

Veteran Patient Information

North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust is proud to be signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant and has received accreditation awarded by the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA). In order to be outstanding we have made a series of pledges around sharing and driving best practice in NHS care for people who currently serve or have served in the armed forces and their families.

All veterans are entitled to priority access to NHS care for service-related conditions; however, this is always subject to clinical need and does not mean that they will automatically be treated ahead of others who have a more urgent clinical need.

Please let a member of staff know if you or your spouse/partner have ever served in the UK armed forces so that we can best support your care needs.

Visit our website to read this information in an online format and to find out more about how the wider NHS supports the armed forces community: combined.nhs.uk/working-together/armed-forces-covenant/.



How we support our veteran patients

Being identified as a veteran in your NHS medical notes will ensure that you are able to access specific veterans' health services, such as those for mental health, hearing loss, limb amputation and wheelchairs. Please ensure that you are also registered as a veteran with your GP.

What can you expect from our mental health services?

- We support the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant
- We are committed to ensuring no disadvantage and giving special consideration where appropriate
- We will have educated and trained all relevant staff to identify and respond to veterans' needs, signposting them to local support services where required
- We also support the UK armed forces community as an employer

We work with a range of extra services for the armed forces community and will let you know of, and refer you to, any that could benefit you.

National veteran support:

- Veterans UK Helpline, T: 0808 1914 218 E: veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk
- Help for Heroes, T: 01980 844280 helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support
- The Veterans' Gateway, a first point of contact for veterans and their families providing information, advice and support, T: 0808 802 1212 Text: 81212
- NHS Op COURAGE, The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service, T: 0300 323 0137 (Midlands or East of England) E: mevs.mhm@nhs.net
- Royal British Legion, helps support veterans and their families, T: 0808 802 8080 britishlegion.org.uk
- Defence Medical Welfare Service, this service has dedicated officers who will assist the patient in identifying service charities and other organisations, T: 0800 999 3697 E: referral@dmws.org.uk
- Combat Stress/Rethink, provides emotional support and a listening ear can be contacted on a 24-hour freephone helpline, T: 0800 138 1619 E: helpline@combatstress.org.uk
- The Poppy Factory, provides employment support for veterans with mental and physical health conditions, T: 0208 940 3305 E: admin@poppyfactory.org
- Walking With The Wounded (WWTW), T: 01263 863900 E: info@wwtw.org.uk

Local veteran support:

- Soldiers', Sailors' & Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA), T: 01785 212680 or via the helpline 0800 7314880 E: staffordshire@ssafa.org.uk
- Tri Service and Veteran Support Centre, based in Newcastle-under-Lyme, the centre is run for veterans by veterans and they utilise a 'hub' based approach to supporting veterans in need, T: 01782 713963 E: info@veteransupportcentre.org
- Walk Talk and Action, based in Stoke-on-Trent, this group supports people who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression (including postnatal depression), anxiety, loneliness, and midlife crisis through a range of services walktalkaction.co.uk/contact
- Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfast Club, groups based in Crewe and Stafford, visit the website to find a club afvbc.net
- Veteran Support Network CIC, based in Stoke-on-Trent, this group is North Staffordshire's mental health and wellbeing support service for veterans, T: 07734 016461 veteransupportnetwork.org.uk