



Improving health and wellbeing support for armed forces in England– engagement toolkit

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Introduction

The NHS in England provides healthcare services for families of serving personnel who have registered with an NHS GP practice, and families of veterans.

Whilst most armed forces families enjoy healthy lives, the unique circumstances of military life, such as moving home every few years, can make accessing the NHS difficult and create added pressure for some.

We want to help change this, so that armed forces families are able to access NHS services more easily across England. We also want to ensure that those families caring for individuals injured in service get the care and support they need from clinicians and people who understand the armed forces.

This engagement is an opportunity for people and organisations to share their views on how we can do this. As part of this, we would like to explore whether setting up armed forces families support networks would help. There are already some very effective support networks in parts of England, which focus on improving armed forces families' experiences of health services.

The engagement will run from 30 September 2020 to 30 November 2020, during which time we will be hosting a series of online meetings and events, supported by a questionnaire. For information on the engagement and associated events, please visit here: <https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/health-and-wellbeing-support-armed-forces-families>

We would welcome your help in promoting the questionnaire and virtual events. We recognise that these are unprecedented times and want to ensure that everyone who wants to share their views has the opportunity to do so.

Anyone can get involved, however, we are particularly keen to hear from armed forces families (regular, reserve and veteran families), people who are serving in or who have served in the British armed forces and organisations working with or supporting the armed forces community. Responses will be treated in confidence

and will help us to improve the care and support we offer armed forces families in England.

We have created this engagement toolkit, which includes a number of resources, to support you with promoting this engagement and carrying out your own engagement activity.

If you would like any further information on the engagement or anything in this toolkit, please email nelcsu.armedforcesfamilies@nhs.net.

Brief

We have developed a brief that can be shared with individuals and organisations. The brief outlines our engagement work and how people can get involved. Please click [here](#) to view the brief.

Engagement document and questionnaire

For more information on the engagement and to access the questionnaire, please click [here](#).

Engagement sessions (plan and presentation)

To support you with your engagement activities, we have developed a focus group session plan, which can be used to run meetings and events to gather feedback from armed forces families, organisations and individuals. Given the current situation with COVID-19, it is expected that these will be carried out virtually.

The session plan includes an engagement presentation, which can be viewed at the start of the session and covers key information, such as background information, session questions and housekeeping. It also includes an outline of the session to support the facilitator and a template for making notes.

To download a copy of the focus group session plan, supporting materials and the feedback template, please click [here](#).

If you hold any engagement sessions, please send your completed notes and feedback to nelcsu.armedforcesfamilies@nhs.net by 30 November 2020. This information will be considered along with other engagement responses and will help to inform an engagement report. All notes from the sessions will be anonymised and will not contain any identifiable data.

Newsletter/web/intranet copy

We have created the below templates, which can be adapted to promote the engagement through your own channels.

1. Web/intranet copy for external organisations

Share your views to help improve health and wellbeing support for armed forces families in England

The NHS has launched a questionnaire and series of virtual events to explore how it can improve health and wellbeing support for serving, reserve and veteran families in England.

Whilst most armed forces families enjoy healthy lives, the unique circumstances of military life, such as moving home every few years, can make accessing the NHS difficult and create added pressure for some.

We want to help change this, so that armed forces families are able to access NHS services more easily across England. We also want to ensure that those families caring for individuals injured in service get the care and support they need from clinicians and people who understand the armed forces.

Anyone can share their views, however, the NHS is particularly keen to hear from serving, reserve and veteran families, people who are serving in or who have served in the British armed forces (regular and reserves) and organisations working with or supporting the armed forces community.

To find out more, and to get involved, please visit the [NHS England and NHS Improvement website](#). The deadline for responding is 30 November 2020.

2. Newsletter copy for external organisations

Share your views to help improve health and wellbeing support for armed forces families in England

The NHS has launched a questionnaire and series of virtual events to explore how it can improve health and wellbeing support for serving, reserve and veteran families in England.

Whilst most armed forces families enjoy healthy lives, the unique circumstances of military life can cause pressures for some, and affect an individual's health and wellbeing. The NHS wants to help change this, so that armed forces families are able to access NHS services more easily across England.

To share your views on how this can be done, visit [here](#) for more information. The deadline for responding is 30 November 2020.

Social media

To support the promotion of our engagement work, we will be using social media to inform our networks of our engagement activities.

Please follow us on our social media channels (our handle is @NHSEngland) and support us by tagging us in your posts so we can retweet and share good news stories.

Using hashtags:

Hashtags represent a topic of conversation and can link a series of tweets together. They enable users to listen to, follow and join conversations on trending topics, in addition to commenting in real time.

For this engagement, we will be using the hashtag **#forcesfamilies** – please use this in your tweets and remember to tag us so people can follow the conversations.

We have developed social media assets for a range of audiences (including families of serving personnel, reservists and veterans). The social media assets can be downloaded [here](#). Please note, these materials have been produced for the purpose of this campaign, and can not be used for any other purpose due to copyright laws. For more information, please contact nelcsu.armedforcesfamilies@nhs.net

We have also developed some social media copy to be used alongside the social media assets:

Generic:

- Tell the NHS how it could improve care and support for armed forces families in England. Have your say by taking part in a questionnaire or virtual event. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies
- The NHS in England wants to make sure armed forces families have access to the right care and support. Share your views – take part in a questionnaire or virtual event. Visit here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies
- What does the NHS in England need to do to support armed forces families' health and wellbeing needs? Take part in a questionnaire or virtual event to have your say. Visit here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies

Families of serving personnel:

- The NHS wants to make it easier for armed forces families in England to access the care and support they need. Share your views on how it can support your family. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies

Families of veterans:

- The NHS wants to hear from the families of veterans in England about how it can improve care and support for them. Take part in a questionnaire or virtual event and share your views. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies

Families of reservists:

- Families of armed forces reserves, how can the NHS in England support you and your family? Take part in a questionnaire or virtual event and share your views. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies

Children and young people:

- The NHS in England wants to make sure children and young people from armed forces families get access to the right care and support. Have your say

by filling in a short questionnaire or taking part in a virtual event. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies

Veterans:

- Armed forces veterans – the NHS in England wants to make it for easier for your family to access the care and support you need. Take part in a questionnaire or virtual event and share your views. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies

Families of Gurkhas:

- The NHS wants to hear from the families of those serving in the Brigade of Gurkhas about their experiences of care and support in England. Have your say by taking part in a questionnaire or virtual event <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies
- Serving in the Brigade of Gurkhas in England? Share your views on how the NHS can improve care and support for your family. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies

Serving personnel:

- Serving personnel – how can the NHS in England support your family's health and wellbeing? Have your say by taking part in a questionnaire or virtual event. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies

Military charities and other organisations:

- The NHS wants to know how it can improve care and support for armed forces families in England. If you work with or support these families share your views by taking part in a questionnaire or virtual event. Click here for more information: <https://bit.ly/30IYYnX> #forcesfamilies