

Browney House Surgery

Veterans Identification and Action Plan Policy

Document Control

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1	01.10.2019	Andrew Nagi, Partner	Andrew Nagi, Partner	Policy Created – research from www.nhs.uk CQC website and CCG FAIR Funding Scheme.
2	01.02.2019	Andrew Nagi, Partner	Andrew Nagi, Partner	Veteran count coded on SystemOne is 4 as of 01.01.2019 (page 4). Note – update annually on front page.

Browney House Surgery Veteran Policy & Plan of Action

Background Information

Members of the Armed Forces community are considered as vulnerable by Browney House Surgery. Service men and women can be considered as vulnerable adults and family members of service men and women can be considered both vulnerable adults and children. This comprises serving personnel (regular and reserve), their families and veterans. There are about 2.4 million veterans in Great Britain, 5% of the population aged 16 and over. Almost two-thirds of veterans are 65 and over and the majority are male. Also, there are about 5.4 million adult spouses, partners, widowers (overall mainly female) and child dependents of veterans.

The healthcare needs of veterans can be different from other patients. They may:

- Miss the structure, support and friendship of the forces
- Find transition to life outside the military stressful.

Acknowledging this is a crucial first step in providing effective healthcare for veterans. Their treatment may need some understanding of military life.

Armed Forces personnel and veterans may have physical and mental health issues specific to their time in service.

There has been an emphasis on veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

For veterans who deployed when serving, rates of PTSD (9%) are higher than the incidence among civilians. This rises to 17% for those who deployed in a front-line, infantry combat role. Rates for veterans who have not been deployed (around 6.2%), are broadly equivalent to the incidence among civilians. More common issues for all veterans include other mental health difficulties, such as anxiety and depression, as well as problems related to alcohol.

There is growing evidence that a range of mental health conditions may appear (or patients may present) some years after leaving the armed forces. These conditions may relate to combat, training or other military experiences, transition out of service or pre-service vulnerabilities.

Service families often have extra pressures on family life and may be more vulnerable than the general population. These include:

- Stress around deployment, concerns about injury or death
- Extended, short-notice and repeated periods of separation
- Social isolation from family and friends (based in remote locations and moved at short notice)
- Additional and short notice caring responsibilities
- Adapting to family life after enforced separation.

Service families tend to move every two to three years. They should not be disadvantaged by:

- Losing their place on hospital waiting lists
- Having their care interrupted
- Needing to re-register with GP services.

Practice Information

To improve the identification and care for veterans and their families, military veterans will be recognised when registering as a patient at Browney House Surgery. A read code will be added to the patient record if a patient has ticked the 'Armed Forces' section of their registration form and indicated that they are a veteran.

The SystemOne clinical read code for 'Military Veteran' will be added to the veteran's record. The code to be added is 'XaX3N' (as of 01.11.2019).

After a clinical system review for the amount of veterans currently coded on the veteran register using SystemOne at Browney House Surgery, 4 veterans were found to be coded. The Practice will continue to code as detailed above. Clinical and Reception staff will identify and code as necessary. The veteran count will be reviewed on an annual basis along with other Practice policies. Browney House Surgery would like this number to significantly improve over the next year and before the next review.

Coding of veteran status on the Practice system will enable local and national data extraction and give the NHS a better understanding of how many veterans have been identified by GP Practices. This will contribute to how the NHS moves forward with veteran care.

Messages on prescriptions and an information section on the Practice website will be used in order to publicise the fact that Browney House Surgery are actively coding and trying to identify patients whom have served in the Armed Forces. Examples of this can be seen at the end of this document.

In order to identify and treat any conditions that veterans may suffer from due to their time of service, Browney House Surgery will ask the following question in their patient registration questionnaire template:

Armed Forces – Have you served in the Armed Forces? Please state if you suffer from any conditions associated or you may feel are associated with your time serving in the Armed Forces. This information may be helpful to Clinicians treating you at Browney House Surgery:

.....
.....
.....

Browney House Surgery is hopeful that military veterans will be provided with an improved patient experience when visiting a clinician or when referred to a secondary service. Highlighting a patient's veteran status will enable clinicians to identify that a veteran could be suffering from issues not only associated with their current health but with issues that may be associated from their time in the military service.

