

Making health and care services better for armed forces families

Tell us what you think

All comments and feedback must be sent by
30 November 2020



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Who we are and what we do

We are the NHS and provide health and care services for the families of people who work or who have worked in the armed forces.

We want to make health and care services better for armed forces families.

We know that most people who work or have worked in the armed forces and their families live a healthy life. But health and care needs might be different for anyone who is connected to the armed forces.

If you are part of an armed forces family, there might be

- More stress in your life
- More time away from family and friends
- A family member who needs to be cared for because they have been injured
- A family member who has a mental health issue
- A need to move to different places every few years
- Someone who has died in the family due to their work in the armed forces.



Not everyone in the NHS understands these different needs so some people and their families are not getting the care they need.

We want to

- Change what we can do to give support to the families of people who work in or who have worked in the armed forces
- Make it easier for armed forces families to use NHS services in different parts of England
- Make it easier to get care and support from clinical services and staff who understand what they need.



We want to find out your ideas on how we could do this. We also want to know what you think about having more armed forces families support networks across England.

We already have some excellent armed forces families support networks across the country. But not everywhere. Feedback on these support networks is good.



These networks provide the following support for armed forces families

- Being a contact for armed forces families so they can get help and support from the NHS
- Working with armed forces families to understand some of the challenges and issues in getting good health care
- Training and sharing information with other healthcare professionals so they understand what people in the armed forces and their families need
- Working with armed forces families so we understand what they need and can put this in our training
- Training up champions and leaders who work with the NHS to support armed forces families

We think these support networks could be a good way to help people in the armed forces and their families get the health and care they need. We would like to know what you think about setting up support networks. We would also like to hear ideas about what support armed forces families need.

We will use your answers to make health and care services better for the families of people who work in or who have worked in the armed forces. We know life has been very hard since COVID-19. This has changed life for many people in the armed forces and their families. Some of them have had to move to work with the NHS.

We want to say thank you to everyone who has worked to help with COVID-19.



We want to say thank you to everyone who has worked to help with COVID-19. We are doing everything we can to make changes and adapt. We are working with National Voices to follow five principles.

We will

- Engage and connect with the people who have been affected most by change because of COVID-19
- Make sure everyone matters
- Do everything we can to make sure everyone is treated as an equal
- Recognise people as individuals and make sure they get care and support that is right for them
- Value health and support as equal.

We want to hear your ideas and what you think. Please answer the following questions and thank you for your interest and your time.

Why we want to look at what armed forces families need in health and care

We have made a lot of progress in how we care for veterans (someone who used to be in the armed forces). But it is also important we give help and support to the whole of the armed forces community and their families.

One person's poor health can affect the whole family. This can be physical or mental health. We know some armed forces families are dealing with this on their own. They might not know who to ask for help or how to ask for help.

We know families can have problems getting NHS care if they move around a lot. They might be on a long waiting list for services like dental health. These problems can get bigger and this is why we want to give armed forces families more support.



The armed forces community told us they need more help with:

- Better access to health and wellbeing services with shorter waits for care and treatment
- Care and support that patients want
- The NHS understanding what armed forces families need and their way of life
- Care for the individual person that suits their needs – this is part of the Armed Forces Covenant agreement
- Understanding what care and support is available

- Making it easier for armed forces families to ask for help if they need it
- Getting support and advice for the whole family when they move from a military life to being civilians
- Linking veterans' health services with support for their families

Please tell us what you think about our ideas. We welcome views from everyone and particularly want to hear from these groups of people:

- Families of people who work in or who have worked in the armed forces
- Regular armed forces personnel
- Reservist armed forces personnel
- Veterans



Our questionnaire – what we want you to do

We want to hear your thoughts, experiences and ideas. You only need to answer the sections that relate to you. This should take about 10 minutes.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are changing the way we talk with you. We are holding some online meetings and events. If you'd like support to run your own event, or would like us to come to one of your events to talk about this, let us know.

For further information, please visit:

<https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/health-and-wellbeing-support-armed-forces-families/> or email nelcsu.armedforcesfamilies@nhs.net.

Look out for our updates on social media, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media platforms. This is our hashtag #forcesfamilies

When we need your feedback by

Please send your answers, thoughts and experiences by **30 November 2020**.

How to send your comments and feedback

Fill in the questionnaire and post it for free to:

FREEPOST NHS ARMED FORCES FAMILIES.

