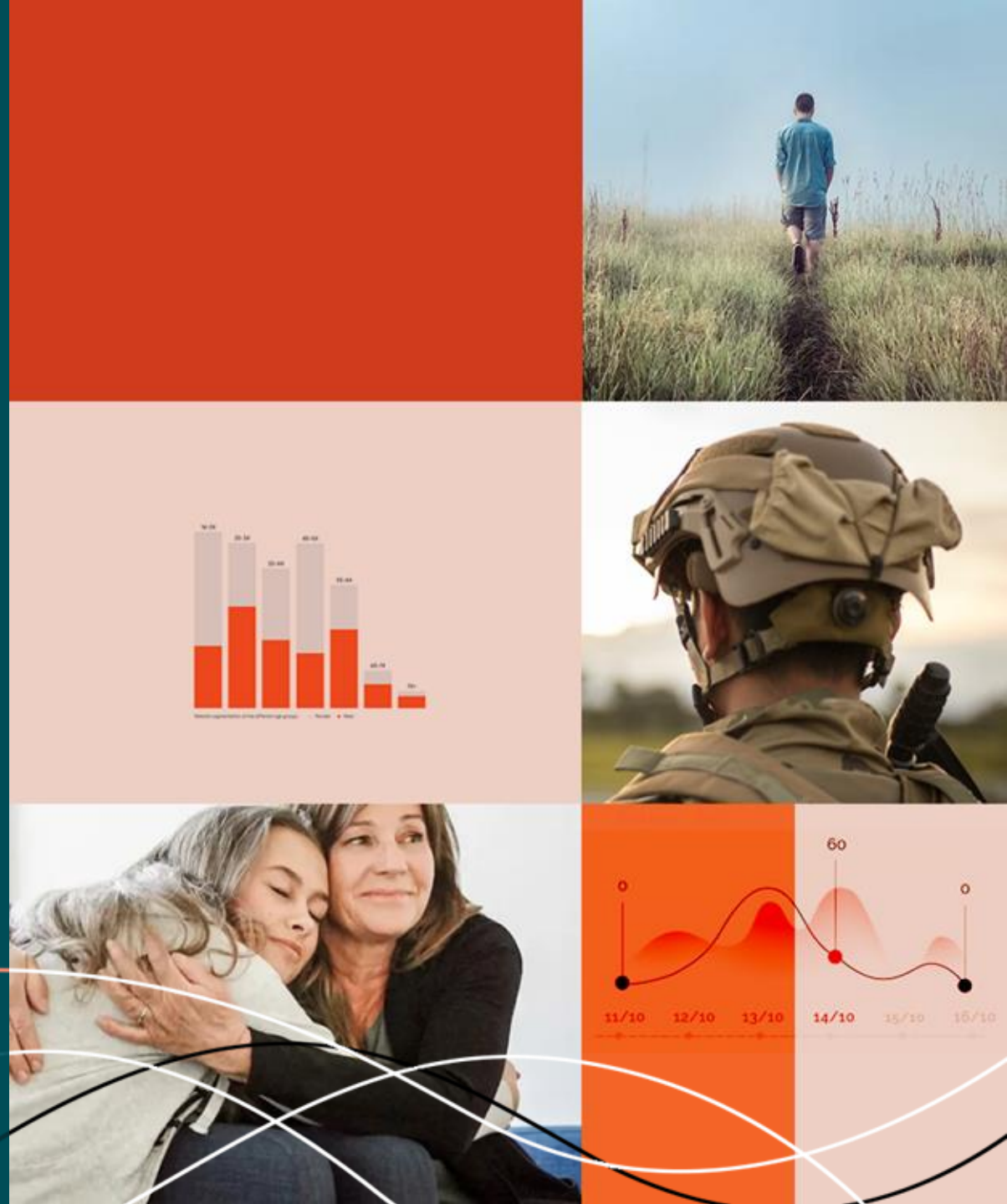


Trauma Healing in Israel – System Diagnosis

Wexner Heritage and Professional Alumni
September 23, 2026



Grounding Ourselves in a Shared Baseline



Scale of the Exposure

2K killed



165K displaced



86K civilians recognized by BTL



25K soldiers/security personnel injured



SOURCE: Ministry of Defense; National Insurance Institute

Myth vs. Reality

Myth Reality

**PTSD is the core
of Israel's mental
health crisis**

Myth Reality

**PTSD is the core
of Israel's mental
health crisis**

**PTSD is only
one part of the
picture**

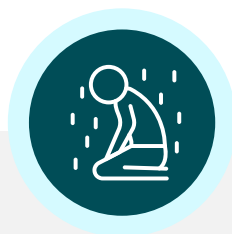
National Mental Health Demand

Ten million people. Different exposures, different needs.



1 in 5

experience
emotional distress
frequently or
continuously



19-25%

with probable PTSD,
Depression or Anxiety



3.5M

patient-therapist
sessions in the public
sector
(+42% vs. 2022)

Soldiers and Reservists

13K

new PTSD
cases



9K

being
reviewed



Soldiers/Reservists and Families

13K

new PTSD
cases



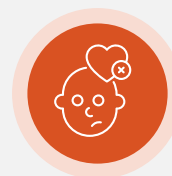
9K

being
reviewed



52%

deterioration
in children's
wellbeing



1/3

considering
separation/
divorce



Spillover into Families

Secondary Behavioral Outcomes



70%

increase in
opioid use



1 in 4

report increased
substance use



40%

increase in Eating
Disorder referrals

Impact on Physical Health



20%

increase in strokes



8x

cardiac events in the South

Myth Reality

**Everyone in
Israel has been
exposed to
trauma and
needs treatment**

Myth Reality

Everyone in Israel has been exposed to trauma and needs treatment

A good system distinguishes between normal stress response, clinical risk and psychiatric need.

Two Track National Strategy



System Enablers

Myth Reality

**Therapy is
essential, but we
cannot fix the
shortage of
professionals**

Myth Reality

Therapy is essential, but we cannot fix the shortage of professionals

Therapy is essential, but much more is needed to carry a national trauma response

