

## Support for veterans, their families and carers

The stress and trauma associated with serving in the armed forces can impact on your mental health. Support is available from a range of services in the region which provide mental health support for veterans and their families. You can also access help with benefits, employment and housing.

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### Your GP

#### **Veteran Friendly GP Practices**

GP practices that have agreed to become Veteran Friendly GP Practices follow guidelines and training to best support the armed forces veterans community. These include:

- having a clinical lead for veteran health
- asking patients 'Have you served?' to identify veteran patients
- supporting veteran patients to access dedicated health services
- specialist training to meet the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant

There are several veteran friendly GP practices in Newcastle:

- [Throckley Primary care](#)
- [Denton Park Medical group](#)
- [Newcastle Medical centre](#)
- [Cruddas Park surgery](#)
- [Fenham Hall medical group](#)
- [Heaton Road surgery](#)
- [Denton Turret medical centre](#)

You can find more information about veteran friendly practices [on the Royal College of General Practitioners website](#).

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### **Local support and advice**

**Op COURAGE** is an NHS mental health specialist service designed to help serving personnel due to leave the military, reservists, armed forces veterans and their families. [The North of England service](#) can be contacted by phone on [0300 373 3332](#) or email

[OpCourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:OpCourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk)

**Anxious Minds** provides confidential support for people with mental health issues anxiety, depression, stress, abuse, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), grief and loss. They offer:

- adults and children counselling services (you can pay a donation to use this service)
- **[The Veteran Recovery College](#)** offers veterans and their families help through counselling, addiction support, outdoor therapy and up to 15 support groups a week. The college also provides back to work support and advice services.
- **[drop in and recovery centre](#)**
- peer support groups
- outdoor therapy activities
- self help videos
- **[community mental health radio station](#)**

**Combat Stress** offer a 24 hour helpline for veterans and their families, to give advice on mental health and where to get help from.

**Forward Assists'** peer led support groups and structured diversionary activities provide a service that reduces social isolation and promotes community engagement with other veterans on a daily or weekly basis. Forward Assist, helps individuals to navigate and access the multitude of organisations and services available to them in the civilian community whilst using activities and vocational skills based projects that enable veterans to gain nationally accredited qualifications.

**Joining Forces** is an Age UK supported service for veterans.

**SSAFA** helps those who currently serve and those who have served in our Armed Forces and their dependant families. They can obtain assistance in the form of grants if needed and signpost people to organisations who help with housing, debt advice, training and mental health problems.

**Veterans at Ease** is a north east based charity helping veterans and their families deal with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other combat stress related issues. The charity is run by veterans for veterans. They offer an outreach service to veterans that don't have the resources to travel.

**Veterans' Transition Intervention and Liaison Service (VWALS)** is a mental health and wellbeing service to support veterans, their families and carers living in the North East of England. It provides a single point of access to the range of mental health support services which already exist across the region, making it easier to get signposted to the right help and support. VWALS also provide a wellbeing group for families and carers of serving military and veterans. Veterans and their families can access VWALS directly themselves or may be referred from their GP or another health, social care or third sector service.

**North East Counselling Services** delivers counselling services to carers and veterans across the North East.

**Royal British Legion** offer help, advice and community activities for veterans.

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**Armed Forces Outreach Service**

[Armed Forces Outreach Service](#) (AFOS) is a partnership between local authorities and housing associations in the North East providing a service to the Armed Forces Community.

They offer SSAFA (Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Families Association) trained staff to help people from the Armed Forces find a home and settle into the community,

They can support with:

- general housing advice such as moving home, homelessness, and rent arrears.
  - support with finding employment and training
  - signposting and linking to local support services for armed forces veterans
  - advice and information on finance, income, benefits and debt
  - signposting and link to mental health support and social prescribing
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## The Forcer protocol

[The Forcer Protocol](#) is a national scheme to lower the risk of harm to veterans who go missing by giving police important information that can help find the person more quickly. It is designed to help in the search for missing service veterans by including information on their vulnerabilities and where they have been found before. You can complete a copy of the forcer protocol form on [Safe and Found Online](#)

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## Other useful information

[Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust](#) provides NHS mental health, learning disability and specialist services across Newcastle, Northumberland, North Tyneside, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland. They also have a number of mental health self help guides#

[The Campaign Against Living Miserably \(CALM\)](#) offers immediate support to men who are down or in crisis. They offer confidential, anonymous and free support and signposting to men anywhere in the UK. Their website provides information and hosts a webchat service and a private online forum for those bereaved by suicide and would like to talk to others who have gone through the same experience.

