

Meeting title:	Public Trust Board	Public Trust Board paper S			
Date of the meeting:	14 September 2023				
Title:	Amendment to Special Leave Policy - Armed Forces and additional paid leave under the Special Leave Policy				
Report presented by:	Clare Teeney – Chief People Officer				
Report written by:	Daniel Del Greco – People Promise Manager				
Action – this paper is for:	Decision/Approval	x	Assurance		Update
Where this report has been discussed previously	The amendment to the Special Leave Policy has been reviewed by the Policy and Guidance Committee				

To your knowledge, does the report provide assurance or mitigate any significant risks? If yes, please detail which
<p>Changes to support the employment of the Armed Forces community, ultimately supports the Trust, in meeting its statutory obligations placed on all NHS Trusts under the Armed Forces Covenant Duty. This requires Trusts and other public bodies to “have due regard” to the principles of the Covenant and requires decisions about the development and delivery of services to be made with conscious consideration of the needs of the Armed Forces community.</p>

Purpose of the Report

To summarise recent activity to support the Armed Forces community at UHL and to seek approval of the changes to the Special Leave policy in relation to additional paid leave for the Armed Forces community.

Recommendation

The Board are recommended to:

- Be assured that action is continuing to be taken to support the Armed Forces community at UHL.
- Approve the increase of paid leave for colleagues for members of the Armed Forces community.

Summary

As a Trust we have a duty to support the employment of the Armed Forces community. Following the re-signing of our Armed Forces covenant in June this year, we have taken a number of actions and set future plans in place to further support the employment of colleagues from the Armed Forces community. An area which requires Trust Board approval is the increase of paid leave for colleagues in the Armed Forces community as set out below.

Main report detail

Recent key activity to support the Armed Forces community

June 2023 - UHL re-signed the Armed Forces Covenant, setting out our commitments to support the armed forces community.

August 2023 - UHL has implemented a guaranteed interview scheme for those from the armed forces community who meet the essential criteria set out in the job profile.

August 2023 - An Armed Forces Staff network has been established, which aims primarily to provide support for colleagues with armed forces connections, through sharing experiences and concerns, including signposting support around health, with a focus on mental health/wellbeing.

September 2023 - We currently hold a gold award under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, which recognises organisations which demonstrate and advocate support to defence and the armed forces community. The above activity has supported our re-submission in September, to maintain our Gold award accreditation.

September/October 2023 – We also hold Veteran Aware accreditation, which recognises NHS Trusts who are committed to supporting both the employment and care of veterans. Work is underway to submit for revalidation later this year.

Special Leave Policy amendment – increase in paid leave for Armed Forces colleagues

To further support the employment of the Armed Forces community at UHL, as well as support “readiness” of the Reserve Forces employed at UHL, we have set out to:

- Increase additional paid leave for Reserves from the current 10 days to 12 days to support reserve forces training.
- Provide 6 days paid leave for Cadet instructors for training.
- Provide 2 days paid leave for spouse/partners to provide some support for unforeseen military delays.

To note - A fuller review of a range of “Family Friendly” policies including the Special Leave Policy is underway and will be brought to Trust Board in the coming months. However approval of the additional paid leave for the Armed Forces community is time sensitive, to support the Trust’s submissions under the Employer Recognition Scheme and Veteran Aware accreditation and therefore has been brought for approval sooner.