If you want to fill out the questionnaire online or over the phone, please use the contact details below:

Online questionnaire: <https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/health-and-wellbeing-support-armed-forces-families/>

By phone at: **0203 688 1653**

If you want to find out more about this questionnaire, please visit our website at: <https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/health-and-wellbeing-support-armed-forces-families/>

Keeping information confidential

Your answers will help the NHS to improve care and support for armed forces families. You do not have to give your name if you don't want to. We will not use any personal information in our final report.

All information you tell us will be processed on behalf of NHS England and NHS Improvement by NEL Commissioning Support Unit and will be handled in strictest confidence.



What happens with what you tell us

NEL Commissioning Support Unit will analyse all the information we get and write a report. We will share this information with the people who make decisions to decide what support is needed for armed forces families in the future. We want to keep talking with armed forces families to make sure we are getting things right.

Our feedback report will be made available to everyone and shared with the people who gave us feedback. We will also make sure future opportunities to be involved with this work are promoted widely so we get to hear from as many people as possible.

Registering with an NHS GP

If you live in England and want to register with an NHS GP, please do this as soon as possible. Please go to www.nhs.uk to find GP practices in your local area.

Registering with a GP practice is easy – just contact the GP practice you'd like to go to and ask to be included on their patient list.

You will be asked to fill out a form so your medical records can be transferred to the GP practice you have chosen. Make sure you tell them you are part of an armed forces family, so this can be added to your patient notes. Doing this helps to ensure that you are treated in line with the Armed Forces Covenant.



How to find out more

You can find out more about health services for the armed forces community on this website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/military-healthcare/>

If you need more information or help, please send an email to:

england.armedforceshealth@nhs.net

Questionnaire

If you would like this document in a different format or language please contact us

Email: nelcsu.armedforcesfamilies@nhs.net

Or phone 0203 688 1653 to talk to us

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30 November 2020

SECTION 1: Questions about you

1 Please tick one box that describes you or your organisation. You can also tick one box if you are filling out the questionnaire on behalf of someone else – for example you might be a carer or relative.

- ☐ A. I am in the British armed forces (Regular)
- ☐ B. I am in the British armed forces (Reservist)
- ☐ C. I am a veteran – this is someone who used to be in the armed forces
- ☐ D. I am part of an armed forces family
- ☐ E. I work for an armed forces charity, other charity or another organisation that supports the armed forces community
- ☐ F. Something else

2 We need to know who is answering these questions. Please tell us if you are answering on behalf of:

- ☐ Myself
- ☐ A relative or someone I care for
- ☐ An organisation (please tell us which one)
- ☐ Something else (please tell us more)

3 Please tell us what your armed forces experience is. Are you or your family member in the:

- ☐ Army ☐ Royal Air Force ☐ Royal Marines ☐ Royal Navy
☐ Other (please tell us what this is)

- ☐ This question does not apply to me

4 Please tell us the first part of your postcode or your BFPO number.

We only need this information to help us see where you live and who is answering our questions. We won't use it to identify where you live or who you are.

5 If you are a member of an armed forces family living overseas, do you get support from the Defence Global Practice or European Joint Support Unit?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ This does not apply to me or my family

6 A) If you live in England, are you registered with an NHS GP practice or Defence Medical Services GP practice?

- ☐ I am with an NHS GP practice
☐ I am with a Defence Medical Services GP practice
☐ I am not registered with either
☐ This does not apply to me (please go to question 7A)

- 6** B) If you are not registered with an NHS GP in England, please tell us why here.

- 7** A) Would you like to be kept up to date with information about what we find from this questionnaire?

☐

Yes – please go to question 7B

☐

No

B) Please tell us your email or postal address.

We will only use your contact information to keep you up to date on what we find out from this questionnaire.

We will not use this information for any other reason and we will not share it with any other organisations.

SECTION 2

This section is for current armed forces personnel (Regular or Reservist), veterans and their families.

Developing support for armed forces families

The NHS wants to improve care and support for the families of people who are in or who have been in the armed forces.

Armed forces families have already told us a lot about what support they need and how services can be made better.

Setting up armed forces families support networks across the country is one idea to make support better. These networks could bring lots of organisations together who already provide care and support.

This might include the NHS, the Ministry of Defence, local authorities, Families Federations and voluntary and community organisations. This would help make life more connected for armed forces families.

