

Armed Forces Covenant Annual Update

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Executive Summary

Trust Board Paper H

Context

This paper provides an update regarding the Trust's commitment to the [Armed Forces Covenant](#). The Trust signed the covenant in November 2015, pledging the support of Leicester's Hospitals to the Armed Forces community. The purpose of the covenant is to encourage support for service personnel, their families and veterans and to recognise and remember the sacrifices they have made. It encourages everyone within the Trust to offer support to the local Armed Forces community, making it easier for service personnel, families and veterans to receive help from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and charitable organisations.

Questions

1. How has the Trust supported the Armed Forces Covenant in the past 12 months?
2. How is the Trust to continue its support of the Armed Forces Covenant?

Conclusion

1. The Trust has provided considerable support for the Armed Forces Covenant over the past 12 months. Support has been offered through four work streams and the Trust has been accredited with [veteran aware status](#).
2. Support for the covenant is continuing and further initiatives are planned or in progress, including the Trust offering long-term placements for Regular Defence Secondary Care Clinicians.

Input Sought

The Trust Board is requested to note this update and make suggestions to maintain and improve our support of the covenant.

For Reference

1. The following objectives were considered when preparing this report:

Safe, high quality, patient centred healthcare	[Yes]
Effective, integrated emergency care	[Yes]
Consistently meeting national access standards	[Yes]
Integrated care in partnership with others	[Yes]
Enhanced delivery in research, innovation & Ed	[Yes]
A caring, professional, engaged workforce	[Yes]
Clinically sustainable services with excellent facilities	[Yes]
Financially sustainable NHS organisation	[Not applicable]
Enabled by excellent IM&T	[Yes]

2. This matter relates to the following governance initiatives:

Organisational Risk Register	[Not applicable]
Board Assurance Framework	[Not applicable]

3. Related Patient and Public Involvement actions: [Yes]

4. Results of any Equality Impact Assessment: [Yes]

5. Scheduled date for the next paper on this topic: [March 2021]

6. Executive Summaries should not exceed 1 page. [My paper does comply]

7. Papers should not exceed 7 pages. [My paper does comply]

UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF LEICESTER NHS TRUST

TO: TRUST BOARD
FROM: HAZEL WYTON, DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND OD
DATE: 26 MARCH 2020
SUBJECT: ARMED FORCES COVENANT

1. Introduction

1.1 This paper provides an update regarding the Trust's commitment to the [Armed Forces Covenant](#). The Trust signed the covenant in November 2015, pledging the support of Leicester's Hospitals to the Armed Forces community. The purpose of the covenant is to encourage support for service personnel, their families and veterans and to recognise and remember the sacrifices they have made. It encourages everyone within the Trust to offer support to the local Armed Forces community, making it easier for service personnel, families and veterans to receive help from the MOD and charitable organisations.

1.2 The Trust continues to support the Armed Forces community through four work streams. Within these work streams a number of activities have been undertaken and plans made to further enhance our commitment to the covenant. The four work streams are:

- (a) to support **Regular Armed Forces personnel** by:
- Maintaining their professional skills through offering work placements;
 - Supporting personnel and their families transiting to civilian life;
 - Celebrating and actively participating in events to demonstrate the Trust's commitment to the covenant;
- (b) to support the recruitment and retention of Armed Forces **Reservists and Adult Cadet Instructors** from amongst our staff;
- (c) to support staff who have **family members** serving in the Armed Forces;
- (d) to support **veterans** to ensure they receive the care they need;

2. How has the Trust supported the Armed Forces Covenant in the past 12 months?

2.1 The Trust received veteran aware status in May 2019, following submission of its first report to the [Veteran Covenant Healthcare Alliance \(VCHA\)](#). The aim of the alliance is to improve veteran care within the NHS and is part of the Getting it Right First Time (GIRFT) programme. LPT also received veteran aware status in 2019, with the support of UHL, becoming the first Mental Health Trust to receive accreditation. This made LLR the first STP

to have all providers accredited as veteran aware. The Trust's Armed Forces Champion was also invited to present to the first VCHA workshop in Birmingham, in May 2019.

