



Armed Forces Community (North)

e-Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 1

November 2013



Welcome to the first Armed Forces Community (North) e-Newsletter hosted by NHS England's North Yorkshire and Humber Area Team (NYH AT).



- the latest news on the Armed Forces Community Covenants across our region.

In each edition we would also like to provide a focus for a particular Armed Forces Charity or Service/Ex-Service personnel organisation. For our first edition we have spoken to Debbie Whittington, General Secretary of COBSEO, the Confederation of Service Charities, who is keen to communicate the existence, purpose and benefits of their organisation to the wider community.

The Newsletter will be published twice a year and we welcome contributions which can be sent to us via our email address on the last page of the newsletter.

Best Wishes

Julie Warren
Director of Commissioning
Area Team – North Yorkshire and Humber

The newsletter will share information on the latest developments, initiatives, news and good work from across the North West, North East and Yorkshire and Humber regional areas. It will allow us to further communicate the knowledge and expertise within the region in order to ensure the development of services that better meet the needs of Armed Forces serving personnel, veterans and their families and dependents.

In this first edition we focus on:

- the three Armed Forces Networks (AFNs) in the North, their future and how we might want to shape them.
- an update on the NHS Commissioning landscape and responsibilities.
- an overview of Army Primary Health Care Services transitional change to a tri-service role (Army, RAF and Navy) as Defence Primary Health Care (DPHC).

Saltwell Park's Field of Remembrance



The Royal British Legion's Field of Remembrance at Saltwell Park opened again this month to honour fallen soldiers from the North East. Just a year after its creation, the field once again gave the region the opportunity

to pay tribute to those lost in conflict and over 12,000 crosses were left at the Gateshead Park by families, service men and women and volunteers to commemorate those lost in service.

The **Thrive 'Down to Earth'** project, funded and supported by the Royal British Legion, is now working with former military personnel to create a Garden of Reflection at the park. Working with Gateshead Council the project team will eventually create a garden that will be a calm, tranquil



Michael, the first veteran at "Down to Earth"

space for reflection, open to all members of the public. **For more information on the project and details of how to get involved contact Amanda Hannen on 07585 957478 or amanda.hannen@thrive.org.uk**

The Armed Forces Networks

AFNs continue to be the recognised forums where all sectors of the health and welfare community; statutory and Third Sector can come together irrespective of organisation or geography.

The NHS briefing '[Supporting planning for 13/14 for direct commissioning](#)' details the transition of AFNs from a host NHS Area Team leadership to a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)/local leadership-based model by April 2014, a transition that will be supported and facilitated by NHS England. Bury CCG is already providing leadership and support to the NW AFN whilst the NYH AT is committed to supporting the transition of the NE and Y&H AFNs.

The NYH AT recommendation is to operate two AFNs, reduced from three, reconfiguring on an army brigade footprint with rotational CCG leadership. It is proposed that AFNs report to, and, as such, are accountable to local Health and Wellbeing Boards. Views are currently being sought on the future-proofing of AFNs via an options paper that is being circulated to all stakeholders.

Healthcare Commissioning Changes

Following the enactment of the Health and Social Care Act 2013 there have been considerable changes in commissioning responsibilities for the wider Armed Forces Community.

NHS England's NYH AT is one of 3 lead area teams nationally that are now responsible for commissioning health services for AF serving personnel and their dependents, where registered with a Defence Medical Services (DMS) Practice. NHS CCGs hold statutory responsibility for all secondary and community services required for veterans, reservists and their families and serving families not registered with a DMS GP. Bespoke services for veterans, such as veterans' mental health services, will also be commissioned by CCGs. ['Securing excellence in commissioning for Armed Forces and their families'](#) sets out these commissioner responsibilities for the wider Armed Forces (AF) community.

['Supporting planning for 13/14 for direct commissioning'](#) (complementing ['Supporting Planning 2013/14 for Clinical Commissioning Groups'](#)) outlines NHS England's responsibilities around seamless transition of care, the delivery of the AF Covenant and the transfer of 'Mental Health for veterans' services into CCG leadership.

