

Armed Forces Covenant

Reference Number: RDF1938-23

Date of Response: 25/10/2023

Further to your Freedom of Information Act request, please find the Trust's response(s) below:

Please be aware that the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (Royal Devon) has existed since 1st April 2022 following the integration of the Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust (known as Northern Services) and the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust (known as Eastern Services).

1. *Who is your designated Dyad and what is their connection with and understanding of veteran's needs?*

Answer: The lead for armed forces is David Matthewman, Director of People (Northern Services). David is an RAF veteran with 19 years' service and is aware of the needs of our veteran communities.

2. *Have you applied for veteran's aware status and when?*

Answer: The Trust went through a VCHA reaccreditation assessment in September 2022 and was awarded this status. We are still working through a list of actions to support our VCHA accreditation.

3. *Who runs your staff engagement network and is this their main role in the organisation?*

Answer: We are currently in the process of setting up an armed forces inclusion network, and this is being led by David Matthewman.

4. *How many hours a week is the person allocated to veterans' activity?*

Answer: Not applicable as this forms part of David's overall job.

5. *How many meetings for staff do you hold a year and when were the last 4 and next 4 meetings?*

Answer: We are currently in the process of setting up an armed forces inclusion network, and this is being led by David Matthewman.

6. *What improvements have been made because of issues staff have raised at these meetings, if any? Please give specific details of what was raised, when and when the resolution was delivered.*

Answer: This question is not applicable as the staff inclusion group is still being established.

7. *Have you signed up to the step into health programme?*

Answer: Yes, we are currently working with Step in Health and have signed a commitment to it.

8. *If so, who manages your actions?* Answer: David Matthewman, Director of People (Northern Services) and Hannah Radford, Head of Strategic Resourcing.
9. *How often is the information from step into health accessed?*
Unable to answer this as we are still becoming established with the programme.
10. *How many staff who qualify under the covenant status do you employ?*
Unable to answer as we do not capture veteran status for our staff currently.
11. *Do you operate a guaranteed interview scheme for qualifying persons under the covenant?*
Answer: This will be established as part of our workplan.
12. *How many people qualifying under the covenant have you employed in the last 12 months? Not applicable.*
13. *How many people qualifying under the covenant have you rejected for employment in the last 12 months and at what stages of recruitment?*
Not applicable.
14. *How many patients do you have on record covered by the covenant?*
Answer: We are currently unable to answer this. The Trust has implemented an electronic patient record system because of integration, and the capturing of veteran status will be included as part of our workplan.
15. *What evidenced outcomes have you had for patients within your covenant commitments? How were these outcomes achieved?*
Unable to answer.
16. *Do you employ staff who solely deal with patients qualifying for support under the covenant and if so, are they directly employed by you or contracted through the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance approved Defence Medical Welfare Service or other agency?.*
Answer: We have a liaison with the Defence Medical Welfare Service.
17. *How many patients have been referred to specialist activity as a direct result of your covenant commitment actions?*
Unable to answer.
18. *What are your arrangements for referring patients covered by the covenant to specialised services?*
Unable to answer.
19. *How are you ensuring that your covenant commitments are achieved and maintained? Please provide evidence.*
Answer: These will be monitored via the staff armed forces inclusion network, which in turn will report to the Trust Inclusion Steering Group.
20. *How much taxpayer money has been invested in meeting your commitments?*
Answer: We have not collected costs of meeting commitments, as the actions taken have formed part of the roles of individuals.