



# contact

Collaborating for Military Mental Health

**Contact Group UK Military Mental Health sector event**

Supported by [Veterans' Foundation](#) and [NHS England & NHS Improvement](#)

**Wednesday 22 June 2022  
10.00am-4.00pm  
(Registration & coffee from 9.30am)**

**De Clare Suite, Cardiff Marriott Hotel, Mill Lane, Cardiff CF10 1EZ**

(A location map with travel information & directions can be found on the hotel website [here](#).)

Up to date information about the National Rail strike can be found [here](#).)

## **Delegate pack**

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## **Introduction and background**

The Contact Group is the **UK collaboration for military mental health policy, treatment and research**, and the mental health cluster for **Cobseo - the Confederation of Service Charities**.

Supported by the **Veterans' Foundation** and **NHS England & NHS Improvement**, Contact is delighted to be hosting this **one-day military mental health event in Cardiff**. The event will focus on the **military mental health sector (for serving, veterans and families) in both Wales and the UK**. It will include keynote speeches, speaker panels featuring a range of speakers, and sessions on key Contact workstreams with opportunities for questions, small group discussions, and feedback.

Thanks to the generous support of the **Veterans' Foundation** and **NHS England & NHS Improvement**, the event is **free and open to all**, both sector professionals and those with a general interest in military mental health in the UK.

This is an **in-person event** and remote/online participation will not be possible. A summary of the event including any speaker presentations (with permission), outcomes and next steps will be posted to the Contact website afterwards and the link circulated.

### **Event funders**

Many thanks to our event funders, the **Veterans' Foundation** and **NHS England & NHS Improvement**, without whose generous support the hosting of this event would not have been possible.

### **Event feedback**

After the event, a short, online feedback form will be circulated to all delegates which we would be grateful if you could take a couple of minutes to complete to help us evaluate this event, report to our funders and plan future events.

## **Event programme**

9.30-10.00 Registration & coffee

10.00-10.05 **Welcome & introduction** – Charles Winstanley, Contact Group

10.05-10.30 **Introductory address – Colonel (Retd) James Phillips, Wales Veterans' Commissioner.**

Followed by Q&As chaired by Charles Winstanley

10.30-11.35 **Speaker panel: Overview of the Military Mental Health sector in Wales in 2022 and beyond** – Speakers: **Neil Kitchiner**, Veterans NHS Wales and Cardiff University; **Roger Lees**, Adferiad; **Finola Pickwell**, Adferiad; **David Trotman**, Woody's Lodge; **Simon Frith**, Alabaré. Followed by Q&As and discussion chaired by **Neil Kitchiner**

11.35-11.45 Coffee break

11.45-12.00 **Contact workstreams: Case management (VMHIS) & Common assessment (CAF)** – Speakers: **Debra Elliott**, NHS England (video presentation); **Roy Brown**, Cobseo (video presentation); **Charles Winstanley**, Contact Group

12.00-12.15 Small group discussions

12.15-12.30 Group feedback moderated by Charles Winstanley

12.30-1.30 Lunch

1.30-1.45 **Contact workstreams: Data dashboard and Research** – Speakers: **Tammy Cheng**, OVA (video presentation); **Liz Brown**, NI Veterans' Support Office (video presentation)

1.45-2.00 Small group discussions

2.00-2.15 Group feedback moderated by Charles Winstanley

2.15-2.30 **Contact workstream: Quality & accreditation (QNVMHS)** – Speakers: **Jemini Jethwa & Hannah Lucas-Motley**, Royal College of Psychiatrists (video presentation); **Felix Davies**, Combat Stress (video presentation); **Neil Kitchiner**, VNHSW

2.30-2.45 Small group discussions

2.45-3.00 Group feedback moderated by Neil Kitchiner

3.00-3.10 Break

3.10-3.55 **Speaker panel: Overview of the UK Military Mental Health sector in 2022 and beyond** – Speakers: **Rachel Price**, Cobseo; **Nick Grace**, Cobseo; **Marie-Louise Sharp**, King's College London; **Cherie Armour**, Queen's University Belfast (video presentation). Followed by Q&As and discussion chaired by **Charles Winstanley**

3.55-4.00 **Final thoughts and close** – Charles Winstanley, Contact Group

## **Speaker biographies** (in order of appearance)

### **Charles Winstanley, Independent Chair, Contact Group**

Charles Winstanley was appointed Chair of the Contact Group in Sept 2018. He also chairs both the Scottish Government's Board for the new Veterans Mental Health Service and the military sub-committee of the Cabinet Office Honours, Decorations and Medals Committee.

Previously he chaired the boards at the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and at NHS Lothian (during which time he was elected Chair of Scotland's NHS Chairs). Charles chaired the GMC's Fitness to Practice panel, and has been a non-executive director at the MoD, UK Supreme Court, and at the Scottish Government. Since 1997 he has been a Deputy Lieutenant of London.

Trained at Sandhurst and Staff College, Charles served with 16th/5th Lancers in Ulster, Germany, and the Middle East. In later TA service he commanded BAOR-rolled Royal Yeomanry squadrons in London and Belfast, and was then on the MoD staff. After manufacturing and communications roles, he founded his own strategy consultancy. Charles has masters and doctoral degrees in business management from Henley Business School.