[Togetherall](#) offers round-the-clock online support with trained counsellors, online forums to talk to others and free mental health resources. All armed forces serving personnel, reservists, veterans and their families can access these services at any time.

[ABF The Soldier's Charity](#) can provide grants to pay for support for wellbeing of veterans or their carers.

[WinG Outdoor activities](#) run various outdoor activity sessions such as hiking, mountain biking, canoeing and rock climbing for Veterans seeking to improve their mental health and well being through outdoor well being activities.

You might also like to consider [mindfulness](#) therapy.

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## Useful Organisations

### SSAFA – The Armed Forces Charity

**Email:** tyneandwear.branch@ssafa.org.uk

**Website:** <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/tyne-wear>

**Telephone:** 0191 222 0803

**Address:** Fenham Barracks, NE2 4NP

### Veterans' Transition Intervention and Liaison Service

**Email:** vwals@nhs.net

**Telephone:** 0191 441 5974

**Address:** North End House, DH1 4LW

### Veterans at Ease Ltd

**Email:** Garreth@veteransatease.org

**Website:** [www.veteransatease.org](http://www.veteransatease.org)

**Telephone:** 0191 249 9944

**Address:** 11 Jackson Street, NE8 1EE

### Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)

**Email:** info@thecalmzone.net

**Website:** [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

**Telephone:** 0203 697 9331

**Address:** Po Box 68766, SE1P 4JZ

### Forward Assist

**Email:** admin@forward-assist.com

**Website:** <http://www.forward-assist.com/>

**Telephone:** 0191 250 4877

**Address:** c/o John Willie Sams Centre, NE23 7HS

## **Combat Stress**

**Email:** [helpline@combatstress.org.uk](mailto:helpline@combatstress.org.uk)

**Website:** <http://www.combatstress.org.uk/>

**Telephone:** 0800 138 1619

## **North East Counselling Services**

**Email:** [info@necounselling.org.uk](mailto:info@necounselling.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.necounselling.org.uk](http://www.necounselling.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 0191 466 1314

**Address:** HLF House, NE21 5NJ

## **Joining Forces Tyne & Wear**

**Email:** [linda.williams@ageukgateshead.org.uk](mailto:linda.williams@ageukgateshead.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/joining-forces/>

**Telephone:** 0191 477 3559

**Address:** Age UK Gateshead, NE8 1EQ

## **ABF The Soldiers' Charity**

**Email:** [supportercare@soldierscharity.org](mailto:supportercare@soldierscharity.org)

**Website:** <http://www.soldierscharity.org/>

**Telephone:** 020 7901 8900

**Address:** Mountbarrow House , SW1W 9RB

## **Anxious Minds**

**Email:** [info@anxiousminds.co.uk](mailto:info@anxiousminds.co.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.anxiousminds.co.uk/>

**Telephone:** 0191 262 0305

**Address:** (inside the) Creative Wellbeing Centre, NE28 6RL

## **Mental Health Social Work Team at Newcastle City Council**

**Website:** [www.newcastle.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support-adults](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support-adults)

**Telephone:** 0191 277 2355

## **WinG Outdoor Activities**

**Email:** [info@wingoutdooractivities.org](mailto:info@wingoutdooractivities.org)

**Website:** [www.wingoutdooractivities.org](http://www.wingoutdooractivities.org)

**Telephone:** 07506 176888

**Address:** WinG Outdoor Activities, NE1

## **TogetherAll**

**Website:** <https://togetherall.com/en-gb/>

**Telephone:** 07506 176888

## **Walking With The Wounded**

**Email:** [info@wwtw.org.uk](mailto:info@wwtw.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk/>

**Telephone:** 033 00 585 800

**Address:** The Walker Building, NE296LL

## **Armed Forces Outreach Service**

**Email:** [armedforcesoutreach@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:armedforcesoutreach@gateshead.gov.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.armedforcesoutreachservice.org/>

**Telephone:** 07928 129 183

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## Related Articles

[Depression](#)

[Support for addictions and harmful behaviours](#)

[Bipolar disorder](#)

[Mental Health](#)

[Getting repairs and decorating done](#)

[Home adaptations, equipment and aids](#)

[How to pay for adaptations to your home](#)

[Looking after someone](#)