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**Themes:** Advocacy, Counselling, Health and Wellbeing, Healthier Lives, Mental Health, Physical Disabilities, Specific Health Conditions

**Aimed at:** Veterans

How armed forces healthcare works

The partnership between the NHS and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has enabled the armed forces to provide modern and advanced clinical care, and give its medical staff the broadest and most up-to-date training and experience.

Structure

Medical services are delivered to servicemen and women by the MoD, the NHS, charities and welfare organisations.

The MoD is responsible for providing the following healthcare for serving personnel:

primary care: such as general practice, dentistry, occupational medicine and community mental health services within the UK and at defence outposts overseas

specialist healthcare, such as secondary care and rehabilitation through the Headley Court Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre

Services are staffed by regular uniformed and reserve medical personnel from all 3 services - the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.

Military casualties

Armed forces personnel returning from operations for treatment in the UK usually

go to Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (QEHB), which is also the home of the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine (RCDM).

During their treatment at QEHB, most military patients are grouped together in a secure trauma ward staffed by military and NHS medical staff.

The RCDM and UHB have earned an excellent reputation for treating the complex injuries typical of military casualties.

### Mental health

All serving personnel receive their mental health care through MoD-commissioned services.

Military mental health professionals are sent on operations overseas, so they can provide assessment and care in the field.

In the UK, mental health services work alongside community-based mental health services, to ensure they follow national best practice guidelines.

Care is offered at 15 military Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMH) across the UK (and smaller centres abroad), which provide outpatient mental health care.

Inpatient mental health care services in the UK are provided under contract by a partnership of 8 NHS trusts.

This is led by the South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Service personnel are assessed, stabilised and treated in hospitals as close to their home or parent unit as possible.

The priority is to return injured servicemen and women to work as quickly as possible.

The trusts providing inpatient healthcare are:

South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Cambridge and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust

NHS Grampian

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Transition and veterans health

Everyone leaving the armed forces is given a summary of their medical records, which they are advised to give to their new NHS doctor when they register with them.

A rigorous handover process – known as the Seriously Injured Leavers Protocol (SILP) – is in place for veterans with healthcare requirements after leaving the forces.

Subject to the clinical needs of others, veterans are also entitled to priority NHS treatment for any condition that may have been caused during service.

Individuals within the non-serving armed forces community can access all NHS services, including those services set up to meet the needs of veterans, like prosthetics and mental health.

For serving personnel with a discharge date from the armed forces who are struggling with their mental health, they can access the Veterans' Mental Health Transition Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS).

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.

**Area:** Bassetlaw, Bolsover

## **Contact Details**

call 111

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

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