Two Track National Strategy



Expand & diversify care capacity

Advance equity & access

Invest in research & innovation

Two Track National Strategy

Psychoeducation

Trauma-informed society

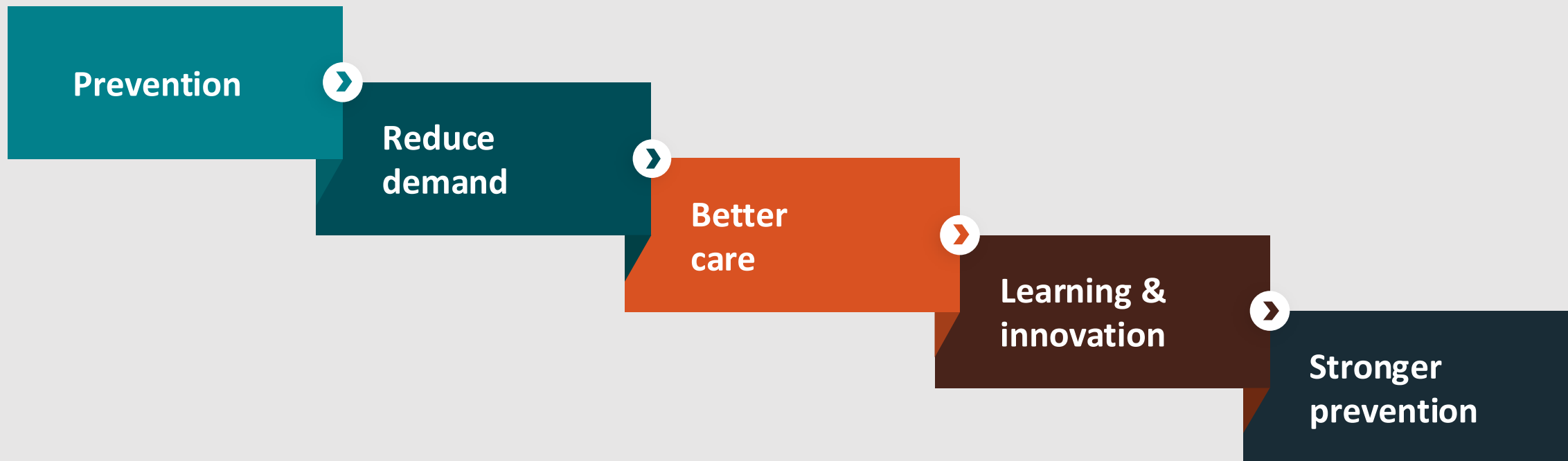
Early detection

Track B

Prevention & Resilience

80-
85%

How the System Stabilizes



Myth Reality

**More services
means more
access.**

What Success Looks Like

Clear pathways

Faster access

Continuous learning

Myth Reality

**More services
means more
access.**

**Services heal
people. But a
system ensures
people reach
them.**

System Enablers

**Governance &
coordination**

**Quality
standards**

**Effective
Capacity**

**Data & evidence
infrastructure**

Myth Reality

**Mental Health is
no longer an
emergency as
the war is
ending.**

Myth Reality

Mental Health is no longer an emergency as the war is ending.

When the urgency drops, symptoms can surface and healing can start.



