

News story: Defence Minister outlines expanded mental health provision for Armed Forces and veterans

Speaking at a conference on mental health at King's College London yesterday, Mr Ellwood also debunked several myths around veterans, saying that ex-forces personnel are not mad, bad and sad, but make a vital contribution to society.

The MOD recently increased funding for mental health provision for military personnel by £20 million over the next ten years.

A new helpline for service personnel has also been established. The new number – 0800 323 4444 is backed up by a major internal communications campaign on mental fitness across the services.

Combat Stress – the leading veterans mental health charity – has been commissioned to run the new helpline service for serving troops 24 hours a day.

The extra £2-million a year for the next ten years to improve mental health services in the Armed Forces is on top of the £20-million per year that is currently committed. The additional money, which brings the total planned spending to £220-million over the next decade, will be put towards an increase in mental health specialists and bolstering existing provision.

The MOD currently has a network of 20 'hub and spoke' mental health centres, comprising of 11 hubs and a further nine teams. Regular visiting clinics are also held at other military centres across the country.

Last year the MOD launched its [Defence Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) focusing on preventative measures to protect our personnel. MOD also partnered with the Royal Foundation, a charity setup by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry, to improve training and education alongside the strategy to promote mental fitness.

There are a range of services provided by partners working with MOD and through the Armed Forces Covenant, including the NHS, other Government departments and charities which serving personnel, veterans, and their families can access.

You can read the executive summary of the strategy [here](#)

You can read the full strategy [here](#)