



Veterans' Gateway Update - February 2017

As we approach the launch of the new Veterans' Gateway service this spring we wanted to update you on the project's process to date and next steps.

The consortium team has been busy building the infrastructure to support the new service including signing up our 26 referral partners. We hope the below will provide you with the information you need to raise awareness of the Veterans' Gateway among your staff and stakeholders.

We are currently working hard building the Veterans' Gateway website and developing the customer journey for the contact centre. Importantly we are making sure the referral model works and is able to deliver the support our veterans' community need when they need it.

As you can see from the top of the page we have now developed the new Veterans' Gateway brand and you will shortly receive the materials you need as one of our partners to promote the new service to your audiences.

We will provide another update in a month's time to keep you informed of progress as the launch approaches. Thank you for your support.

What is the Veterans' Gateway?

In November 2016 the Ministry of Defence announced £2 million of funding from the Covenant Fund for a one-stop service to better support British Armed Forces veterans in need. The service responds to calls from veterans' charities and groups for help in navigating the wide range of services and organisations set up to support those who have served in the Forces.

The service will be the first point of contact for veterans and their families to access information, advice and support on a range of issues including healthcare, housing, and employment. It will allow information and services from partners to be accessed from one place and all enquiries will be followed up to ensure that veterans receive the right support.

The Veteran's Gateway will provide website, online chat, phone line and text message services available to any veteran, from anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. Veterans can access face-to-face support through the Veterans' Gateway network of partners and organisations across the UK and overseas.

Why is it needed?

More than 2,000 charitable groups currently offer help to veterans, but they can prove difficult to navigate. By having a first point of contact, the Veterans' Gateway team will be able to quickly work out which of the partners is best placed to help with the information, advice and support required.

Who is working on it?

A consortium of military charities including The Royal British Legion, Poppyscotland, SSAFA, and Combat Stress, and service provider Connect Assist is managing the contact centre. A wider group of 26 referral partners (Annex A) from military and other charity sectors have currently signed up to be a part of the Veterans' Gateway. This means that the service will offer advice and support on a broad range of issues and from a multitude of providers.

Further referral partners will continue to be recruited after the Veterans' Gateway launches. The helpline will be run by Connect Assist located in South Wales and staffed by skilled advisers, many of whom we hope will be veterans or family members with experience of Service life.

When will it launch?

The Veterans' Gateway will launch in the week commencing 22 May 2017. On the day there will be a media launch led by the consortium. Prior to the launch all partners will be sent a Veterans' Gateway toolkit containing the brand guidelines, key messaging, imagery, and templates for marketing materials.

What can I do?

We're asking current partners to use this update and the materials that will be sent before the launch to inform their staff, stakeholders and network about the Veteran's Gateway and help us ensure our veteran community is aware of the new service.

Annex:

- A. List of Referral Partners (as at 14 Feb 17).

ANNEX A

NAME OF REFERRAL PARTNER:	
Help for Heroes	Veterans UK
Royal British Legion Industries	Career Transition Partnership
RFEA – The Forces Employment Charity	The Royal British Legion
Blesma – the Limbless Veterans Charity	SSAFA
Blind Veterans UK	Combat Stress
X-Forces	Forces Pension Society
Poppy Factory	RAFA
Stoll	Shelter
Walking with the Wounded	Family Fund
Mind	Career Transition Partnership
Relate	Poppyscotland
SAIL	Forces Pension Society
Officers' Association	Tax Help for Older People