**Care for Military Veterans and their Families**

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**Armed Forces Covenant**

The Armed Forces covenant sets out the relationship between the nation, the government and the armed forces. It aims to prevent those who serve or have served, and their families, from facing disadvantage in their access to services. It ensures that, where appropriate, injured servicemen and women and bereaved families receive special consideration. The covenant articulates the view that the nation has a moral obligation to members of the Armed Forces Community in return for the sacrifices they make.

**What is a Veteran?**

A veteran is anyone who has served in HM Armed Forces, regular or reserve including National Servicemen, former Polish forces under British command and Merchant Mariners who have seen duty in military operations. This can be anywhere from as little as one day of active duty to a lifelong military career.

**ASK THE QUESTION**

One of the main issues with implementing the Armed Forced Covenant is recognition of veterans in the community. Many people do not know the Armed Forces Covenant exists, and so many veterans and their families go without receiving the opportunities they are entitled to as privilege for serving their country. To address this, all we need to do is ASK THE QUESTION.

Asking if a patient has served in the Armed Forces or is a dependent of someone who has served in the Armed Forces opens up a considerable array of support and interventions available to the clinicians and veteran alike. A list of resources is included in this document.

**Have you served in the Armed Forces as a regular or reservist or are you a dependant of someone who is/has been?**

**What to do if you identify a veteran or a dependant of a veteran.**

1. Add the code “History Relating to Military Service Xa8Da” as a significant problem
2. Set up an alert on the screen for whenever someone access the patient’s medical record.
3. Provide the patent with a copy of the Veterans Support Resources (Appendix 1)
4. Fill in a Ministry of Defence Data Protection Act 1998 Subject Request Form to request a copy of the patient’s health care record. (Appendix 2)

**Referring a Veteran or a dependent for further care**

In all cases where the healthcare complaint may relate to prior service in HM Armed Forces, this should be highlighted in the referral document. This allows the receiving care provider to continue care according to the Armed Forces Covenant.

**Accessing the Armed Forces Patient Health Care Record**

Health care records of veterans are not automatically sent to their NHS GP after discharge from the military - they need to be requested. This can be done by completing a Ministry of Defence Subject Access Request Form (appendix 2).

**Appendix 1**

**Veteran Support Resources**

**The Royal British Legion**

Tel 0808 802 8080

Address 199 Borough High Street London LE1 1AA

Finance, Care, Support, Advice

**SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association)**

Tel 0845 241 7141

Confidential Helpline 0800 731 4880

AWOL line 01380 738137

Housing, Adoption, Mentoring, Child services, Offenders and Ex offenders

**Combat Stress**

Tel 0800 138 1619

Address Tyrwhitt House, Oak Law Road, Leatherhead KT22 0BX

Mental Health, Community Outreach, Inpatient Mental Health, PTSD

**MOD Veterans UK**

Tel 0808 191 4218

Address MOD, Norcross, Thornton Cleveleys, FY 5 3WP

Support, Pensions, Compensation

**Veterans and Reservists Mental Health Programme**

Tel 0800 032 6258

Address DCMH Chilwell, Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 5HA

Consultant Psychiatric Service (GP or self refer)

**Appendix 2**

**MoD SAR Form**