If a clinician is aware of a patient's veteran status they are asked to state this in any referral letter including if, in their clinical opinion, the condition may be related to military service. They will allocate the correct appointment priority based on the patient's medical condition.

This document will be updated annually or sooner if required. Information contained in this document is accurate and correct as of 01.10.2019.

Veteran's healthcare toolkit

The below article was taken from the CQC website and shares a link for the Royal College of GPs Veterans' Healthcare Toolkit. GPs can access this by using this policy.

The RCGP has produced guidance for GPs on how to deal with veterans' healthcare needs. The [veterans' healthcare toolkit](#) advises how best to help those who may have been affected by their service careers. The toolkit includes:

- NHS duty to the armed forces community, including the [Armed Forces Covenant](#).
- Services for veterans, provided by NHS and other groups.
- How to request a patient's service medical records.

<https://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/resources/toolkits/veterans-healthcare-toolkit.aspx>

Registration Questionnaire

Shown below is a copy of pages 3 and 4 of the Browney House Surgery New Patient Registration Questionnaire. An Armed Forces section has been added so that patients can inform the Practice and clinicians can be made aware of veteran status.

Have you nominated someone to speak on your behalf (e.g. a person who has Power of Attorney)?		Yes / No	If "Yes", please state their name / address / phone number:	
Women only:				
When was your last smear done?	Date	Was this at your GP's Surgery?	Yes	NO
What was the result of the smear?				
Date of last mammogram (if applicable):	Date	Method of contraception (if used):		
Do you wish to see a doctor in this practice for contraceptive services (including the pill, coil or cap)?				
Summary Care Records: The NHS are changing the way your health information is stored and managed. The NHS Summary Care record is an electronic record of important information about your health. It will be available to health care staff providing your NHS Care. An information pack has been provided.				
Are you happy to have a Summary Care Record?				
Yes	No	More Time Required to decide:		
Patient Participation Group The Practice is committed to improving the services we provide to our patients. To do this, it is vital that we hear from people about their experiences, views, and ideas for making services better. By expressing your interest, you will be helping us to plan ways of involving patients that suit you. It will also mean we can keep you informed of opportunities to give your views and up to date with developments within the Practice. If you are interested in getting involved, please tick the box below and we will arrange for the Practice Patient Participation Group Application Form to be given to you at your initial consultation.				
Yes, I am interested in becoming involved in the Practice Patient Participation Group (Please tick the "Yes" Box)				Yes
Patient Signature:		Signature on behalf of Patient:		
Armed Forces - Have you served in the Armed Forces? Please state if you suffer from any conditions associated or you may feel are associated with your time serving in the Armed Forces. This information may be helpful to Clinicians treating you at Browney House Surgery:				
Alcohol Consumption: For the following questions please tick the answer which best applies to you. (1 drink = 1/2 pint of beer or one glass of wine or 1 single spirit)				
How often do you have a drink containing alcohol? <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly or less <input type="checkbox"/> Two to four times per month <input type="checkbox"/> Two to three times per week <input type="checkbox"/> Four or more times per week				
How many standard drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking? <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> 1 or 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 or 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 or 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 to 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 or more				
How often do you have 6 or more standard drinks on one occasion? <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Daily or almost daily				

Doc: Ref - 369900_0 Filename: Identify Patient Needs Protocol - New Patient Registration Policy & Form Page 7 of 9

Exercise Questionnaire

- General Practice Physical Activity Questionnaire -

A: Physical activity at work

Please tick the type and amount of physical activity involved in your work.

		Please tick
a	I am not in employment (e.g. retired, retired for health reasons, unemployed, full-time carer, etc.)	
b	I spend most of my time at work sitting (such as in an office)	
c	I spend most of my time at work standing or walking. However, my work does not require much intense physical effort (e.g. shop assistant, hairdresser, security guard, childminder, etc.)	
d	My work involves definite physical effort including handling of heavy objects and use of tools (e.g. plumber, electrician, carpenter, cleaner, hospital nurse, gardener, postal delivery workers etc.)	
e	My work involves vigorous physical activity including handling of very heavy objects (e.g. scaffolder, construction worker, refuse collector, etc.)	

B: Physical Exercise

During the last week, how many hours did you spend on each of the following activities?

