

**Exploring attitudes towards personalised medicine in
mental illness.**

Signposting Booklet

General information on available support services for ex-Service personnel

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FOREWORD

Thank you for registering your interest (and/or participating) in this study exploring attitudes towards personalised psychiatry among veterans with mental illness. We recognise that participating in the study and answering the questions may bring up memories of difficult experiences or may prompt you to seek support in the future.

Should you wish to access support, we hope that this booklet will provide a useful reference for a wide range of organisations that you may find appropriate to your needs.

Thank you once again, your participation is greatly appreciated.

If you think you (or a relative or friend) might be experiencing some form of mental health problem, then you should make an appointment with your GP for help and advice.

If you believe someone's life is at risk, or you do not feel you can keep yourself or someone else safe, call 999 or go to A&E immediately.

Lists of Armed Forces Charities

1.1. Armed Forces Charities

ArmedForcesCharities.org.uk contains details of armed forces charities registered in the UK, including charities that cater for the needs of serving and ex-serving personnel and their families, armed forces museums and heritage organisations and cadet units and organisations.

Their interactive database tool is a good place to search for charity details

Web: www.armedforcescharities.org.uk

1.2. COBSEO

The Confederation of Service Charities (**COBSEO**) acts as an umbrella organisation representing major armed forces charities in the UK and their engagement with major governmental, private sector and community stakeholders.

Under the navigation tab 'Our Members', you can search for individual charities by keyword or category, as well as Regimental Associations and details on services in the Devolved Administrations.

Web: www.cobseo.org.uk

1.3. Veterans UK: The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency

See Section 2

1.4. Veterans' Gateway

Veterans' Gateway is a good initial point of contact for veterans and their families. It organises information and appropriate organisations by theme.

Web: www.veteransgateway.org.uk/

UK-Wide Mental Health Services and Advice

If you think you (or a relative or friend) might be experiencing some form of mental health problem, then you should make an appointment with your GP for help and advice.

If you believe someone's life is at risk, or you do not feel you can keep yourself or someone else safe, call 999 or go to A&E immediately.

For NHS services in the Nations and local regions, please see section 3. If you are unsure what to do, you can call 111 from anywhere in the UK.

2.1. Togetherall

Togetherall (formerly Big White Wall) is an anonymous online peer support network that encourages you to be open about what is on your mind, to improve mental health and wellbeing.

It is available 24/7 and is free for veterans and their families (16+). You can talk anonymously through your troubles with the whole community, or a selected group or individual. Trained mental health professionals can help small groups of members to resolve problems like stress, anxiety and depression via live chats online.

Open: 24hrs/ 365 days

Web: www.togetherall.com

2.2. Combat Stress (including 24 Hour Helpline)

Originally called the *Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society*, **Combat Stress** specialises in the treatment and support of British Armed Forces Veterans who have mental health problems across the UK, as well as running a 24-hour helpline. Combat Stress provides confidential help and advice on any mental health issues to the military community, veterans and their families.

Open: 24hrs/ 365 days

Web: www.combatstress.org.uk

Helpline: 0800 138 1619

Email: helpline@combatstress.org.uk

Text: 07537 173683 (*standard charges may apply*)

2.3. Forcesline

As part of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) this Forcesline offers totally confidential, non-judgemental, guidance on all personal/welfare issues, including sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying, racism, drugs, depression, alcohol, debt, relationship counselling and suicide to the serving and ex-serving military community from anywhere in the world. It is completely independent of the military chain of command.

They also provide an email service and a live chat function.

Open: Mon – Fri, 9am - 5pm (UK) **Web:** www.ssafa.org.uk/how-we-help/forcesline

UK: 0800 260 6767

Rest of the World: +44(0) 207 463 9292

Cyprus: 8009 1065

Falkland Islands Freephone: #6111

2.4. The Veterans and Reserves Mental Health Programme (VRMHP)

The Veterans and Reserves Mental Health Programme (**VRMHP**) (*formerly the Medical Assessment Programme*) provides mental health assessments for veterans and reservists who have concerns about their mental health as a result of service.

The Medical Assessment Programme has moved from St Thomas' Hospital, London to Chilwell, Nottingham and the service is now co-located with Reservist Mental Health Programme and renamed the VRMHP.

The VRMHP investigates patients' mental health concerns and, so far as possible, it provides a diagnosis if the veteran has a mental health disorder, and recommends appropriate management through the NHS, if required. Advice will also be provided on the extensive support network that is available to veterans and their families in the UK.

The Programme is available to veterans who have deployed since 1982 and are experiencing mental health challenges as a result of military service. The service will remain the same; a full mental health assessment by a consultant psychiatrist with accompanying guidance on care and treatment for the veteran's local clinical team. Referrals to the VRMHP will preferably be made by the individual's GP however self-referrals will now be accepted for this service.