NHS Interim Commissioning Policies

NHS England have now published 37 interim commissioning policies for services which are commissioned directly by NHS England, i.e. AF, Health and Justice and all direct commissioning populations. Creating a set of nationally consistent policies has been a priority, especially where members of the AF communities are concerned, as they are subject to re-locations that can disrupt provision of their healthcare. These England-wide policies and application forms are now available on <http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/d-com/policies/ssp/>. Applications can be submitted to england.nyh-armedforces@nhs.net.

These are interim policies and consultation on their development is being worked through AF and Health & Justice Clinical Reference Groups over the coming months. A gateway communication notice will be released and widely cascaded to all stakeholders.

NHS Commissioning Intentions 14/15

A commissioning intentions document is soon to be available that will advise providers and key stakeholders of any planned changes to the services Directly Commissioned by the NHS on behalf of serving personnel, mobilised reservists and families registered with DMS GPs. The document will also support other commissioners of AF Services e.g. DMS, CCGs and other parts of NHS England, such as Dental Commissioning for AF families, IVF services, Secondary Care Mental Health for Serving Personnel, Public Health (e.g. immunisation and screening) and specialist commissioning for complex disability (e.g. prosthetics and wheelchairs).

To continue dialogue with NHS commissioners, NYH AT have organised a meeting in December 2013 for NHS England and the 9 CCGs with military bases, to share and discuss 14/15 commissioning intentions and business planning to provide the necessary assurance to meet recently published 14/15 NHS planning guidance.

Armed Forces Strategic Forum

The NYH AT facilitated the first **Armed Forces Strategic Forum** on October 23rd bringing together the main commissioning organisations with statutory



responsibility for health for the wider AF Community. Representatives from the MoD, NHS, Public Health England and Local Authorities came together with key 3rd Sector partners to discuss commissioning priorities and targets for the next 3-5 years.

The forum provided the opportunity for information sharing and discussion around some of the key issues facing us such as the role of the AFNs, suitability of currently commissioned health services and whether or not commissioners need to consider veterans as a special population.

There is strong support for the Forum to continue on a bi-annual basis and as such the AT will arrange the next meeting for early Spring 2014.

Defence Primary Health Care

Army Primary Health Care Services are currently undergoing a period of transition as they move to support all 3 services (Army, Navy and RAF) in their new role as Defence Primary Health Care (DPHC) under the command of the Surgeon Generals Dept.

The Regional Headquarters for the North is located in the Duchess of Kent Barracks at Catterick Garrison and now has command of 18 Medical Centres that account for around 22,000 patients across the region, including three families' practices at Catterick Garrison, RAF Leeming and RAF Linton-on-Ouse.

As joint commissioners the MOD and NHS England are currently reviewing a number of services that are presently commissioned separately (e.g. out of hours services).

This work is on-going and is vital to ensure that this period of change for both the MOD and the NHS does not affect patient care for those registered at DMS practices.

Phoenix House Recovery Centre

Phoenix House, the new Help for Heroes Recovery Centre at Catterick Garrison has officially opened its doors. The centre is open to all injured, sick or wounded veterans, as well as those still serving and comprises of 46 en-suite bedrooms, 4 family rooms, arts and craft, training and IT facilities, a gym and café.



Veterans Gaz Golightly and John Painter open Phoenix House

With the guidance of specialists, residents are encouraged to develop their own recovery plan through educational programmes, work placements, and sporting activities. The team also offers advice and support on a wide range of issues, such as money, health, housing, employment and respite. *"We're here to help serving personnel and veterans with health and wellbeing needs from all three services, their families and carers".* **To find out more contact Lawrence Mannion, t: 01748 83414 e: catterick.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk**



VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH OUTREACH SERVICES

In response to the Dr Andrew Murrison 2010 Report '[Fighting Fit](#)', funding was allocated via old Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) and AFNs to support the delivery of initiatives that would improve the availability of Mental Health Services for veterans (£150k p.a., 2011-2015, per SHA).

