



# VETERAN SUPPORT BOOKLET

# Support for Veterans

This booklet is a guide to the support that is available to Serving and Ex-servicemen and Women of the UK Armed Forces.

Thank you for your Service

## Combat Stress



Combat Stress Is the UK's leading mental health charity for veterans offering free treatment and support to ex-servicemen and women of the UK Armed Forces.

**Call us on 0800 138 1619**

**Text us on 07537 404 719 or**

**email [helpline@combatstress.org.uk](mailto:helpline@combatstress.org.uk).**

**<https://combatstress.org.uk/>**

## Veterans UK



Veterans needing urgent help in a crisis can contact the Veterans UK helpline

**Freephone (UK only): 0808 1914 218**

**Normal Service 8.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday**

**Bereavement line: 0800 169 3458**

When the helpline is closed, callers will be given the option to be routed to Combat Stress or The Samaritans 24hr helpline.

## TOGETHERALL



A safe anonymous 24/7 online community where you can talk to people, who feel like you; whilst guided by trained professionals.

**Website: <https://togetherall.com/en-gb/mental-health-support-for-all-uk-armed-forces-veterans/>**

## Help for Heroes - Hidden Wounds



The Help for Heroes Hidden Wounds service can support you if you are Ex-Service Personnel, or a family member, who is living with anxiety, depression, anger or wishing to change your drinking habits.

We know many Veterans struggling with their mental health have never accessed support before. If you are the loved one of a Veteran who hasn't reached out, particularly if you are worried about the impact of your Veteran's mental health on your own wellbeing, we're here to offer free and confidential advice.

**Ask for Help - Tel: 0300 303 9888**

**Mon - Friday 9am - 5pm**

**<https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/application/>**

**<https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/>**

## SAAFA



SSAFA provides lifelong support for veterans and their families. Our trained volunteers can provide practical, emotional and financial support if and when you need it:

**<https://www.ssaafa.org.uk/>**

**Tel: 0800 260 6780**

**Mon - Thurs 9am - 5pm**

**Friday 9am - 4pm**

## Armed Forces Breakfast Club

The Armed Forces Breakfast club is a vital community where veterans come together to share stories, find support and enjoy a hearty breakfast.

**Find your local Club:** <https://afvbc.com/armed-forces-veterans-breakfast-clubs-directory>

**Website:** <https://afvbc.com/>



## OP COURAGE



Op COURAGE is an NHS mental health specialist service designed to help serving personnel due to leave the military, reservists, armed forces veterans and their families.

### How Op COURAGE can help:

Op COURAGE can help you and your family with a range of support and treatment, including:

- helping you transition from military to civilian life by providing mental health care with Defence Medical Services (DMS)
- helping you recognise and treat early signs of mental health problems, as well as more advanced mental health conditions and psychological trauma
- providing support and treatment for substance misuse and addictions

- helping you to access other NHS mental health services if you need them, such as [finding an NHS talking therapies service](#) and eating disorder services
- liaising with charities and local organisations to support your wider health and wellbeing needs, such as help with housing, relationships, finances and employment
- supporting armed forces families affected by mental health problems, including helping them to access local services

YouTube: NHS video on what Op COURAGE is and how it can help: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8G5InGfABs>

### Contacting Op COURAGE

You can contact the service in many ways, including:

- directly getting in touch yourself, or through a family member or friend
- asking a GP or other healthcare representative to refer you
- asking a charity to refer you

**Tel:** 0300 034 9991 or email [mevs.mhm@nhs.net](mailto:mevs.mhm@nhs.net)

**Website:** [Op COURAGE The East of England](#)

## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION



Lifelong Support for serving and ex-serving personnel and their families

**Tel: 0808 802 8080**

**8am - 8pm - 7 days per week**

**Website:** <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>

## ROYAL AIR FORCE BENEVOLENT FUND



For more than 100 years, the RAF Benevolent Fund has been supporting members of our RAF Family through thick and thin providing practical, emotional, and financial support whenever they need us.

### For Help and Support:

Please contact us via email at [welfare Navigators@rafbf.org.uk](mailto:welfare Navigators@rafbf.org.uk), via our [online form](#)

or by calling our helpline on 0300 102 1919 between 9:30am-4:30pm Monday-Thursday and 9:30am-4pm on Friday

## BLIND VETERANS UK



Rebuilding  
lives after  
sight loss

Blind Veterans UK can help you to live a fulfilling, independent life after sight loss. We believe that no one should battle blindness alone.

We offer a bespoke service to every one of our beneficiaries, providing rehabilitation, training, practical advice and emotional support for life.

Whether you need help with day-to-day living, getting out and about or staying in touch with loved ones, our expert staff are here to help you adjust to life with a vision impairment and relearn vital life skills.

### Apply Online:

<https://www.blindveterans.org.uk/help-info/apply-for-support/apply-for-support-application-form/>

**Tel: 0800 389 7979**



## OP NOVA



Op NOVA, delivered by the Forces Employment Charity and commissioned by NHS England, provides support for veterans who are in contact with the justice system, enabling them to access the services they need.

