

We are a Veteran Friendly Hospital

1 The Armed Forces Community.

A veteran is anyone who has served at least one day in the Armed Forces and veterans make up around 10% of the population. But the Armed Forces Community is far larger; it includes serving Regular Forces and Reservists, veterans and their families.

2 Identifying members of the Armed forces Community

By asking the question “**Have you, or your spouse or partner, ever served in the Armed Forces**” we can identify members of the Armed Forces Community. Asking if someone is a veteran will sometimes get the wrong answer because not everyone, especially young service leavers, considers themselves to be a veteran, even though they are.

3 Why it matters.

Those who have served have a unique and often difficult role. Most will make a successful transition into civilian life after Service, but for those who don't there is a wide range of support tailored to their specific needs. As a veteran Friendly Hospital we **recognise** and **value** the unique contribution and sacrifice of the Armed Forces Community and are proactive in supporting them.

4 Support for the Armed forces Community

Organisations like the Royal British Legion (RBL) help members of the Armed Forces Community with a wide range of support needs including housing, mental health, debt and independent living. The RBL works as part of a network of organisations from national charities to grassroots organisations. You can refer into the RBL on: **0808 802 8080**

5 The Veterans Gateway

The Veterans Gateway was set up so there is one point of contact for support. The Veterans Gateway can be contacted by the veteran on: **0808 802 1212** or at **www.veteransgateway.org.uk**. The support line is open 24/7.

6 Busting the Myths

Not everyone who has been on operational tour will suffer from poor mental health because of what they have seen or the role they played. In addition veterans are less likely than the general population to be homeless or in prison.

7 What can I do?

Do – ask the question “**Have you, or your spouse or partner, ever served in the Armed Forces.**”

Do – refer the serving individual, veteran, their spouse or partner or widow(er) to the RBL or Veterans Gateway for additional support if they need it.