What We Can Expect

15-20%

expected to need clinical
therapeutic support



100k

injured soldiers by 2028



20-30%

increase in suicides unless
prevention efforts are scaled up



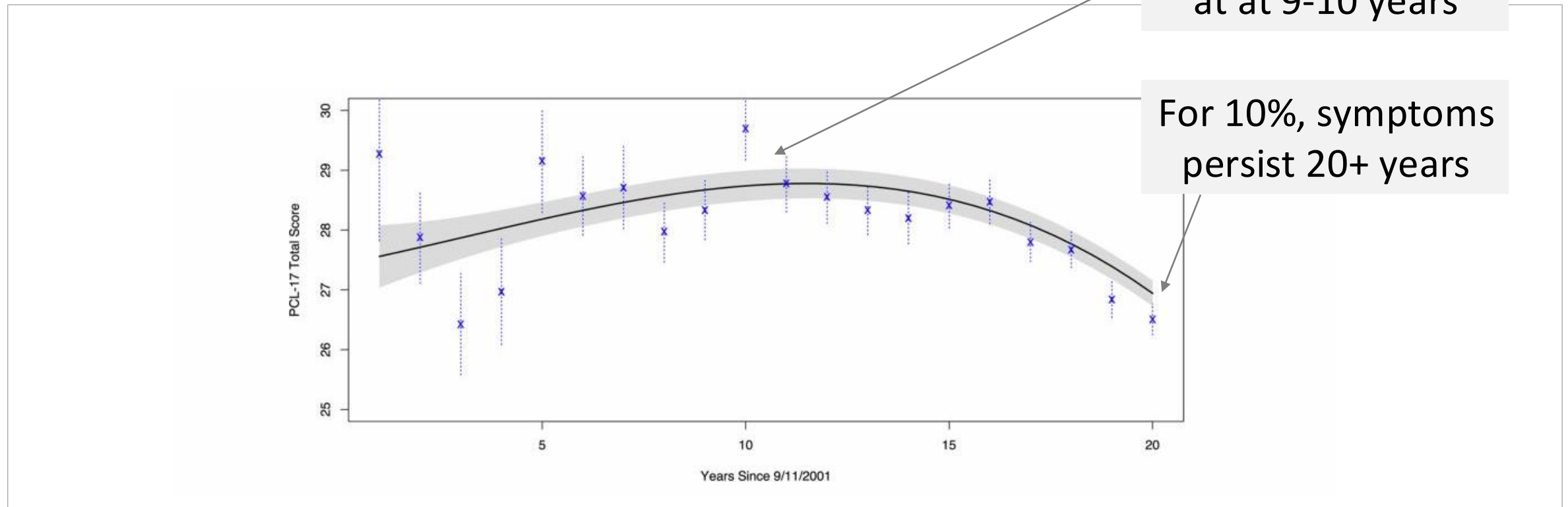
197Bn

direct and indirect costs due to
PTSD in next 5 years

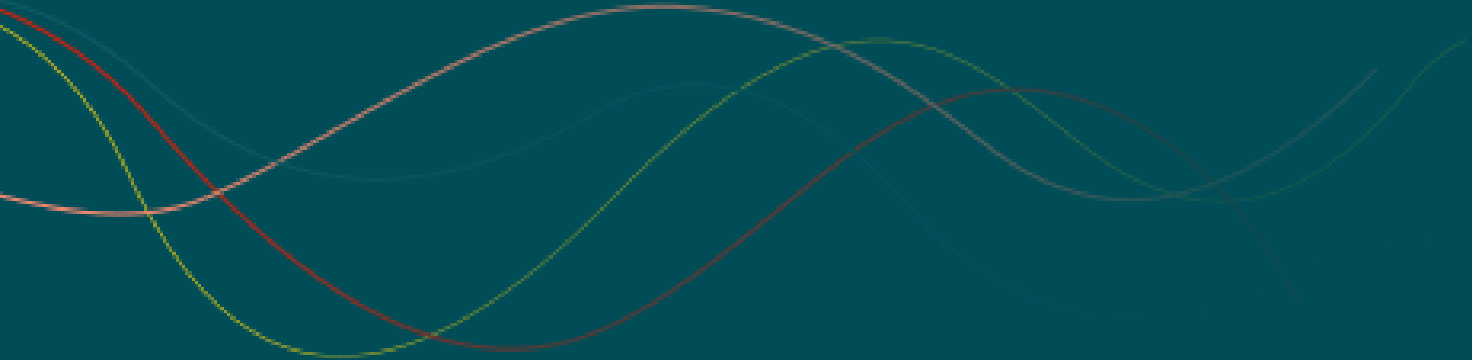


Trauma is not an acute wave that resolves quickly

Tracking of 9/11 First-Aid Responders for 20 Years



SOURCE: Mann, F., et al. (2025). "Long-Term Trajectories of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Symptoms in World Trade Center Responders." *Nature Mental Health*.



Key Opportunities

Where Leaders Can Act Now

Service-level Opportunities

- Helps people in need now
- Direct or near-direct interventions for people, families, and communities.
- Best when there is a clear gap and quality models

Systemic Opportunities

- Helps the field work better
