



Ministry
of Defence

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 2 July 2020¹ requesting the following information:

“

- What is the number of serving personnel have PTSD?
- If you are unable to provide as specific a diagnosis as PTSD:
 - What number of serving personnel have a mental health disorder due to being deployed abroad?
 - What number of serving personnel have a mental health disorder diagnosed during the course of service?
- What is the number of personnel remain in service after a diagnosis of PTSD?
- On average how long does a service personnel member continue serving from the point they are diagnosed with PTSD?

In regards to the above questions please provide a time range from 2012 – 2021 considering across the spectrum of disciplines i.e. RAF, Army and Navy.”

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence holds the number of serving personnel who have PTSD and therefore this response will answer bullet points 1, 3 and 4.

Between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2021 (latest data available), **2,411** UK Armed Forces personnel had an initial assessment for PTSD at a MOD DCMH. As at 1 June 2021, **910 (38%)** were still serving. Please note, some personnel first seen for an initial assessment for PTSD at a MOD DCMH prior to 2012 may still be serving but have not been included in this response.

On average UK Armed Forces personnel exit service **557.5 days** (approximately 18 months) from the point they are first diagnosed with PTSD¹. Please note this calculation includes all exit reasons and an individual may have left service for another reason not related to PTSD.

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance), you may find it useful to note the following:

MOD produce an annual official statistic on the mental health of the UK Armed Forces which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/defence-mental-health-statistics-index>

¹ First initial assessment for PTSD at a DCMH is assumed to be after 1 April 2007 due to data being unavailable prior to April 2007.

MOD also produce an annual official statistic on medical discharges in the UK Armed Forces which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

Methodology/Background Notes

DCMH are specialised psychiatric services based on community mental health teams closely located with primary care services at MOD sites in the UK and abroad.

This response only captures patients who had an initial assessment for PTSD at a DCMH. DCMH staff record the initial mental health assessment during a patient's first appointment, based on presenting complaints. The information is provisional and final diagnoses may differ as some patients do not present the full range of symptoms, signs, or clinical history during their first appointment. The mental health assessment of condition data was categorised according to the World Health Organisation's International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Health-Related Disorders 10th edition (ICD-10).

UK Armed Forces personnel diagnosed with PTSD by a GP in primary care but who have not had an initial assessment for PTSD at a DCMH have been excluded from this analysis. Patients may be assessed as suffering from PTSD when they are seen by a clinician in primary care. This diagnosis may change once they are seen by a specialist mental health clinician at a DCMH.

This response includes regular UK Armed Forces personnel, Ghurkhas, Military Provost Guard Staff, mobilised reservists, Full Time Reserve Service personnel and Non-regular Permanent Staff as all these individuals are eligible for assessment at a DCMH. This response includes personnel in the Royal Navy/Royal Marines, Army and RAF.

The first date an individual had an initial assessment for PTSD at a DCMH was used as the first point an individual was diagnosed with PTSD. The first initial assessment for PTSD at a DCMH is assumed to be after 1 April 2007 due to data being unavailable prior to April 2007. Therefore, some individuals included may have been first diagnosed with PTSD prior to April 2007.

The first exit date recorded in the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system after the first date an individual had an initial assessment for PTSD at a DCMH was used to calculate the time to exit. Median was used as the average. Those without a valid exit date recorded after the first point they were diagnosed with PTSD will not be included in the average time to exit calculations.

Data Sources

DCMH data is as recorded on the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). DMICP is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers.

The Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system was used to collect exit dates and to identify those still serving as at 1 June 2021. JPA is the most accurate source for demographic information on UK Armed Forces personnel.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics Health