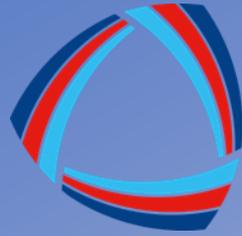


Identifying Veterans in Primary Care

An Audit Template for Trainees

Brigadier (Retd) Robin Simpson FRCGP
RCGP Veterans Champion

Based on an idea from Officer Cadet Natasha Brannan RAMC
Foundation Year 2



Could your Practice do more? How many Veterans are in your Practice?

News > Health

The overwhelming number of suicidal military members, and the neglect they face

More than a dozen former British soldiers who fought in Afghanistan kill themselves within two months

Alarm over surge in suicides by veterans of Afghanistan war

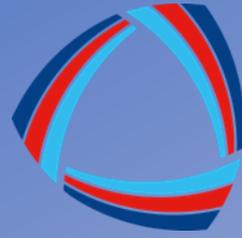
'Keep eye on veterans in crisis', Army widow says

ITV REPORT 21 December 2018 at 5:01pm

71 military personnel and veterans have taken their lives in 2018, ITV News understands

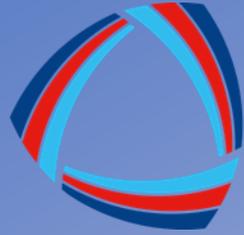
🏠 > News

Veteran suicides are the 'epidemic of our time' former head of the army has warned



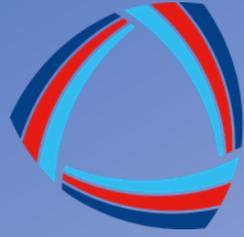
Who is a veteran?

- **Veterans include anyone who has served for at least one day in the Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve)**
- **By far the majority serve over 10 years**



How many veterans are there in UK?

- Around 2.4 million veterans
- Of these, over 50% are aged 75 or older. 85% are male
- 18,000 Service people leave military annually
- 2,500 who leave the Services on medical grounds per annum
- 750,000 UK Armed Forces veterans of working age residing in England and Wales
- 5.4 million adult spouses, partners, widowers and child dependants
- **Each NHS GP will have around 30 or more veterans on their list**



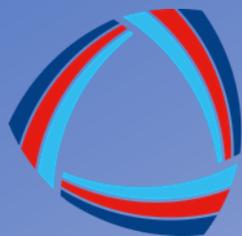
Why are veterans treated as a special group?

- Service in the Armed Forces is different from other occupations.
- Relinquish some of their own civil liberties and put themselves in harm's way to protect others.
- Risk of serious injury (for example loss of limbs, eyes or other body parts) is substantially increased.
- Armed Forces Covenant – a promise by the nation to ensure that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces and their families are treated fairly.

Know your Veterans

- Patients likely to present in a “crisis”
- Knowing your veterans will allow:
 - Signposting to veteran dedicated services
 - Operation Courage – dedicated Mental Health Service for Veterans (England)
 - Priority treatment for conditions attributable to military service

Details of Operation Courage at: [Mental health support for veterans, service leavers and reservists - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare/veterans-mental-health-support/)



The audit cycle

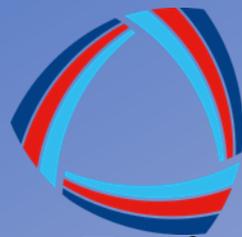
- Stage 1 - preparation
 - Choose a topic
- Stage 2 - select criteria
 - Define the criteria / Define the standard
- Stage 3 - measuring level of performance
 - Collect and then analyse the data
 - Discuss how well the standards were met
- Stage 4 - making improvements
 - Present the results
 - Action Plan
- Stage 5 - maintaining improvements
 - Repeat the audit





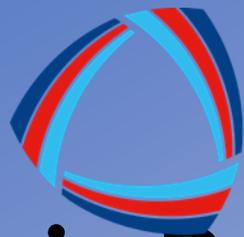
Audit on Veterans in Primary Care – Can a GP recognise Veterans in their Practice Population?

- Stage 1 – preparation
 - Veterans make up about 5% of the population
 - Service in the Armed Forces is different from other occupations.
 - More at risk of some conditions and particularly in Mental Health (alcohol, PTSD)
 - Armed Forces Covenant – a promise by the nation to ensure that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces and their families are treated fairly.
 - Important topic and needs every veteran to be identified by their GP
 - Veterans are poor at seeking help
- Stage 2 - Define the criteria /Define the standard
 - If the healthcare of veterans is to be met, then they need to be recognised by their GP using “veterans” Snomed Code (you may need help from your Practice manager to learn how to conduct a Search)
 - Criteria – 1% of the Practice Population should be coded a Veteran



Audit on Veterans in Primary Care – Can a GP recognise Veterans in their Practice Population?

- Stage 3 - measuring level of performance
 - Collect and then analyse the data
 - Search SNOMED code: Type “Military Veteran” (this is the recommended code to use)
 - Other codes: Army Veteran, Royal Navy Veteran, Royal Marine Veteran, Royal Air Force Veteran
 - Have the standards been met?



Audit on Veterans in Primary Care – Can a GP recognise Veterans in their Practice Population?

