

NHS mental health care for veterans

Mental illness is common and can affect anyone (including serving and ex-members of the Armed Forces and their families). Whilst some people cope by getting support from their family and friends, or by getting help with other issues in their lives, others need clinical care and treatment, which could be from the NHS, support groups or charities.

Within the NHS, there are a range of mental health services that provide different types of care and treatment. This includes dedicated mental health services for service personnel approaching discharge from the British Armed Forces and veterans. By veteran we mean anyone who has served for at least one day in Her Majesty's Armed Forces (regular or reserve).

These services are called the NHS Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS) and the NHS Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS).

Both of these services are provided by specialists in mental health who have an expert understanding of the Armed Forces.

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NHS Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS)

Accessing the TILS in your local area is quick and easy:

- If you are due to leave the Armed Forces, the TILS will work with the MOD to offer you mental health support through your transition period and beyond.
- Both serving personnel approaching discharge and ex-forces will have a specialist assessment two weeks after the TILS has received your referral. Where appropriate, the TILS will aim to see you for your first appointment two weeks after this. You will be supported by a military aware team who will develop a personalised care plan with you.
- Your assessment may find that other NHS services can provide more relevant support. If this is the case, the TILS will help you access these services, which could include talking therapies or treatment for other conditions, such as eating disorders or psychosis.
- If you have significant mental health difficulties that are military related and have not improved with previous treatment, you will be referred to your local CTS.

NHS Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS)

Access to the CTS is via the TILS. This ensures that any previous treatment and support has been considered.

This service provides a range of intensive care and treatment for people with military related complex mental health difficulties, many of whom will have experienced trauma.

Once referred to the CTS, the service will aim to see you for your first appointment two weeks after this.

You will be supported by a military aware team who will develop a personalised care plan with you. This will include arrangements for crisis care.

Accessing NHS mental health services

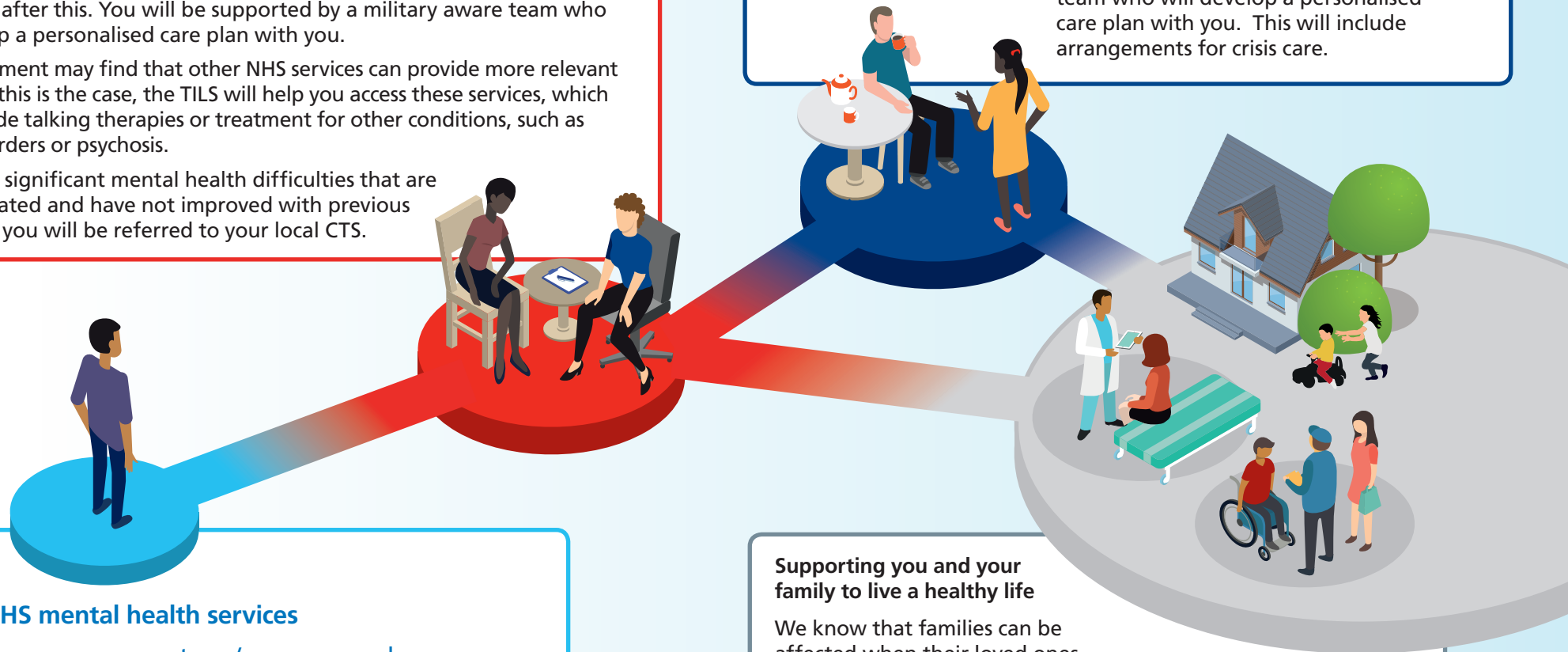
If you think you or your partner / spouse may be struggling to cope, the NHS Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS) and NHS Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS) can help.

Access to both of these services is via the TILS. You can contact the TILS direct or ask your GP or an Armed Forces charity to refer you.

Supporting you and your family to live a healthy life

We know that families can be affected when their loved ones are unwell, so where required they will be supported to access local services to help ensure they get the right care and treatment.

With your permission and where appropriate, they will also have the opportunity to be involved in developing your care plan.



NHS Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS)

This is a dedicated out-patient service for serving personnel approaching discharge from the Armed Forces and veterans who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

The TILS provides a range of treatment, from recognising the early signs of mental health problems and providing access to early support, to therapeutic treatment for complex mental health difficulties and psychological trauma. Help may also be provided with housing, employment, alcohol misuse and social support.

NHS Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS)

This is an enhanced out patient service for ex-forces who have military related complex mental health difficulties that have not improved with previous treatment.

The service provides intensive care and treatment that may include (but is not limited to) support for drug and alcohol misuse, physical health, employment, housing, relationships and finances, as well as occupational and trauma focused therapies.

Accessing NHS mental health care for veterans

Access to both of these services is through the TILS. You can contact the service direct (see below) or ask your GP or a military charity to refer you.

- **North of England** services: call 0191 441 5974 or email vwals@nhs.net
- **Midlands or East of England** services: call 0300 323 0137 or email mevs.mhm@nhs.net
- **London or South East of England** services: call 020 3317 6818 or email cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net
- **South West of England** services: call 0300 365 0300 or email sc.veterans@nhs.net

To access these services you must:

- be a resident in England and have served in the UK Armed Forces for a full day
- be registered with a GP practice in England or be willing and eligible to register with a GP
- provide your military service number or another form of eligibility.

Both services work with a range of local organisations, including the wider NHS, charities, housing, employment agencies and social services, to ensure the appropriate support is in place for you and your family.

If you experience a mental health crisis before being assessed by the TILS and you are not under the care of a mental health team, you can get help by dialling 111, booking an emergency GP appointment, visiting A&E or calling 999. A mental health crisis often means that you no longer feel able to cope or are not in control of your situation.

It is important to register with an NHS GP and tell them that you have served in the Armed Forces so, where appropriate, you can access these and other dedicated services for veterans.

For more information, visit NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk and type in 'veteran'