Helpline: 0800 032 6258

Web: www.gov.uk/support-for-war-veterans

Email: DPHCE-DCMHCHL-VRMHP@mod.uk

2.5. NHS Op COURAGE

See section 3

2.6. MIND (England & Wales)

Mind's telephone helpline offers a range of advice on non-urgent mental health issues on their info-line and also offers legal advice on via legal line. The website also has links to a wide range of booklets and leaflets.

Open: Mon–Fri, 9am – 6pm

Web: www.mind.org.uk

Infoline: 0300 123 3393

Legal line: 0300 466 6463

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Legal Email: legal@mind.org.uk

2.7. Samaritans

Someone to talk to 24 hours a day. **Samaritans** offer contact by phonecall, email, and letter and include links to a self-help app.

Open: 24hrs/365 days a year

Tel: 116 123 (UK and ROI)

Email: jo@samaritans.org (24hr wait)

Web: www.samaritans.org

2.8. Shout

24 hours a day, text support line . **Shout** offer free support via text if you are struggling to cop and need to talk.

Open: 24hrs/365 days a year

Text: 'SHOUT' to 85258

Web: www.giveusashout.org

2.9. Veterans UK: The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency

Veterans UK aims to be a first-stop for veterans providing information on the various services offered by other organisations in one place. The Veterans UK Helpline provides advice on many topics including urgent help, pensions, medals and badges and service records.

Open: Mon – Thurs: 7.30am - 6.30pm; Fri: 7.30am - 5pm

Helpline: 0808 191 4218 (free, UK)

Overseas: +44 (0)125 386 6043

Email: veterans-uk@mod.uk

Web: www.veterans-uk.info

2.10. Royal British Legion

Provides financial, social and emotional support to all those who have served and are currently serving in the Armed Forces, as well as their families. There is an online chat service available via their website 7 days a week from 8am until 8pm.

There are 2,500 local branches around the UK and overseas providing support for people in their local communities and also a meeting place to get together.

Open: 7 days a week, 8am – 8pm

Helpline: 0808 802 8080

Web: www.britishlegion.org.uk

2.11. Help for Heroes

Help for Heroes provides direct, practical support for wounded, injured and sick servicemen, women and veterans and their families. Help for Heroes also works to provide psychological services, and more details can be found on their website, as well as a link to their online for to request support.

Open: Mon – Fri, 9am -5pm

Web: www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/

2.12. Fighting with Pride

Fighting With Pride is a military charity supporting the health and wellbeing of LGBT+ Veterans, service personnel and their families.

Web: www.fightingwithpride.org.uk

Email: info@fightingwithpride.org.uk

Nations and Regional Mental Health Service and Advice

Please note that the list of regional/local services is not exhaustive. For more information on local services, if you cannot find an appropriate service listed below, please contact:

Combat Stress 24 hour helpline (see section 2.2)

Veterans UK Helpline (see section 2.9)

NHS Services in England

3.1. Op COURAGE

NHS Op COURAGE is an NHS mental health specialist service designed to help serving personnel due to leave the military, reservists, veterans and their families. It comprises the Veteran's Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS), the Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS), and the Veteran's Mental Health High Intensity Service (HIS).

The various parts of Op COURAGE can help you and your family with support and treatment including intensive emergency care and treatment if you're in a crisis, helping you transition from military to civilian life by providing mental health care with Defence Medical Services (DMS), helping you to access other NHS mental health services, and helping you get in touch with charities and local organisations who can support your wider health and wellbeing needs, such as housing, relationships, finances, employment, drug and alcohol misuse and social support.

The service is bespoke to each region, and more information is available on the website where you will find regional contact details

North of England: 0300 373 33 32

East of England: 0300 034 9991

The Midlands: 0300 323 0137

London: 020 3317 6818

South East England: 0300 365 2000

South West England: 0300 034 9986

Web: www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/armed-forces-community/
(or search Op COURAGE)

3.2. Support for Armed Forces Community in Northern Ireland

There is currently no central HSC service for veterans and their families in Northern Ireland. However, the **Northern Ireland Veterans' Support Office (NIVSO)** is the lead support and signposting service for veterans and veterans' groups in Northern Ireland, and their website should be the first point of contact for anyone looking for NI-specific information.

Web: nivso.org.uk/

3.3. Support for Armed Forces Community in Scotland

There is currently no central NHS service for veterans and their families in Scotland. However, the **MYGOV** website contains useful information and links to support from **Veterans First Point**, the **National Prosthetics Service**, and links to **Veterans Scotland** member organisations.