In the North this comprised of 3 pilot projects, the NE Veterans' Wellbeing Assessment and Liaison Service (VWALS), the Y&H Veterans Mental Health Outreach Service and the NW Military Veterans Improving Access to Psychological Therapies Service (MV IAPT) which was additionally funded from local IAPT money.

Two of the three pilots in the North have recently published their evaluations which demonstrate that the services have been well received and are effective in supporting veterans with a range of mental health disorders and signposting them back into NHS.

On-going work with local CCG's will include dialogue regarding the re-procurement of these valuable services. The North West are further advanced in their discussions and a service specification for the new service has been drawn up with the involvement of CCG colleagues, based on the learning from the evaluation of the service.

For more information on each of the services:

NW: 0161 253 6638, e: mviapt.enquiries.nw@nhs.net
<http://www.penninecare.nhs.uk/Military-Veterans-Service.htm>

NE: 0191 441 5974, e: vwals@nhs.net
<http://www.teww.nhs.uk/Our-services1/Trustwide-services/Veteran-services/Veterans-Wellbeing-Assessment-and-Liaison-Service/>
www.ntw.nhs.uk (and enter 'veterans' in search box)
<http://www.nemhdu.org.uk/silo/files/vwals-evaluation-report.pdf>

Y&H: 01482 617594, e: veteransoutreachservice@humber.nhs.uk
<http://www.humber.nhs.uk/services/veterans-outreach-service>

Other Support Service Include:

Vulnerable Veterans and Adult Dependants (VVADS) services: bespoke IAPT service based at Catterick working with veterans and dependants of serving personnel t:01748 873156

Combat Stress: 24hr helpline 0800 138 1619

Royal British Legion: 020 3207 2100

Cobseo -The Confederation of Service Charities



cobseo
The Confederation
of Service Charities

Charities is a membership organisation representing, promoting and furthering the interests of the AF Community. They maximize charitable support through co-operation, co-ordination, cohesion and where appropriate co-location of organisations working in the sector and comprise of 190+ Service and ex-Service organisations. Cobseo business is conducted by an Executive Committee comprising seventeen CEOs of the major service funds and charities.

COBSEO:

- Identify issues of concern and coordinate appropriate action.
 - Represent and support the opinions of member organisations, individually and collectively at central and local government levels and with other national and international agencies.
 - Exchange and coordinate information internally.
 - Act as a point of contact for external agencies to the members of 'cobseo'.
- enquiries@cobseo.org.uk**
t: 0207 8113224 www.cobseo.org.uk

Big White Wall (BWW)

provides free, safe, anonymous online support 24/7 by trained counsellors for members of the wider armed forces community, including all serving personnel, veterans/ex-military and families. BWW has already helped over 5,000 members of the AF community and funding from MOD, Department of Health and Help for Heroes is in place to help thousands more. **95% of members report feeling better as a result of using BWW, and 73% talk about something for the first time.**

One member of BWW, a decorated soldier with PTSD, said:

I have felt comfortable in expressing myself."

If you or someone you know is struggling with something or going through a tough time BWW is there to help. Accessing BWW is easy. Go to www.bigwhitewall.com and follow the simple joining instructions. BWW members reviews about the service can be read here: <http://apps.nhs.uk/app/big-white-wall/>

www.bigwhitewall.com/join/FlashPlayer4.aspx?video=4

For a base with so many people, Camp Bastion was a pretty lonely place. Big White Wall helped me feel less alone in such a crowd.



"The support given by BWW is fantastic. You are not judged and you can be yourself. Most of us are good at hiding our feelings. This is the only place



AF Community Covenant Update

15 (NE) Bde completed the signing of all 34 AF Community Covenants across Y&H and NE local authority areas in Nov 2012 and were the first region in the country to have everyone signed up. Major John Mayo continues to work with the councils in the development of the covenants.

As of this month, 35 out of the 42 covenants (83%) in the 42 (NW) Bde region have been signed, with Salford City Council being the latest to sign this October. Lt Cdr Lee Pad-dock continues to work with councils to complete the signing of the remaining 7 across the region.