- 2.2 In July 2019, Trust staff received a visit from the Armed Forces Champion for University Hospital of Coventry and Warwick NHS Trust, to support development of their Armed Forces agenda.
- 2.3 The Trust's Armed Forces Champion has submitted a number of amendments to the Trust's, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy to take full account of the Armed Forces community. The Trust also included an Armed Forces section in its annual [EDI Report](#), in October 2019.
- 2.4 A new slide has been added to the Trust's induction programme to introduce to all new members of the staff to the Trust's Armed Forces agenda.
- 2.5 The Trust's Armed Forces Champion presented to staff of the Integrated Discharge Hub, in October 2019, with a view to improving awareness of the Armed Forces community and the support available from the MOD and charitable organisations.
- 2.6 The Trust supported a visit by two Army Generals in January 2020. This visit was part of a wider visit of Army Generals to Leicester, organised by the City Mayor and sponsored by the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire. The aim of the visit was to give the generals an insight into the workings of a modern and vibrant city.
- 2.7 Also in January 2020, the Trust re-pledged its support for the NHS Employers [Step into Health](#) programme. This is a national initiative between the NHS and MOD to support service leavers and their families to find careers in the NHS. It recognises the transferable skills and cultural values that Armed Forces personnel develop whilst serving, and how they are compatible with those required within NHS roles. By supporting this programme, the Trust actively promotes around 350 NHS careers, offers work placements, and ensure that ex-Forces personnel and their families, who join the Trust, are able to access support to make a successful transition into the NHS. To further support this activity, Trust staff have forged an effective relationship with Career Transition Partnership (CTP) and the MOD Regional Resettlement Centre (RRC), based near Cottesmore in Rutland. The Trust's Armed Forces Champion has supported mock interviews with service leavers and promoted NHS jobs at the RRC on a quarterly basis. As part of this work the Trust has also agreed to post UHL jobs on the [Forces Family Jobs](#) website. In March 2020, the Trust's UHL Resourcing Lead, Recruitment Services, attended a Step into Health workshop, in London, provided by NHS Employers.
- 2.8 The Trust's Armed Forces Champion has recorded a webinar presentation for use by NHS Employers to promote the Defence [Employer Recognition Scheme \(ERS\)](#) and explain how the Trust achieved GOLD status in 2018. The webinar was broadcast in February 2020.

- 2.9 Also in February 2020, the Trust's Armed Forces Champion attended a workshop at the request of the Armed Forces Engagement Officer for Rutland County Council, together with representatives of the LLR CCGs and LPT. The key topic of conversation was veteran care pathways, following the County's recent survey of the health and social needs of the Armed Forces community: [Rutland County Council Armed Forces Community Survey October 2019](#)
- 2.10 The Trust's Armed Forces Champion has continued to attend the LLR Civil and Military Partnership Board. This Board gives strategic direction and provides oversight of the implementation of the covenant. It also fosters engagement across LLR. All local authorities are represented on the board, as are local military units, local health service providers and commissioners and local and national charities; meetings are held quarterly.
- 2.11 Trust staff continue to work closely with members of 222 Medical Squadron (part of 254 Medical Regiment) to encourage recruiting to the Reserves, with events held across the Trust throughout 2019.
- 2.12 The Trust has continued to be a strong advocate for the Armed Forces and uses its staff magazine, website and social media channels to promote the covenant at every opportunity, including Reserves Day and Armed Forces Day. The following links provide examples of such support:
- [Facebook - Army Reservist attend prestigious Games](#)
 - [Twitter - Royal Navy Reservist working in ED](#)
 - [Twitter - Reserves Day at the LRI](#)
 - [Twitter - Reserves Day at the Glenfield](#)
- 2.13 The Trust has continued to be well represented at Armed Forces events and meetings. The Trust's Armed Forces Champion attended the first meeting of the NHS East Midlands Armed Forces Network. The Champion has also represented the Trust at quarterly meetings of the Leicestershire and Rutland Reserve Forces & Cadet Association (RFCA) Counties Committee and the Remembrance Day Service in Victoria Park. The Trust's Armed Forces Champion and the Chair of Trust Group Holdings attended the Defence ERS Dinner on behalf of UHL, in November 2019, at the Leicester Tigers Stadium.
- 2.14 The Trust has continued to reach out to the Armed Forces community and engage at a local level. The Trust's Armed Forces Champion has held supportive meetings with 254 Medical Regiment, 144 (Parachute) Medical Squadron (based in Nottingham) and 212 Field Hospital (based in Sheffield).
- 2.15 The Trust continues to offer support to the new [Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre \(DNRC\)](#), Stanford Hall. The Trust's Armed Forces Champion visited the [Defence](#)

[Medical Rehabilitation Centre \(DMRC\)](#) to confirm our support, in June 2019. The DMRC is the military element of the DNRC.

- 2.16 The Trust continues to support Mesothelioma UK's [Armed Forces Project](#) following their successful bid for covenant funds in 2016. These funds have provided a specialist nurse to support veterans diagnosed with Mesothelioma, provided advice and information. The charity has enabled access to nearly £7m of no-fault compensation for 55 veterans diagnosed with Mesothelioma. The charity is also sponsoring research into the incidence of this terminal disease amongst service personnel and veterans. It hopes the findings of this research will be presented at the Palace of Westminster in the Autumn of 2020.

3. **How is the Trust to continue its support of the Armed Forces Covenant?**

- 3.1 Trust staff are to continue supporting the Armed Forces Covenant along the four work streams previously mentioned and further specific initiatives are planned or in progress.
- 3.2 The Trust is to offer long-term placements for Regular Defence Secondary Care Clinicians.
- 3.3 The Trust's Armed Forces Champion attended a briefing on SystemOne at the Oakham Group Practice, in October 2019, to better understand how this system can be used in support of veterans and service families. Going forward, a key objective in the development of the NerveCentre EPR will be the ability to flag veterans and service families, to enable the signposting of support available from the MOD and charitable organisations.

4. **Conclusion**

- 4.1 There has been considerable support for the Armed Forces Covenant over the past 12 months and the Trust has been accredited with veteran aware status.
- 4.3 Two members of staff are worthy of praise for their work in support of the covenant: Diane Bailey and Conor Ward.
- 4.4 The committee is requested to note this update and make suggestions to maintain and improve our support of the covenant.

Hazel Wyton

Director of People and OD

26th March 2020