- Investments individual organizations usually cannot build alone, but the field badly needs.
- Best to improve effective capacity in the ecosystem

Opportunities at Service Level

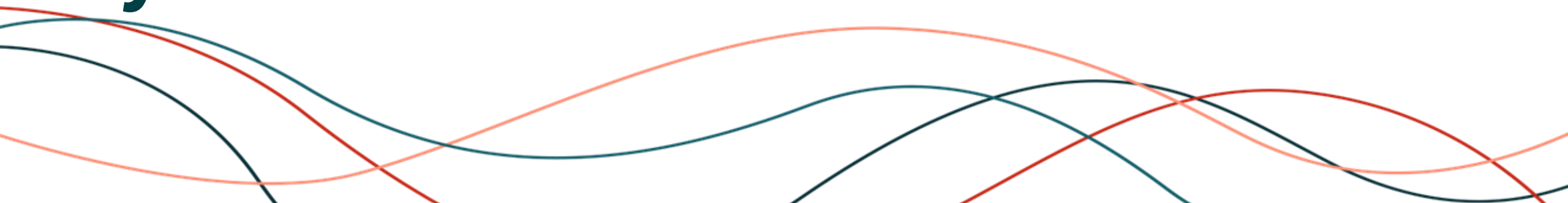
1. Children and teenagers
2. Specialized treatment capacity (e.g., suicide, family)
3. Culturally competent care (e.g., Arab-Israeli)
4. Rehabilitation / Reintegration (e.g., work, school)
5. Innovation (new methods and technology)

Opportunities at Systemic Level

1. Prevention and psychoeducation
2. Navigation and triage
3. Quality standards
4. Effective capacity expansion and stratified care
5. Data and learning infrastructure

Israel needs both services and systems.

But the biggest gap today is that services are not adding up to a system.



Questions, comments and to access research...

gila@ICARCollective.org

lisa@ICARCollective.org



THANK
YOU