Web: www.mygov.scot/browse/living-visiting-scotland/veterans-support

3.4. Veterans NHS Wales

Any veteran living in Wales who has served at least one day with the British Military as either a regular service member or as a reservist who has a 'service related psychological injury' can access the **Veterans Wales** service through self-referral, be referred by their families or by other agencies or services. Variation exists across local health boards, and all information can be found on their website.

Swansea Bay HB: 01792 532 967

Aneurin Bevan HB: 01873 735 240

Betsi Cadwaladr HB: 03000 857 964

Cardiff & Vale HB: 029 2183 2261

Cwm Taf Morgannwg HB: 01443 443 443

Hywel Dda HB: 01570 422 577

Web: www.veteranswales.co.uk/

General Advice and Support

4.1. Citizens Advice Bureau (UK-wide)

The national centre provides free, confidential advice on a range of issues including finances, housing and employment. You can talk to them via an online chat service available Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm through their website.

They also have a range of local offices that you can visit or call, the details of which can be found on their website.

Open: Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm

Consumer Helpline: 0344 411 1444

Welsh Advisor: 0344 477 2020

Web: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

4.2. Debt Advice Line

Are an independent charity offering free, confidential, debt advice. Their website provides fact sheets, interactive tools and guides as well as an online chat service.

Open: Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm; Sat 9:30am-1pm

Tel: 0808 808 4000

Web: www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

4.3. Royal British Legion

See section 2

4.4. Veterans UK: The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency

See section 2

Alcohol and Drugs

5.1. We Are With You

We Are With You (formerly Addaction) is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. This website gives information about coping with alcohol and drug dependency and can help you find a service in your local area.

Web: <https://www.wearewithyou.org.uk/>

5.2. Alcoholics Anonymous

A fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other to help others to recover from alcoholism. You can find your local meeting via their website.

Free national helpline: 0800 917 7650

Email: help@alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Web: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

5.3. Al-Anon

Provides local support to anyone whose life is, or has been, affected by someone else's drinking as they believe alcoholism affects the whole family, not just the drinker.

Open: 10am - 10pm, 365 days a year

Helpline: 0800 0086 811

Email: enquiries@al-anonuk.org.uk

Web: www.al-anonuk.org.uk/

5.4. Drinkaware

Offers free, confidential information and advice to callers who are concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.

Drinkline Helpline: 0300 123 1110

Web: www.drinkaware.co.uk

5.5. National Drugs Helpline - FRANK

FRANK is a confidential service to speak to a professionally trained advisor about drugs. They offer a live chat service on their website from 2pm until 6pm.

Open: 24hrs/365 days a year

Tel: 0300 123 6600

Text a question to Frank: 82111

Web: www.talktofrank.com

5.6. Turning Point

National health and social care provider to help people find a new direction in life and help tackle substance misuse, mental health issues or employment difficulties

Tel: 0207 481 7600 (*not a helpline*)

Web: www.turning-point.co.uk

Jobs, Employment and Benefits

6.1. National Job Centre

To contact Jobcentre plus for support finding a job, or more advice on benefits:

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus>

6.2. NACRO

Aims to help those with a criminal record get back into work, providing information for ex-offenders, their families and those working with them.

Open: Mon - Th, 9am - 5pm, Fri 1pm-5pm

Advice line: 0300 123 1999

Email: helpline@nacro.org.uk

Web: www.nacro.org.uk

6.3. RFEA: The Forces Employment Charity

Provides tailored job finding support, helping to source job opportunities for all service leavers and ex-forces personnel across the UK.

You can register online for their employment services, call the helpline below or visit their website to find details of their regional offices.

Helpline: 0121 2362 3058

Web: www.rfea.org.uk

6.4. The Officers' Association

Provides practical support and advice on transition and employment for officers and their families whether still serving, in transition, or having left the Armed Forces. There are three core streams of support aimed at: building knowledge; growing connections; and sourcing employment positions.

The Officers' Association also provide support regarding financial assistance and housing via the website and a separate telephone number.

Tel: 0207 808 4175

Web: www.officersassociation.org.uk

6.5. SSAFA

SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association) has a network of volunteers who can help with advice on a range of financial issues.

Open: Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm

Helpline: 0800 731 4880

Web: www.ssafa.org.uk

Grants for Courses/Education

7.1. Adult Learning Grants

Financial assistance to help adults back into education. Offers a website providing information on advanced learning grants and loans and a learner support helpline providing advice on support for childcare costs, housing and grants that may be available whilst learning.

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/grant-bursary-adult-learners>

7.2. Royal British Legion

See section 2.

7.3. Army Benevolent Fund

Offers a range of financial grants for care in the home, holidays, bursaries, annuities and practical support to serving and ex-service personnel and their families. They have regional offices throughout the UK the details of which are provided on their website.