		None	Some but less than 1 hour	1 hour but less than 3 hours	3 hours or more
a	Physical exercise such as swimming, jogging, aerobics, football, tennis, gym workout etc.				
b	Cycling, including cycling to work and during leisure time				
c	Walking, including walking to work, shopping, for pleasure etc.				
d	Housework/Childcare				
e	Gardening/DIY				

C: How would you describe your usual walking pace?

Please tick one box only.

- Slow Pace (less than 3 miles per hour)
 Brisk Pace
 Steady Average Pace
 Fast Pace (over 4 miles per hour)

Repeat Prescription Online Ordering

Would you like a Username & Password so that you can order repeat prescriptions online?

- Yes No

Additional Information

Please state any additional information that you feel the practice should know about (health problems, carer information, specific medications etc.).

Thank you for completing this form For more information about the services we offer, please see our website: www.browneyhousesurgery.com

Armed Forces Prescription message

Shown below is a screenshot of a message added to the counterfoil of patient prescriptions. Hopefully this will improve patient care and improve the Veteran Register.

The screenshot shows the 'Prescription Printing Settings' dialog box. On the left is a navigation tree with categories: User Settings, Organisation Settings, and PC Settings. 'Prescription Printing (Counterfoil)' is selected under Organisation Settings. The main area contains several checkboxes for printing options, a search bar, and a table for 'Repeats List Heading Messages'. The table has two columns: 'Site' and 'Message'. Two rows are visible, both for 'Browney House Surgery' and 'Croft View Surgery', with a message asking about Armed Forces service. Below this is a section for 'Print Details of Pending Recalls' with two lists: 'Recall Types' and 'Selected Recall Types'. The 'Selected Recall Types' list includes Asthma, BP Check, CHD Monitoring, Cholesterol Check, CKD, COPD, CVD at risk, and Diabetes. At the bottom are 'Restore Defaults', 'Ok', and 'Cancel' buttons.

Prescription Printing Settings

Enter text to search Search Clear

- User Settings
 - Prescription Authorising
 - Prescription Counterfoils
 - Quick Print
- Organisation Settings
 - FP10MDA Printing
 - Prescription Authorising
 - Prescribing Codes
 - Prescription Printing
 - Prescription Printing (Counterfoil)
- PC Settings
 - Printers & Margins
 - Print Test

Print review dates and issues remaining for each repeat template

Print issue intervals for each repeat template

Print action group descriptions for each repeat template

Print message at top of repeats list advising that the patient must book a medication review (where required)

Print the patient's GP practice details on repeats lists (if known)

Print irregular and regular repeat drugs separately on repeats lists

Irregular repeats list item message

Repeats List Heading Messages

Amend Message Clear Message

Site	Message
Browney House Surgery	Have you served in the Armed Forces? Are you a Service family member? Please let the Surgery know so that we can improve medical care and treatment for current and former members of the armed services.
Croft View Surgery	Have you served in the Armed Forces? Are you a Service family member? Please let the Surgery know so that we can improve medical care and treatment for current and former members of the armed services.

4 Sites

Print Details of Pending Recalls

Recall Types	Selected Recall Types
Type	Type
Breast Screening	Asthma
CA Prostate Screen Due	BP Check
Cancer	CHD Monitoring
Cardiac NSF - Primary Care	Cholesterol Check
Cardiac NSF - Rehabilitation	CKD
Cardiac NSF - Secondary Care	COPD
CHS 1 Year Exam Doctor	CVD at risk
CHS 1 Year Exam Health Visitor	Diabetes

Restore Defaults Ok Cancel

Additional Information for the practice to use in the future and to update policies.

1. Background re – Veteran Friendly Practices

GPs are signing up to become ‘veteran friendly’ under a new national scheme to improve medical care and treatment for former members of the armed services that has been backed by NHS England and the Royal College of GPs.

Practices can qualify for veteran friendly status by offering extra support for ex-military personnel who may face additional challenges when they return to civilian life.

Dr Mike Brookes, a North Yorkshire GP who served in Iraq, came up with the idea when a patient told him that he had specifically joined his practice to see someone who could understand his needs as a veteran.

The scheme, called the Military Veteran Aware Accreditation, has now been adopted by NHS England and the Royal College of GPs as a nationwide initiative so that family doctors can better identify and treat veterans, ensuring they get access to dedicated care where appropriate.

