

10 February 2011

To: SHA Chief Executives & Armed Forces Network Leads

*Room 501
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London
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Tel: 07900 167 549

GATEWAY REFERENCE NUMBER: 15560

Dear Colleague

HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS

1. The purpose of this letter is to draw to your attention the actions required in order to meet the Military and Veterans Health requirements contained in the Operating Framework for the NHS in England 2011/12¹.

What are the NHS's responsibilities?

2. In summary, Armed Forces dependents and veterans are generally the responsibility of the NHS in the same way as normal residents. Primary care for Armed Forces personnel is generally the responsibility of the single service primary healthcare organisations (Army, Royal Navy and RAF), whilst secondary care is the responsibility of the NHS. For historical purposes, a full explanation of these arrangements was provided in a letter from Lyn Simpson (Gateway Reference 10070, dated 20 June 2008).
3. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is currently reviewing the funding of NHS care to reflect the above division of responsibility. Where a member of the Armed Forces is referred for NHS secondary care, via a standard NHS pathway including non-elective care, the PCT where the MoD medical centre of the resident Armed Forces population is located, should fund this care. However, the MoD is required to fund secondary care services where the requirement varies from the standard NHS pathways in either the treatment requested or management requirements (e.g. fastrack care or non-standard treatment). Non-standard care arrangements are normally the subject of specific MoD contracts or by prior agreement with the MoD referrer. Where MoD fund non-standard secondary care, the code "XMD" should replace the PCT code for data submission and payment purposes.

¹http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_1227

NHS Transition

4. I wish to thank each SHA for the appointment of NHS Armed Forces Network (AFN) Leads and the sponsoring of NHS Armed Forces Forums. The dialogue and joint working resulting from these initiatives has already been effective in meeting the needs of the Armed Forces community, in particular improving the transition of the seriously injured to NHS care and providing support to NHS medical reservists. The maintenance of this work is a key consideration for the coming year.
5. You were asked in the Operating Framework to develop and maintain your Armed Forces Networks to ensure the implementation of the Ministry of Defence/NHS Transition Protocol for those who have been injured in the course of their duty, meeting veterans' prosthetic needs and ensuring the implementation of the Murrison Report (*Fighting Fit – A mental health plan for servicemen and veterans*)² to improve mental health services for veterans.
6. SHAs must ensure continuity of this work during the NHS transition period and this should be fully reflected in your SHA transition plans which will be tested as part of the forthcoming "transition assurance" process and monitored through the commissioning development parts of the integrated performance management process. PCT clusters will need to take account of current responsibilities from April 2011 but especially during 2012/13 when Clusters will be directly accountable to the NHS Commissioning Board.
7. For the future, and subject to passage of the Health and Social Care Bill through Parliament, the intention is for current PCT duties in relation to healthcare for the armed forces and their families to be transferred to the NHS Commissioning Board who may delegate some of them to GP consortia. We plan to work with Pathfinders and AFNs to understand the best way to do this.
8. Work has been ongoing with NHS Connecting for Health and the NHS Information Centre to better understand MoD referrals into NHS secondary care. To this end, all MoD medical centres have been issued with an NHS Practice code, which will be published and maintained in the Organisation Data Service (ODS) GP Practice file from February 2011 onwards. If required sooner, these codes appear in the January 2011 GP Practice amendment file. Each MoD medical centre is associated to the PCT within whose geographic boundaries it falls. These practice codes will now appear on all MoD referral letters and where the MoD has access to Choose & Book. Please ask NHS Trusts to update their local systems to include the ODS coding for the MoD medical centres and to include these codes when submitting datasets.
9. Commissioners who wish to better understand their unregistered Armed Forces population can contact the DH Military Health & Veterans Team or their SHA AFN Lead (refer annex).

² http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/DF9DAC72-C196-4967-BBE9-4D8A6580E7F3/0/20101006_mental_health_Report.pdf

Veteran's Health

10. Work is now ongoing with the implementation of the Report presented by Dr Andrew Murrison MP (*Fighting Fit – A mental health plan for servicemen and veterans*) to improve mental health services for veterans. All of the recommendations made in this report have been accepted by the Government. This includes the introduction of an online mental health community; a veterans mental health helpline managed by Combat Stress; the development of a Veterans' Information Service; and the commissioning of veterans' mental health outreach and assessment service. Your ongoing support in the implementation and evaluation of these services is appreciated.
11. Dr Andrew Murrison MP has now been engaged by the Minister of State for Health to undertake a review into prosthetics provision for veterans. This review is due to report in June.

NHS Armed Forces Network Conference

12. The NHS Armed Forces Network Conference will take place on Monday 7 March at the Royal British Legion in Borough, London. The conference will include a range of presentations and discussions led by the NHS, MoD and Third Sector around the Military Health and Veterans programme for 2011/12. Your AFN lead has full details and I would encourage a senior member of each SHA management team to attend.

Queries

13. If you require further information, then please do not hesitate to contact the DH Military Health & Veterans team: Dave.Rutter@dh.gsi.gov.uk or Rob.Moorhead@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Yours sincerely



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Director of Performance
NHS Finance, Performance and Operations

Encl.

Annex A – NHS Armed Forces Network Leads Contact List
 Correct at 28 January 2011.

Organisation	Representative	Contact Details
Department of Health (England)	Dave Rutter Head of Military Health & Veterans	DoH.ArmedForcesNetworks@nhs.net Tel: 0207 972 1510
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Please direct any general queries or requests for an updated contact list to:
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