National Office Tel: 0207 901 8900

Web: www.soldierscharity.org

7.4. Prince's Trust

Offers help for those 13-30 who are unemployed or struggling with education.

Freephone: 0800 842 842

Web: www.princes-trust.org.uk

7.5. RAF Benevolent Fund

For former RAF personnel or their families. Offers a wide range of practical, financial and emotional support.

Tel: 0300 102 1919

Web: www.rafbf.org

7.6. Royal Navy Benevolent Trust

Offers a range of help, including grants and advice, for serving and ex-serving members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines and their families, including those who are separated or divorced and now living with a new partner.

Tel: 0239 269 0112

Email: rnbt@rnbt.org.uk

Web: www.rnbt.org.uk

Housing

8.1. Haig Housing

Provides housing assistance to ex-service personnel and/or their dependents.

Open: Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm

Main Line: 0208 685 5777

Email: enquiries@haighousing.org.uk

Web: www.haighomes.org.uk

8.2. ABF The Soldiers' Charity

See section 7

8.3. SPACES

Assistance for single ex-Service personnel in finding housing.

Tel: 0174 883 3797

Alternate: 0174 887 2940

Alternate: 0174 883 0191

Email: spaces@riverside.org.uk

Web: www.spaces.org.uk

8.4. SSAFA: Housing Advice

SSAFA has a dedicated area of the website for housing advice.

Tel: 0207 463 9354

Web: www.ssafa.org.uk/help-you/veterans/housing-advice

8.5. Stoll Foundation

Provides temporary and permanent housing for ex-Service personnel. They hold a bi-monthly drop in in London for veterans and their families the details of which are provided on their website.

Head Office: 0207 385 2110

Email: info@stoll.org.uk

Web: www.stoll.org.uk

8.6. Veteran's Aid

Provides help for veterans who are homeless or are likely to become homeless. This includes help with hostel accommodation, financial assistance, meal vouchers and clothing, advice and advocacy. They have a drop in centre and a hostel in London available to veterans.

Freephone: 0800 012 6867

Tel: 0207 828 2468

Email: info@veterans-aid.net

Web: www.veterans-aid.net

Relationship Guidance and Family Support

10.1. Relate

Offers phone counselling, internet counselling, email counselling and live chat with a counsellor via their website. Appointments can also be made for face to face counselling at your local centre, details of which can be found on their website.

Web: www.relate.org.uk

10.2. Relate for Parents

A section of the Relate website is dedicated to parenting which contains useful information for parents worried about their child's behaviour or looking for parenting advice.

Web: www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-family-life-and-parenting

10.3. Working Families

Helping children, working parents and carers and their employers find a better balance between responsibilities at home and work. Provides support on employment rights, tax credits, in work benefits, maternity and paternity leave as well as flexible working options.

Helpline: 0300 012 0312

Email: advice@workingfamilies.org.uk

Web: www.workingfamilies.org.uk

Other Counselling and Further Support

10.4. Cruse

Cruse supports people through bereavement. They offer telephone support and email support as well as face to face and group support at their local branches. You can find your closest branch via their website.

Open: Mon & Fri, 9.30am-5pm; Tues - Thurs 9.30am-8pm

Helpline: 0808 808 1677

Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

Web: www.cruse.org.uk

10.5. Refuge

Refuge works to support women and children against domestic violence, and operate the 24/7 National Domestic Abuse Helpline. Live webchat is also available Mon-Fri 3pm – 10pm

Open: 24hrs/365 days a year

Freephone Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Web: www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Web: www.refuge.org.uk

10.6. Women's Aid

Women's Aid is a federation combatting domestic abuse. Their website carries a helpful directory of local support services.

Web: www.womensaid.org.uk

10.7. The Survivors Trust

TST is the largest umbrella organisation for specialist rape and sexual abuse help services in the UK, with 124 member agencies. It provides links to services for all, regardless of age, gender or location. Services are not 24-hours, but a helpline, support search page, and helpline are all provided.

Web: www.thesurvivorstrust.org

Phone: 0808 801 0818

10.8. Rape Crisis (England & Wales)

A charity working to end sexual violence and abuse in England and Wales. Online live chat, as well as a helpline is provided (not 24-hours)

Web: www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Phone: 0808 500 2222

If you are in immediate danger, call 999.

If you cannot make a noise or speak on the call, press 55 when prompted

Equality and Human Rights

10.9. Equality Advisory Support Service

Specially trained staff will provide information and guidance on discrimination and human rights issues. The website also provides links to similar services in Scotland and Wales.

Open: Mon - Fri: 9am - 8pm; Sat: 10am - 2pm

Phone: 0808 800 0082

Website: www.equalityhumanrights.com

Text-phone: 0808 800 0084