- Stage 4 - making improvements – how to ensure more Veterans have been identified with correct code
 - At registration ask the question “have you ever served in the Armed Forces?”
 - Consider registering the Practice as RCGP Veterans Friendly – appoint Practice Veterans’ Champion
 - Ask the question “have you ever served in the Armed Forces” when sending text messages to patients
 - National Service ended in in 1963 – males born before 1945 are likely to be Veterans
 - Engage with local military charities
 - Consider appointing a Veteran onto Patient Participation Group
 - Consider Veterans’ Poster in Wating Room
 - How does the Practice commemorate “those who have fallen” on the 11th November?
 - Ensure Veterans are recognised and documented in GP notes

Were you ever registered with an Armed Forces GP

Please indicate if you have served in the UK Armed Forces and/or been registered with a Ministry of Defence GP in the UK or overseas: Regular Reservist Veteran Family Member (Spouse, Civil Partner, Service Child)

Address before enlisting: _____

Postcode: _____

Service or Personnel number: Enlistment date: DD MM YY Discharge date: DD MM YY (if applicable)

Footnote: These questions are optional and your answers will not affect your entitlement to register or receive services from the NHS but may improve access to some NHS priority and service charities services.

NHS Family doctor services registration GMS1 []

Patient's details Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS and tick as appropriate

Mr Ms Miss Mx Other Suriname Other

Date of birth: _____ First names: _____

Previous surnames: _____

Male Female Other Town and country of birth: _____

Home address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone number: _____

Please help us trace your previous medical records by providing the following information

Your previous address in UK: _____ Name of previous GP practice while at that address: _____

Address of previous GP practice: _____

If you are from abroad

Your first UK address where registered with a GP: _____

Were you ever registered with an Armed Forces GP

Please indicate if you have served in the UK Armed Forces and/or been registered with a Ministry of Defence GP in the UK or overseas: Regular Reservist Veteran Family Member (Spouse, Civil Partner, Service Child)

Address before enlisting: _____

Postcode: _____

Service or Personnel number: Enlistment date: Discharge date: (if applicable)

Footnote: These questions are optional and your answers will not affect your entitlement to register or receive services from the NHS but may improve access to some NHS priority and service charities services.

If you need your doctor to dispense medicines and appliances* *Not all doctors are authorised to dispense medicines

I live more than 1.6km in a straight line from the nearest chemist

I would have serious difficulty in getting them from a chemist

Signature of Patient Signature on behalf of patient

Date: ____/____/____

NHS Organ Donor registration

I want to register my details on the NHS Organ Donor Register as someone whose organs/tissue may be used for transplantation after my death. Please tick the boxes that apply.

Any of my organs and tissue or

Kidneys Heart Liver Corneas Lungs Pancreas

Signature confirming my consent to join the NHS Organ Donor Register Date: ____/____/____

Please tell your family you want to be an organ donor. If you do not want to be an organ donor, please visit www.organdonor.nhs.uk or call 0300 123 23 23 to register your decision.

NHS Blood Donor registration

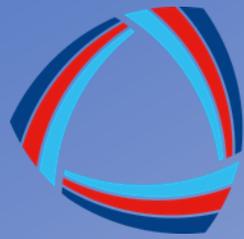
I would like to join the NHS Blood Donor Register as someone who may be contacted and would be prepared to donate blood. Tick here if you have given blood in the last 3 years

Signature confirming my consent to join the NHS Blood Donor Register Date: ____/____/____

My preferred address for donation is: (only if different from above, e.g. your place of work) _____ Postcode: _____

All blood types are needed, especially O negative and B negative. Visit www.blood.co.uk or call 0300 123 23 23.

NHS England use only Patient registered for GMS Dispensing

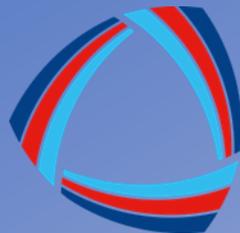


Audit on Veterans in Primary Care – Can a GP recognise Veterans in their Practice Population?

- Stage 5 - maintaining improvements
 - Repeat the audit
 - Aim to have 2% of the Practice population coded as Veterans

RC
GP

Royal College of
General Practitioners

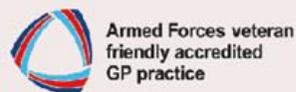


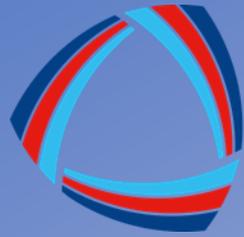
Armed Forces veteran
friendly accredited
GP practice



**'With 18,000 serving people
leaving the military annually,
asking patients, 'Have you
ever served in the UK
Armed Forces?' could make
all the difference.'**

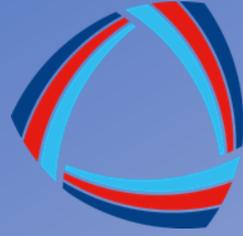
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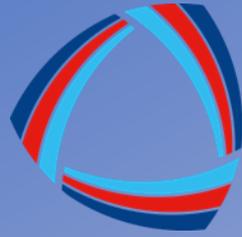
RCGP Veteran Friendly Practices Programme





About the Veterans Accreditation Programme

- RCGP are working with NHS England to accredit GP practices as 'veteran friendly'.
- The programme enables practice to deliver the best possible care and treatment for patients who have served in the armed forces.
- Just over 1,200 GP practices (Jan 2022) in England are already accredited through this programme. Target is to accredit 3,500 practices in England by the end of 2022.
- The Veteran Friendly Practices Programme is free, easy to sign up to, requires no additional work for the practice.
- Requires very minimal training for practice leads. More details found at:
- [Veterans' healthcare toolkit: The Veteran friendly accreditation \(rcgp.org.uk\)](https://www.rcgp.org.uk/veterans-healthcare-toolkit-the-veteran-friendly-accreditation)



Once accredited

Practices will be provided with an information pack:

- **Top Tips for GPs**
- **Quarterly newsletters**
- **Training events / Podcasts / Webinars**
- **Details of Referral Pathways**

