

HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF MILITARY VETERANS/EX-ARMED FORCES IN COUNTY DURHAM

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Better for everyone

What is a health needs assessment?

Health needs assessment is a systematic method for reviewing the health issues facing a population, leading to agreed priorities and resource allocation that will improve health and reduce inequalities.

Purpose

- Estimate the **prevalence** of the veteran population living in County Durham
- Establish the **health and wellbeing needs** of veterans living in County Durham
- Examine **local resources** that are currently available to support the health and wellbeing needs of veterans
- Identify areas of **unmet need, health inequalities and inequities** in veterans experience
- **Work with veterans to make recommendations for change** to address the unmet needs and reduce the inequalities experienced by veterans

Methodology

- Literature review of published and “grey” material
- Quantitative data analysis of available data
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of a survey of military veterans
- Qualitative analysis of stakeholder feedback
- Identification of key themes
- Recommendations, formed with the Armed Forces Forum taking into account all of the evidence presented



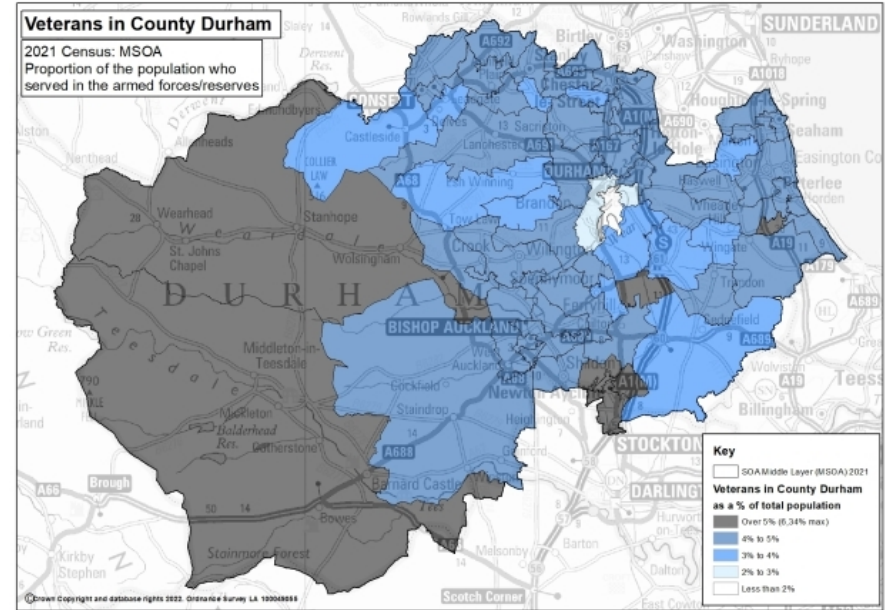
Prevalence

Total **estimated** veteran population in County Durham = 22,615 (5.2%)

Higher than the North East average (5.0%)

Significantly higher than the rest of England (3.8%)

[Veteran Dashboard](#)



Findings

- **A great majority of military personnel transition from the armed forces to civilian life without any major issues**
- Leaving the Armed Forces can be a life changing and stressful event
- Ex Armed Forces are valuable contributors to society
- Impact of service on successful transitions depends on several factors

Theme 1: Data

Theme 2: Health Issues – physical, mental and social

Theme 3: Access to Health Care

Theme 4: Access to support for individuals

Theme 5: Support for the armed forces community

Theme 6: Emerging issues

Recommendations

- All services provided or commissioned by the public sector related to health and wellbeing, especially public health, general practice and other NHS services, **should ask whether people have ever served in the UK Armed Forces and this information should be accurately recorded and able to be extracted from recording systems for future analysis of needs.** This information should be back dated to support identification of need in the future.
- Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) should be updated to cover the sharing of data for analysis purposes including Health Needs Assessments.
- Health and social care professionals, including commissioners, should **undertake training on the health and wellbeing needs of people who have served in the armed forces.**
- Public health commissioned services such as drug and alcohol recovery, should have **veteran specific forums.**
- Health professionals should undertake **training on the culture of the armed forces and the health and wellbeing needs of people who have served in the armed forces.**
- Display material in GP surgeries and on digital platforms which **encourages veterans to self identify.**
- Specific needs of the veteran population should be considered within any future **developments in dementia care** across the County.

Recommendations for HWB

- (a) To note the contents of the Veterans HNA
- (b) To agree the recommendations within the HNA
- (c) Agree to the development of an action plan, via the Armed Forces Forum, to implement the recommendations from the HNA – this will require support and action from HWB partners
- (d) To request an annual update on the implementation of the recommendations