Dr Brookes said: “It made me reflect on a potential unmet need for our veterans. I could see how pivotal a GP practice could be at identifying ex-service personnel to help ensure they receive care and treatment that is considerate of their time in the armed forces. It is great to think that a conversation with a patient at a GP practice in the Dales could lead to a national project to improve veterans’ health.”

While healthcare for veterans is already prioritised, the NHS wants to improve the way in which veterans are registered at their GP practice and support GPs and practice teams to ensure veterans are fully aware of the dedicated help available to them.

The expansion follows a successful pilot in the West Midlands – initiated by the RCGP Midlands faculty – where 90 GP practices have signed up so far. The nationwide rollout will be a phased approach and it is hoped that over the next few years every veteran will receive the best possible NHS care from their GP, regardless of where they live.

To become accredited, GP practices need to:

- have a lead for veterans’ issues within the surgery.
- identify and flag veterans on their computer system.
- undertake dedicated training and attend armed forces healthcare meetings
- increase understanding of the health needs of veterans amongst both clinical and administrative staff.

Dr Jonathan Leach, a GP, who served in the army for 25 years and chairs the NHS England Armed Forces Clinical Reference Group, is calling for GPs across the country to sign up. He said: “We are committed to providing veterans with a seamless, high quality service when it comes to their health needs. Our priority is to make sure that no matter where a veteran lives in the country, they will

have access to a GP who understands their military related health needs and supports them to get the right treatment and support. We are therefore urging every GP practice to sign up to this important scheme.”

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs said: “Veterans often have unique health needs, and this new scheme is a fantastic way of ensuring that when they visit their GP, for whatever reason, these needs are flagged up, considered and accommodated. It’s great to see successful local initiatives being rolled out nationally so that they can benefit patients across the country. I’m incredibly proud of the College’s Midland Faculty, of which I am a member, for identifying a good idea, turning it into reality and taking the lead on this.”

2. Veterans and NHS Treatment

Veterans: priority NHS treatment

A veteran is someone who has served in the armed forces for at least 1 day. There are around 2.4 million veterans in Great Britain.

When servicemen and women leave the armed forces, their healthcare is the responsibility of the NHS.

It's very important for continuing healthcare that you register with an NHS GP and remember to tell them that you have served. This will help your GP to better understand any service-related health conditions that you may have and ensure that you are referred, where appropriate, to dedicated services for ex-forces.

If you've recently left the armed forces, it's important to give your GP the paperwork that your military medical centre gave you, including any medical records. This will help to ensure your military health record transfers to your NHS health record. It will also give your GP information on your health and ensure that any ongoing care and treatment is continued.

Being flagged as a veteran in your NHS medical notes will help to ensure that you are able to access dedicated services for those who have served in the UK armed forces. These include services for mental health and physical health conditions.

Find out more about the range of dedicated health services for ex-forces (PDF, 278kb).

'No disadvantage'

You should not be disadvantaged from accessing appropriate health services, so it's important that you notify your current GP if you're moving, particularly if you're on a waiting list for medical treatment, so this information can be transferred across.

Details of GP surgeries and other health services within your area can be found by using find GP services.

All veterans are entitled to priority access to NHS care (including hospital, primary or community care) for conditions associated with their time within the armed forces (service-related).

But this is always subject to clinical need and doesn't entitle you to jump the queue ahead of someone with a higher clinical need.

If the NHS service you're dealing with is unaware of priority treatment, you're actively encouraged to tell them about it and ensure you have told them you have served.

Failing that, you can enlist local health care commissioners, your local authority community covenant lead or one of the national service organisations, such as the Royal British Legion, to support you.

For more information on the duty of care owed to service personnel, read the Armed Forces Covenant (PDF, 919kb).

Personalised care programme

If you have served in the UK armed forces and have a complex and lifelong health condition, you may be eligible for the veterans personalised care programme. This is to ensure you have more choice and control over how your care is planned and delivered. It is based on what matters to you, meaning that you can choose how best to live your life and get the right support to do so.

If eligible, you will have a single personalised care plan for all your health and wellbeing needs that is developed with you and a range of organisations, including health and social care and military charities.

As part of this, you may get a personal budget to pay for some of the care and support you need. You should also get more support in the community and be able to access a range of help, such as emotional and practical support from people who have similar health conditions or disabilities.