We already have some excellent support networks in parts of England to help make armed forces families' experiences of health services better. People have told us they like these networks. Feedback about them is really positive.

These support networks can help by

- Being a contact for armed forces families so they can get help and support from the NHS
- Working with armed forces families to understand what can make it hard to get good health care

- Training and sharing information with other healthcare professionals so they understand what armed forces and their families need
- Working with armed forces families so the NHS understands what they need and can put this in our training
- Having champions and leaders who work with the NHS to support armed forces families

Not all areas in England have support networks at the moment. We want to know if you think setting up networks would help and support armed forces families. We also want your ideas about what other support you think would be helpful.

1 What kind of information and support would be helpful for you and your family? You can tick as many answers as you want.

- ☐ I want to go to one place to ask questions about healthcare issues and services
- ☐ I want help to access health services
- ☐ I want to give feedback so health services can get better
- ☐ I want information about health services for physical health conditions
- ☐ I want information about mental health services for children, young people and adults
- ☐ I want to know how to access support if I'm feeling lonely, isolated, or facing a crisis
- ☐ I want help with other support – for example housing and benefits
- ☐ I want to know about support for carers
- ☐ I want to know about support for children and young people
- ☐ Something else (please tell us more)

2 How can we make health support for armed forces families better?

You can tick as many answers as you want.

- ☐ Make communications better between armed forces families and the places where they get health and care
- ☐ The NHS to understand the armed forces lifestyle so people can have more connected care. For example, for armed forces families who need to move around and for family members with complex medical needs
- ☐ Have one place to contact to get help with coordinating care and support
- ☐ Better access to health and care services with nothing getting in the way of care and treatment
- ☐ More information on NHS services and how to use these services
- ☐ Support and advice to help the whole family move from a life in the military to living in the community
- ☐ Linking health services for veterans with care and support for their families

3 A) What would be the benefits of an armed forces families support network in your area?

3 B) Can you say what the challenges of setting up an armed forces families support network might be?

4 What are the 3 most important things an armed forces families support network should do? Please pick your top 3 answers:

- ☐ Act as a point of contact for armed forces families, offering support and guidance to understand the NHS and services
- ☐ Work with armed forces families to understand the challenges and issues they experience in accessing health services and how these can work better
- ☐ Deliver training and share information with healthcare and other professionals to increase awareness and understanding of the health needs of armed forces families
- ☐ Work in partnership with armed forces families to make sure information and training materials reflect their experiences of military life
- ☐ Train up service champions who work with the NHS to support people with military backgrounds and their families when accessing NHS services

5 A) What is working well now with support for armed forces families between different organisations?

B) What is not working well and could be better?

6 Would you like to take part in developing support for armed forces families?

☐ Yes (please give us your contact details below and we will be in touch)

☐ No

SECTION 3: Anything else you want to tell us

Please tell us anything else you want to say about your experiences of trying to get health and care for you and your family:

**Please now complete the monitoring questions at the end of this document.
Thank you for your time.**

SECTION 4: Equality monitoring questions

We want to find out who has answered our questions. This helps us treat everyone in a more equal way. Please tick one box only.

1 A) How old are you?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26-40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 41-65 | <input type="checkbox"/> 66-74 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 or over | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't want to say |

B) If you are answering questions for someone else, please tell us how old they are.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-8 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13-15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26-40 | <input type="checkbox"/> 41-65 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 66-74 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 or over | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't want to say | |

2 Which gender description describes who you are and how you think of yourself?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am male | <input type="checkbox"/> I am female | <input type="checkbox"/> Another gender or definition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't want to say | | |

3 Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were given at birth?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't want to say |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

4 Do you have a disability?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't want to say |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

If you answered yes, please tell us more about your condition

5 What is your sexual orientation?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/Straight | <input type="checkbox"/> Gay | <input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't want to say |

6 What is your ethnic group?

White

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welsh | <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Irish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> British | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Irish Traveller | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background (please say what this is) | | | |

Mixed

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed background |

Asian or Asian British

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background (please say what this is) | | | |

Black or Black British

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background (please say what this is) | |

Other ethnic group

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't want to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please say what this is) | |

7 What is your religion or belief?

- | | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No religion | <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh | <input type="checkbox"/> Atheist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agnostic | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't want to say | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other religion (please say what this is) | | | |

Thank you for your time.

