

## How can I get involved in the NHS?

The NHS can benefit significantly from the skills and experience you as veterans and reservists bring from your military training and service.

Veteran Aware hospitals support the employment of veterans and reservists in the NHS workforce and will be involved either in the 'Employer Recognition Scheme' or the 'Step Into Health' scheme.

Find out more about careers for veterans and reservists in the NHS at [www.militarystepintohealth.nhs.uk](http://www.militarystepintohealth.nhs.uk)

## Further information about the Armed Forces Covenant

The NHS is committed to the Armed Forces Covenant, which is a promise by the nation ensuring that those who serve or who have served in the UK Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly.

The Armed Forces Covenant has two key principles:

1. The Armed Forces community should not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services
2. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

You and your families should not be disadvantaged from accessing appropriate

health services, for example, if they are on a waiting list and are moving.

The NHS always prioritises people with the most urgent clinical need. At the same time it is important that your health and social needs of the Armed Forces community are recognised and acted upon and the VCHA will help in sharing best practice in this area.

We are committed to consistently and continually learning from our patients and their families in order to improve care for all, so please if you have any feedback or suggestions, contact Patient Experience at: [rcht.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:rcht.patientexperience@nhs.net)

For more information on NHS healthcare for veterans, visit the NHS Choices website at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) and search for 'veteran'.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690



## Veteran Aware Hospital

### Information for patients



Here at Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust (RCHT) we are proud to say that we are a Veteran Aware hospital; we strive to be an exemplar of the best care for veterans in the NHS.

Please let a member of staff know if you or your spouse/partner has ever served in the UK armed forces so that we can best support your care needs.

### Why is this important?

Being flagged as a veteran or reservist in your NHS medical notes will help to ensure that you are able to access specific veterans' health services, such as those for mental health, hearing loss, limb amputation and wheelchairs.

It also means that where you have an illness or medical condition that has been caused by your time in service or occurred whilst you were in the military, you may be entitled to a shorter hospital waiting list.

### Improving care for veterans across the NHS

We at RCHT are a member of the Veterans Covenant Hospital Alliance (VCHA). The VCHA is a network of over 20 NHS hospitals that have volunteered to share and drive the implementation of best practice in NHS care for people who serve or have served in the UK Armed Forces and their families, in line with the Armed Forces Covenant.

### What you can expect in this hospital

- We support the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant, which is a promise by the nation ensuring that those who serve or who have served in the UK Armed Forces, and their families, are not subject to any disadvantage from their service (compared to local people).
- We are committed to ensuring the Armed Forces Covenant is applied and that special consideration will be given where appropriate.
- All relevant staff within this hospital are trained and educated in identifying and responding to veterans' needs.
- This hospital also supports the UK Armed Forces community as an employer.

This hospital works with a range of extra services that are available to the Armed Forces community and will make you aware of and refer you to any of these that could benefit you, including:

- **Royal British Legion** – tel: 0808 802 8080 from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week  
County Office Address:  
The Royal British Legion  
FF20  
Health & Wellbeing Innovation Centre,  
Treliske, Truro TR1 3FF
- **SSAFA** – tel: 01822 832204 (answer phone only)  
email: Cornwall@ssafa.org.uk
- **Combat Stress** – tel: 0800 138 1619

- **Help for Heroes** – contacts West Plymouth Recovery Centre 01752 562179
- **Defence Medical Welfare Service** – officers assist the patient in identifying services provided by service charities and other organisations
- **NHS Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service** – tel: 0300 365 0300 South West of England.
- **Army Benevolent fund** – 02079018900
- **Royal Air Force Benevolent fund** – 08001692942
- **Royal Navy Benevolent fund** – 02392690112

### What further support is available?

There are many service charities and organisations. The Veterans' Gateway is a first point of contact for veterans and their families. Here at RCHT phone 01872 254551 or email [rcht.veterans@nhs.net](mailto:rcht.veterans@nhs.net) and we will put you in touch with the organisations best placed to help with the information, advice and support you need – from healthcare and housing to employability, finances, personal relationships and more.

It provides information, advice and support by phone (0808 802 1212), text (81212) and online at [www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk)