



In Partnership With You

ABBHEY NEWS

Winter 2020

www.abbeymedicalpractice.uk.com

***Abbey Medical Practice providing outstanding care to our patients.
Veterans - no one need suffer in silence anymore.***

Hello and Welcome

Hello and welcome once again to Abbey Medical Practice Newsletter for Veterans. Our goal is to keep you updated with what is happening both locally and further afield for Veterans, especially with the challenges of the current pandemic situation

Our Practice staff can not only help, but also understand the problems some of our Veterans face. We can point you in the right direction with other organisations that can assist you with help to aid your current situation.

If we can be of any support please do not hesitate to call our Veteran Liaison Officer Sher George on 01933 233200. Sher has worked tirelessly to progress referrals and get things done for our Veterans.

A note from Sher: I have worked at Abbey Medical Practice for six years now and I am really passionate in supporting our Veterans. My role is to signpost patients that may need advice or specialist help depending on their individual circumstances. Having been with the Army, I am aware and understand how military mentality works so I recognise the issues that sometime befall Vets when they enter "Civvy Street" I continually strive to champion our patients who have served their country.

Office for Veterans Affairs

Last year the Prime Minister created a new Office for Veterans' Affairs to provide lifelong support to military personnel. Johnny Mercer MP, who himself did three tours of Afghanistan, has been appointed as one of those Minister's for Defence, People and Veterans. Oliver Dowden will work closely with Mr Mercer and the role will now be a joint Ministry of Defence and Cabinet Office position, in order to allow the Minister's to direct the work of the new Office for Veterans' Affairs. The two ministers will share responsibility for Veterans' affairs. OVA and the MOD have recently announced 100 UK Armed Forces charities will benefit from nearly £6 million of extra funding to support serving personnel, Veterans and their families during the coronavirus pandemic. These include charities such as Help for Heroes, Combat Stress and Walking with the Wounded who have due to recent events.

Veterans Gateway

The Veterans Gateway is the first point of contact for Veterans seeking support. The Veteran Gateway put's Veterans and their families in touch with the organisations best placed to help with the information, advice and support they need – from healthcare and housing to employability, finances, personal relationships and more.

Please use www.veteransgateway.org.uk for further information or call 0808 802 1212

Royal British Legion

Abbey Medical Practice are delighted to be working closely with the local RBL in Wellingborough and the services that they offer is remarkable which can only be beneficial to Veterans, within the locality. They offer support over the telephone and email to help you work towards goals that are important to you. This means they could also help with:

- Specialist Information and Advice- About Independent Living Options
- Aids and Adaptations
- Assistance with Disabled Facilities Grants and Challenges
- Small maintenance jobs
- Home safety checks
- Winter warmth checks
- Help and support to navigate social services
- Help and support to challenge decisions
- Help to address isolation and loneliness
- Information on local services
- Setting up your own social groups
- Help to understand your rights and speak up

Call their friendly contact centre on: **0808 802 8080** 8am-8pm, 7 days a week
Or Wellingborough Office 07935204270
wellingboroughbranchrbl@gmail.com

SSAFA (Soldiers Sailors and Air Force Association)

For those who have served within the military community, including their families, we are all aware of SSAFA, especially when serving abroad. But did you know that if you are no longer serving they are still there to help provide much needed support?

SSAFA provides lifelong care for veterans and their families. So if you've ever served in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army or Royal Air Force, they are there for you and your family when you need help, for life.

The Northampton branch is open Tuesdays and Thursdays 09.00 to 13.00 on 01604 603899 or call the Forcesline Advisor, Monday to Friday 09.00 to 17.30 on 0800 731 4880 to help with such things as:

- Debt
- Transition mentoring
- Buying household goods
- Support for offenders & ex-offenders
- Support with housing
- Support for homeless veterans

Veterans with Dogs – Helping you lead an independent life

The charity trains and provides assistance dogs for current and former members of the British armed forces with service related mental health conditions. Emerging evidence demonstrates that there is improvement in anxiety, fear, depression and loneliness following animal assisted interventions. Combat Stress has Veterans, who along with their four legged friends, attend treatment centres to show what a difference the dogs have made to their lives.

Tel No: 01626 798030 for more information

TILS

TILS - Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service - 0300 323 0137 or email mevs.mhm@nhs.net

This service provides a range of treatment, from recognising the early signs of mental health problems and providing access to early support, to therapeutic treatment for complex mental health difficulties and psychological trauma.

Where appropriate, help is also provided for other needs that may affect mental health and wellbeing for example, with housing, finances, employment, social support and reducing alcohol consumption.

INTRODUCTION OF VETERANS' RAILCARD

Great news that the Government will be introducing the Veterans' Railcard, supporting former service personnel with discounted rail travel.

For more information visit: <https://gov.uk/government/news/captain-sir-tom-moore-presented-with-first-veterans-railcard>

FEEDBACK FROM OUR PATIENTS

Sher has been fantastic. Has made me feel at ease when talking about the effects of my sons PTSD on himself. I felt able at long last to talk about my feelings and fears that I hadn't been able to address before. My son has come on leaps and bounds following his counselling. He is a dad himself now and the future is looking great. I can't thank Sher enough for all of the help provided to Veterans and their families.

It was only by a matter of luck that I came across Sher and her role. Initially I phoned to enquire about a previous military injury that had re appeared to the point of severe agony, requiring A&E and the attention of the GPs. I happened to be welcomed by Sher, who first listened patiently about my issue and once I had made apparent the issue was from a previous injury I had gained during my military service, she soon took into account that I was a Veteran. She then made her self known as the Veterans Liaison Officer.

At first, I was shocked as I had not known this position even existed in civilian street and certainly wasn't made aware of the role and its duty during my transition into civilian life. Once she explained her job role, she told me she was going to push me through a system called the Veterans Trauma Network, again an area I wasn't made aware of during my resettlement.

After speaking with Sher and having her talk me through the process of what will happen with my referral through the Trauma

Network, I was instantly put at ease with knowing what was going to happen and constantly being kept up to date with the goings on of my referral.

Leaving the military is scary but leaving the military with a pre-existing injury is even scarier. Not knowing what doctor you are having, or even if they are aware of the previous issues you may have coming into "Civvy Street", is very unsettling. Having to constantly repeat your injury over and over again gets quite upsetting as it feels like your issue, that was previously being resolved in your military career, is now falling on deaf ears.

Having Sher there as the Veterans Liaison officer instantly put my mind and body at ease knowing someone is in my corner fighting my battle with me. Constantly reassuring me and keeping me up to date with the goings on of my referral. And also always asking about my mental health state, something I have been struggling with whilst dealing with my injury. Sher was there to support and offer advice which put me in touch with TILs (Transition, Intervention, Liaison Service)

I urge any soldier due to leave their career and transition into "Civvy Street" to get in touch with their local medical practice and introduce themselves to the Veterans Liaison Officer.

I also highly urge any Veteran in the Wellingborough area who isn't already under the fantastic care of Sher and her job role to introduce themselves.

I can only assure other Veterans like myself that she will do everything she is capable of doing to help, if she can't help which I very much doubt, she will know who can. She is one of the good guys.