Top tips for ex-forces – how to get the most from your GP
1. It is important to register with a GP, rather than wait until you need treatment. Visit the NHS website at www.nhs.uk to find out details of GP practices in your local area.

2. Tell your GP that you’ve served in the UK Armed Forces. This will help your GP to better understand any military related health conditions that you may have and ensure that you are referred, where appropriate, to dedicated services for ex-forces.

3. If you’ve recently left the forces, it is important to give your GP the paperwork that your military medical centre gave you, including any medical records. This will help to ensure your military health record transfers to your NHS health record. This will also give your GP information on your health and ensure that any ongoing care and treatment is continued.

4. Being flagged as a veteran in your NHS medical notes will help to ensure that you are able to access dedicated services for those who have served in the UK Armed Forces. This includes the Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS), the Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS) and the Veterans Trauma Network (VTN). Whilst the NHS is available to everyone, including the Armed Forces community, these services offer ex-forces care and treatment for a range of mental and physical health conditions. They are also provided by military and civilian experts to help ensure that you get the very best care by people who understand your health needs and Armed Forces’ experiences.

As part of this dedicated care and support, these services work closely with a range of organisations and charities, including military charities, to support your wider health and wellbeing needs.

5. With your agreement, it can sometimes be helpful for your doctor to refer you to specific service charities, such as SSAFA, the Royal British Legion, Blesma or Help for Heroes. They can often offer significant help and support, even if they do not all deliver healthcare.

6. You may be worried about sharing information about your time in the Armed Forces. Please note that the NHS is bound by a confidentiality code of practice to ensure GPs, nurses and other people working within the NHS deliver a confidential service bound by law.