

## **Proposed reduced frequency of the “Quarterly NHS Commissioning Population Statistics” Official Statistic**

### **SUMMARY**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently publishes the Quarterly NHS Commissioning Population Statistics on a quarterly basis. We are now seeking external users’ views on reducing the frequency of this publication

### **BACKGROUND**

The ‘Quarterly NHS Commissioning Population Statistics’ Official Statistics provides summary statistics on the number of serving UK Armed Forces personnel and entitled civilian personnel with a Defence Medical Services (DMS) registration. Personnel with a DMS registration have their primary care (GP services) provided by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) rather than the NHS.

This report enables the MOD, the Department of Health, NHS England (and devolved administrations), Public Health England, Local Area Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups to make informed decisions regarding the commissioning of clinical services in different parts of the country depending on the size and composition of the Armed Forces populations requiring access to care.

### **REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGE**

Defence Statistics is proposing to reduce the frequency of this Official Statistic from quarterly to annual as:

- a. Manpower reduction targets set out in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) 2010 have been met and the SDSR 2015 outlines plans to maintain the size of the Regular Armed Forces. In line with this, the number of DMS registrations has stabilised with a reduction of only 867 personnel between 1 October 2016 and 1 January 2017. Additionally, the movement of UK Armed Forces personnel back to the UK from Germany has reduced; with the final unit moves from taking place over the summer months of 2019. Therefore, we believe that annual production of this information will be sufficient to allow the NHS to make informed decisions regarding the commissioning of clinical services with the exception of 2019 when an interim publication will also be produced to support the final moves back from Germany.
- a. Interest in this quarterly publications is low; this is evidenced by the number of web hits on the publication being less than 600 hits for the most popular edition of the publication in both 2014/15 and 2015/16. Furthermore, there have been no Freedom of Information requests or Parliamentary Questions for information on the number of DMS registrations.

Please note that the MOD will continue to monitor the number of serving UK Armed Forces personnel and entitled civilian personnel with a Defence Medical Services (DMS) registration.

### **TIMINGS**

This consultation will run for **six weeks**, from **21 April 2017 to 2 June 2017**. This consultation complies with the Government’s Code of Practice on Consultations.

As long as there are no objections during the consultation period, it is proposed that the reduction in the frequency of the report will proceed as planned and the May 2017 bulletin (based on 1 April 2017 data) will be the final quarterly report produced with the following report produced in May 2018 (based on 1 April 2018 data).

To ensure information is available on the movement of UK Armed Forces personnel back to the UK from Germany we will produce an interim publication in November 2019 (based on 1 October 2019 data) to capture the final unit moves from taking place over the summer months of 2019.

### **RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION**

Considering the reasons for the proposed changes, we now invite the feedback of our external data users and are keen to know what impact the cessation of this publication will have on you.

Ways to respond

If you have any comments on the proposed changes please send:

By email to: [DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk](mailto:DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk)

By post to:

Defence Statistics (Health)  
Ministry of Defence  
Oak 0 West, #6028  
Abbey Wood North  
Bristol  
BS34 8JH

When sending your comments please include contact details (your name and either e mail address, postal address or telephone number) so that we can follow up if clarification is needed.