Any justice sector or statutory organisation personnel can make a referral, and veterans can also self-refer.

### Referral Form:

<https://www.forcesemployment.org.uk/programmes/op-nova/referral-form/>

**Freephone 0800 917 7299**

### Website:

<https://www.forcesemployment.org.uk/programmes/op-nova/>

**or by email at [opnova@forcesemployment.org.uk](mailto:opnova@forcesemployment.org.uk)**

## FORCES EMPLOYMENT CHARITY



Op ASCEND an Office for Veterans' Affairs programme run by the Forces Employment Charity, provides clear, accessible career pathways for veterans, ensuring they are empowered to succeed from the moment they join the Armed Forces, throughout their service, and beyond.

**Tel: 0121 262 3058**

**Website: <https://www.forcesemployment.org.uk/>**

## THE VETERANS CHARITY



Despite being a small charity, The Veterans Charity operate nationally throughout the UK. They are able to assist with essentials such as food shopping (including pet and baby products where required), utilities support, clothing and footwear, household items and single appliances, smartphones/tablets and calling credit/data.

**Link: <https://www.veteranscharity.org.uk/sprtreq>**

## CITIZENS ADVICE



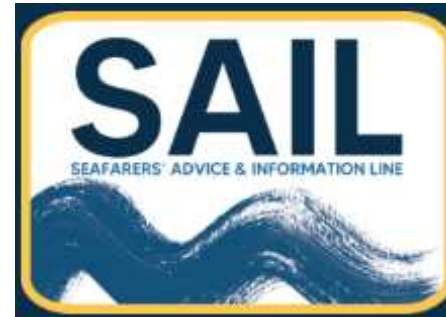
There are many different kinds of financial help available for people in the armed forces, veterans and their families.

You can use this information to find out what financial help might be available to you, depending on your situation. You can also use this information to find details of organisations that might be able to help you further.

### **Website:**

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/armed-forces-and-veterans/benefits-and-concessions-for-the-armed-forces-veterans-and-their-families/>

## SEAFARERS ADVICE & INFORMATION LINE



If you've ever served in any branch of the Royal Navy or Royal Marines, then we can help you. We can also advise you if you've been in the Royal Navy or Royal Marines Reserves.

The most common areas of advice for serving personnel are –

- Money worries
- The practicalities of relationship breakdown
- Immigration advice

For veterans, we often help with –

- Benefits
- Charity grants
- Pensions

If you're the partner, widow or widower of a someone who's served in the RN, then SAIL can help you too.

**Tel: 0800 160 1842 (10am - 4pm Monday - Friday)**

**Website: <https://sailine.org.uk/>**

## WALKING WITH THE WOUNDED



Supporting veterans with mental health problems and emotional wellbeing through the Head Start Programme.

### Operated as a Call-Back System by completing the Request Form:

<https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk/ask-for-help/>

**Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm**

**Website:** <https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk/>

## SAMARITANS VETERAN APP



Samaritans Veterans is a free desktop app that can provide you with emotional support after your career in the Armed Forces

**Register and Sign in:** <https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/military/samaritans-veterans-app/>

## NEED URGENT HELP?

To speak a professional for urgent health and care advice:

- Call NHS 111 (24 hours)
- Call 999 if your life is in danger
- Go to A&E in an emergency

Remember to tell whoever you speak to, that you or the person you are calling about, has served in the UK armed forces so they can give you the right information.

Having difficulties with your  
mental health?



**Call 111  
Option 2**

Mental health crisis support  
available **24/7** for **all ages** via **NHS 111**



# Veterans Healthcare on Discharge from the Military

A veteran is someone who has served in the armed forces for at least one day. There are around 2.6 million veterans in the UK.

It is highly important for continuing healthcare that you register with an NHS GP and remember to tell them you've served.

When you leave the forces, you should be given the option of receiving your medical records for you to pass on to the GP Practice. Alternatively, you will be asked to complete the Military Medical Record Request Form (see below link), which should be handed in when you register with a practice for them to request your records from the military.

<https://www.bostonpcn.co.uk/application/files/9817/1379/5493/Ministry-of-Defence-Request-for-Records.pdf>

Requests for military medical records can take up to 6 months to receive your notes so its advised that you get copies of your records before you leave so these can be merged these with your NHS records.

When servicemen and women leave the armed forces, their healthcare is the responsibility of the NHS. You shouldn't be disadvantaged from accessing appropriate health services, so it is important that you notify your current GP that you are moving, particularly if you are on a waiting list of medical treatment, so that this information can be transferred across.

All veterans are entitled to priority access to NHS care (including hospital, primary or community care) for conditions associated to their time within the armed forces (service-related). However this is always subject to clinical need and does not entitle you to jump the queue ahead of someone with a higher clinical need.

If you are already registered with a GP Practice ensure that they know you are a veteran so they can code your record. They will then ensure appropriate referrals are noted with your status as a military veteran, so that you may receive priority access, should this be appropriate.