

NHS care for the Armed Forces community: background briefing (June 2019)

The NHS is responsible for providing all hospital and most community services for serving personnel (except for mental health, general practice and rehabilitation services). The NHS also provides nearly all community, general practice and hospital services for the families of serving personnel, reservists and veterans. Included as part of this are the following dedicated services and initiatives to support the Armed Forces community.

Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS)

The TILS is for serving personnel approaching discharge from the military and veterans with mental health difficulties. The service provides a range of treatment, from recognising the early signs of mental health problems and providing access to early support, to therapeutic treatment for complex mental health difficulties and psychological trauma. Help may also be provided with housing, employment, alcohol misuse and social support.

Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS)

The CTS is an enhanced out patient service for ex-forces who have military related complex mental health difficulties that have not improved with previous treatment. The service provides intensive care and treatment that may include (but is not limited to) support for drug and alcohol misuse, physical health, employment, housing, relationships and finances, as well as occupational and trauma focused therapies.

Both services are available across England and accessible via the TILS. Individuals can self-refer or ask a GP or Armed Forces charity to refer them. As part of their service offer, families are supported to access care and treatment for themselves where appropriate. Further information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Veterans Trauma Network (VTN)

The [VTN](#) is the first NHS pathway for veterans' physical health, providing care and treatment to those with a service-attributable health problem. Located in ten major trauma centres across England, with links to five specialist NHS trusts, the network works closely with Defence Medical Services (DMS), national centres of clinical expertise, the TILS and CTS, as well as military charities to provide a complete package of care. It is run largely by healthcare professionals who are either veterans or serving personnel. GPs can use a single email (england.veteranstraumanetwork@nhs.net) to refer veterans to the service, where they will benefit from specialist care by military and civilian experts. The service is being expanded to cover Wales this year. The VTN embodies the close relationship between DMS and the NHS that was forged in war and continues in peace.

Armed Forces personnel in transition: Integrated Personal Commissioning for Veterans Framework (IPC4V)

[IPC4V](#) is a personalised care approach for the small number of serving personnel who have complex and enduring physical, neurological and mental health conditions that are attributable to injury whilst in Service. It provides a framework for effectively planning and delivering personalised care in line with the Armed Forces Covenant. Central to this is an improved discharge planning process, starting approximately nine months before these individuals leave the military. This means that the MOD, health and social care, Armed Forces charities and other organisations involved in the care of these individuals are brought together at an earlier point in the care pathway, ensuring care and support arrangements are in place as they transition to civilian life and beyond.

Personalised care for veterans with a long term physical, mental or neurological health condition or disability

Ex-forces with a complex and life-long health condition may be eligible for the [veterans personalised care programme](#). Eligible individuals will have a single personalised care plan for all their health and wellbeing needs that is developed with them and a range of organisations, including health and social care and military charities. To apply, individuals should contact their local clinical commissioning group.

Veteran friendly GP practice accreditation

Over the next five years, NHS England and NHS Improvement, together with the Royal College of General Practitioners, will roll out the [veteran friendly GP practice accreditation scheme](#) to GP practices across England. This accreditation scheme, which is intended to help ensure practices are equipped to best care for veterans and their families, has been piloted in the West Midlands and to date over 270 surgeries have signed up.

The Veterans Covenant Health Alliance (VCHA)

The [VCHA](#) aims to improve NHS care for the Armed Forces community by supporting trusts, health boards and other providers to identify, develop and showcase the best standards of care. 33 hospital trusts have already been accredited as 'Veteran Aware', having demonstrated their commitment to eight core manifesto standards, including signing the Armed Forces Covenant, raising awareness of veterans' healthcare needs among staff, and establishing links with local support providers. The VCHA is working with many more trusts to achieve accreditation.

For further information, please email england.armedforceshealth@nhs.net.