The latest AFCC grant panel sat on 29 October and just under £400,000 worth of application bids were approved throughout the region.

If you are interested in submitting a bid to the Grant Scheme, please see the 'Community covenant grant terms and conditions and application form'. This link will also provide ideas and examples of other successful bids, such as [The Beacon](#) at Catterick Garrison that secured £31k to fund ongoing projects. Further information can also be found within the [Community Covenant Quarterly Newsletter](#).

Regional contact details:

covenant-grantschemenortheast@mod.uk

covenant-grantschemeyorkshumber@mod.uk

covenant-grantschemenorthwest@mod.uk

Forthcoming Dates

York St John Veterans

Awareness Training

December 13th 2014

January 24th 2014

February 21st 2014

Yorkshire and Humber AFN

[Wed 8th Jan 2014](#), 10.30-12.30,

Phoenix House Recovery Centre, Catterick Garrison.

[Tue 8th April 2014](#), 10.00-12.00

HQ Catterick Garrison

North West AFN - 10th January 2014

North East AFN - tbc

Community Covenant Bid

Submission Dates:

17th January 2014

17th May 2014

Veterans Pathfinder Experience at Phoenix House

Phase 1 – 02 – 08th February 2014

Phase 2 – 18 – 24th May 2014

Phase 3 – 05 – 07th August 2014

Veterans Awareness Training (NE) (targeted at frontline health care staff)

18th February 2014 (contact Val

Hodgson t: 0191 4788721.

e: val.hodgson@ntw.nhs.uk

NHS England Delivery of the AF Covenant

NHS England recognises its moral obligation to members of the Armed Forces and their families as set out within the [Armed Forces Covenant](#).

Progress in delivery of the AF Covenant so far includes:

- significant progress in enabling service personnel to access care consistent with other UK citizens with the development of 37 interim commissioning policies
- the right to retain a position on a waiting list
- significant investment into the support of veterans' care that falls under the control of CCGs
- the continued development of AFNs as a means of engaging CCGs to discharge their commissioning responsibilities
- enhancement of 9 Disablement Support Centres
- A CCG Armed Forces Tool kit to be launched in January 2014.
- Veterans' Mental Health Network to establish common standards for commissioning of veterans mental health care
- a formal stakeholder group to be established to ensure that patients' and carers' views are taken into account in commissioning plans.

The Hidden Wounds psychological support programme helps veterans, their families and family members/carers of serving personnel suffering from early symptoms of potentially more serious mental health conditions. Launched by Help for Heroes in partnership with Exeter University CEDAR Centre, the programme is currently being developed for delivery in new Hidden Wounds Centres, with the 1st centre to be fully operational within 12 months. **For further information contact David Fraser, Help for Heroes. 07860 505485.**
e: david.fraser@helpforheroes.org.uk

[Veterans Awareness and Interventions Training Course](#)

This 1 day course provides an in-depth understanding into the needs of this client groups issues and will provide a range of resources to make your work with them more effective. The course is for staff already working with, or aiming to develop better Veterans, Reservists and Dependants identification and interventions support into their service provision. York St John may be able to offer free courses subject to funding restrictions. Bespoke courses can also be delivered to meet the needs of individual teams. **For more information contact Ruth Weatherill, 01904 876260. r.weatherill@yorksja.ac.uk. Website: www.yorksja.ac.uk/hlscpd**



Help For Heroes Pathfinder Experience

(Phoenix House, Catterick Garrison)

This course is aimed at helping veterans who may have struggled with the transition from military to civilian life, who have been medically discharged, or have developed a service related medical condition post discharge, with a view at getting them ready for employment.

There is no cost for this course and all food and accommodation will be provided free of charge. The next Pathfinder Experience will take place over dates above. **For more information and an application form please contact Sally Mendonca on 01748 834148 sally.mendonca@helpforheroes.org.uk**

We welcome your thoughts and ideas to help improve the Newsletter. If you would like to provide us with feedback, have any questions regarding the content or would like to join our mailing list please contact us on: england.nyh-armedforces@nhs.net