



## Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust

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**We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.**

Signed on behalf of:

**Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust (LSCFT)**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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Position: Chief Executive Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 6th January 2021 \_\_\_\_\_



**Lancashire &  
South Cumbria**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **The Armed Forces Covenant**

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom  
Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

## **Section 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant**

1.1 We LSCFT will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen
- in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.

## **Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment**

2.1 LSCFT recognises the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- promoting the fact that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation;
- seeking to support the employment of veterans young and old and working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP), in order to establish a tailored employment pathway for Service Leavers;
- striving to support the employment of Service spouses and partners;
- endeavouring to offer a degree of flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment;
- seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, including by accommodating their training and deployment where possible;
- offering support to our local cadet units, either in our local community or in local schools, where possible;
- aiming to actively participate in Armed Forces Day;
- offering a discount to members of the Armed Forces Community;

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community and our customers on how we are doing.

Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (LSCFT) is very committed to providing high quality care and support to Veterans and Reservists accessing healthcare services or working within the organisation as a staff member. LSCFT recognise that Veterans and Reservists have a variety of transferable skills, expertise and experience gained through military service that can be very valuable to our organisation and are keen to continue to improve our reputation, credibility and service provision for the Armed Forces Community.

LSCFT has Forces Friendly status and currently has Silver Award with the Armed Forces Employment Recognition Scheme (ERS). LSCFT intends to apply for Gold Award status in 2021 and is currently working to identify other Trusts or organisations that we can encourage and support to sign up to the Covenant and apply for Bronze Award with the Employment Recognition Scheme.

The Trust has identified a Human Resources Lead and a Clinical Lead for the Armed Forces. The Clinical Lead has established an Armed Forces Champions Group, which meets quarterly and is a Trust-Wide initiative. To date there are 72 members of the champions group.

An Operational Policy, Procedures and Staff Guidance documents have been produced to outline the care and support on offer for individuals accessing health services and for those employed within the Trust. The policy and procedures identify the range of support services available for the Armed Forces Community and highlights that Veterans and their immediate family members are afforded appropriate priority access to services for service or transition related illness or injury.

The Clinical Lead is a member of the Covenant Delivery Group with responsibilities for the Health Plan. The group meets fortnightly and comprises of the Armed Forces Hub, the College of Military Veterans, Lancashire County Council and LSCFT. The MVV Team (MAPPA/Veterans and Victims) has developed a Veterans Health Passport/Pathway, which is designed to improve access and engagement with health services. We are currently trying to identify funding to develop this into an APP and to engage with the military to promote completion of the passport among service leavers to optimise access and engagement with health services.

LSCFT is committed to providing opportunities for military Veterans and Reservists to obtain employment within the NHS. The Trust is looking to raise awareness, share best practice and improve access to employment. Opportunities are being developed through working in partnership with neighbouring trusts and local organisations that work with the Armed Forces including the Community Transition Partnership, NHS Employers and Bay Healthcare Partners.

LSCFT has signed up to the 'Step into Health' Pledge. Through Step into Health, members of the Armed Forces community can connect to NHS organisations to provide training opportunities, clinical and general work placements, insight days and application support. The programme provides a dedicated pathway into a career in the NHS. Step into Health is open to all Service Leavers, Reservists, Veterans, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and the families of all of these.

The Human Resources Lead has established practices within the HR Department for working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP), which includes advertising roles among the Armed Forces Community and providing employment support and placement opportunities for Reservists.

Reservists are provided with a minimum of two weeks paid leave in order to attend training and further leave for mobilisation requirements. The Trust has already supported a number of Reservists in placement and is keen to develop these opportunities further to include similar arrangements for Cadets. A programme of work is ongoing to identify all staff members who have previous armed forces experience to ensure that sufficient support is provided. Similarly, the HR department is working to enhance support and opportunities for Reservists and Cadets within the Trust or associated organisations.