

**SYNOPSIS OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME
CONDUCTED BY ULSTER UNIVERSITY (UU)
FUNDED BY FORCES IN MIND TRUST (FiMT)
ON BEHALF OF
NORTHERN IRELAND VETERANS' SUPPORT COMMITTEE (NIVSC)**

PROJECT NAME

Understanding, supporting and serving the NI veterans' community, comprising ex-Service personnel and their families.

INTENT

In essence the programme will seek to provide empirical evidence of the issues affecting the veterans' community and make recommendations for improvement, where necessary. Wording from the application states:

The proposed programme of research will enable full analysis and comprehension of the situation, in the context of NI's unique legacy environment, as follows:

- *Scope existing support arrangements (see note below) and channels of communication between the MOD and other authorities, including charities.*
- *Quantify how many veterans there are and identify where they are located in NI. Additionally, ascertain where and how records on them are maintained.*
- *Articulate current and predict future needs within the veterans' community, comprising ex-Service personnel and their families.*
- *Scope existing service provision, identify obstacles to such provision and any gaps or unnecessary duplication.*
- *Identify and recommend how best to communicate with the veterans' community and streamline their access to support services. The concept of a veterans' centre will be explored in this context.*
- *Recommend how existing mechanisms to underpin support to veterans might be improved, including relationships with statutory bodies, and suggest new mechanisms to be developed.*

Note that the term "support" implies PULL activities such as providing access, raising awareness and enabling inclusivity and is usually organisational in nature. "Services" are practical treatments, referral pathways and interventions provided for individuals and are PUSH activities.

ENGAGEMENT

The research team will shortly explain its planned engagement for each aspect of the programme and will seek to work with all statutory and voluntary agencies, as well as individual veterans and their families. NIVSC members will have the opportunity to engage fully in every aspect.

WORK PACKAGES

While research activities will inevitably overlap, the intention is to conduct six discrete Work Packages over the course of a three year programme, commencing in autumn 2015.

Name	Objectives	Report Date
WP1. Supports within and for the veterans' community	<p>a. Scope existing support arrangements and channels of communication between the MOD and other authorities, including charities, which provide many of the PUSH activities.</p> <p>b. Recommend how existing mechanisms to underpin support to veterans might be improved, including relationships with statutory bodies and suggest new mechanisms to be developed.</p>	End Year 1
WP2. Veterans' service provision in NI	Scope existing support and service provisions (PUSH and PULL activities such as generic welfare and specific mental health services available to the veterans' community in NI); identify obstacles to provision and any gaps or unnecessary duplication.	End Year 1
WP3. Quantifying the NI veterans population	Quantify exactly how many veterans there are and identify where they are located in NI. Additionally, ascertain where and how records about them are maintained.	End Year 3
WP4. Current and future support needs	Articulate current and predict future needs within the veterans' community.	End Year 3
WP5. Communication and awareness raising	Identify and recommend how best to communicate with the veterans' community and streamline their access to support services.	Website launch mid Year 2, report end Year 3
WP6. Exploration of a NI Veterans' Centre	To explore the concept of a veterans' centre.	End Year 2