### **Colonel (Retd) James Phillips, Veterans' Commissioner for Wales**

James Phillips was born in 1968 in Chiswick, London and educated at Hampton School, Middlesex and the University of Birmingham, where he read Geography. After Sandhurst, he commissioned into the Royal Artillery (RA) in 1990. His early career saw him posted to 2nd Field Regiment RA and deploy as a troop commander to the first Gulf War and to Northern Ireland.

As a Forward Observation Officer in 24 Airmobile Brigade based in Colchester, James exercised in the USA, Canada and Europe. He deployed to Belize and, in 1995 with UNPROFOR, to Bosnia. He was Mentioned in Dispatches for gallantry during the liberation of Sarajevo. Two further UN tours to Cyprus were in 1998 as Adjutant Sector 2 and in 2005 as the Commander of the Multinational Force Reserve.

After attending Advanced Command and Staff Course, where he completed an MA in Defence Studies, he commanded 10 (Assaye) Battery, equipped with High Velocity Missiles between 2002 and 2004. As Second-in-Command of 47<sup>th</sup> Regiment RA in Thorney Island, he was responsible for converting the unit from air defence to Unmanned Aerial Systems and preparing them for a NATO deployment to Kosovo.

James has held staff appointments in the MOD corporate communications department and HQ British Forces Cyprus as an operational planner. He was assigned from Cyprus to US CENTCOM for the Second Gulf War, working in the Humanitarian Operations Centre.

James commanded 16<sup>th</sup> Regiment RA (2010-12), overseeing operational deployments to provide Ground Based Air Defence to the Falkland Islands and the 2012 London Olympics, as well as rocket, and mortar protection in Iraq and Afghanistan. He also managed to complete an Open University MBA.

Post command, James deployed to Afghanistan as the NATO Chief of Police Transitions, overseeing the handover of Police training across the country to Afghan control. It was then back to MOD as a crisis manager. He was specifically involved in the UK response to Ebola, Syrian chemical weapon disposal and the initial Ukraine crisis, including the MH-17 shoot-down, NATO Assurance Measures and the development of the UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force.

James was promoted to Colonel on appointment as the Defence Attaché to The Hague in January 2016, covering the BENELUX nations during Brexit, WW1 centenary and the UK led Eurofighter sales campaign in Belgium. In 2019 he took up the position of Chief of Operations in NATO's new Enabling and Reinforcement Command (JSEC), in Ulm, southern Germany. He led the intelligence, operations, policing & Special Forces Divisions from initial to full operational capability and successful NATO certification, leaving in 2021. He then worked on the optimisation of Army Basic Training, before his final assignment to MOD Whitehall, developing UK's response to the current Ukraine crisis. On retirement from the Army, he assumed the role of Veterans' Commissioner for Wales on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022.

**Neil Kitchiner, Director & Consultant Clinical Lead, Veterans NHS Wales and Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Cardiff University**

Neil has over 30 years' experience of working in NHS mental health services within the UK (England & Wales) and Australia. Neil briefly worked in the private sector at the Priory Hospital Bristol, and for the past 21 years in Cardiff and Wales University Health Board within the Departments of Liaison Psychiatry and the Traumatic Stress Service as a Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist with responsibility for setting up the partnership with South Wales Fire and Rescue Service until 2008. Neil headed the Welsh pilot funded by the MoD in 2008-2010.

Neil is currently employed as the Director and Consultant Clinical Lead at the Veterans' NHS Wales service (VNHSW). The service offers out-patient mental health treatment for ex-service personnel with service-related mental health problems. Neil was a Captain in the Army Reserve with 203 Welsh Field Hospital. He deployed to Afghanistan in October 2013 – January 2014 on Herrick 19a as part of the MoD Field Mental Health Team. He holds an Honorary title, Senior Research Fellow, Cardiff University.

He regularly lectures and runs workshops on the psychological effects of trauma and psychological therapy for medical and non-medical personnel. He has written over 30 papers, book chapters, and Cochrane Reviews - on trauma focused cognitive behavioural psychotherapy, ex-service personnel, early interventions for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and eye movement desensitisation reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, published in peer reviewed medical and psychological press. Neil is the current PI on EMDR RCT for veterans with combat PTSD.

### **Roger Lees, Veterans' Service Manager – Peer Mentors, Adferiad Recovery**

Veteran Roger Lees served in the Royal Pioneer Corps, working in volatile combat zones around the world. He rose to the rank of Colour Sergeant and was selected for hostile protection services for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a role that would see him face life-threatening danger on a daily basis. After decades of combat missions in the most dangerous conditions, his health began to suffer and he developed PTSD. After 34 years of service, Roger was discharged from the military.

He wanted to give back in some way and help other veterans, so got involved with the Change Step charity in Wales (now part of Adferiad Recovery) which offers support to veterans and their families and carers. Much of this involves helping them access support services, especially for those experiencing trauma and stress-related issues. Roger started to do veteran to veteran mentoring, seeing people in-person on a one-to-one basis, and quickly found that veterans could relate easily to him as they had shared experiences.

In 2020, Roger was awarded a prestigious silver Welsh Veterans Awards Certificate for his work helping other veterans. It was then suggested that the Open University could help Roger boost his skills even further and he applied to the OU's Disabled Veterans' Scholarships Fund which was specially created by the OU to fully support disabled veterans injured in or due to service as they transition to civilian life. It enables veterans to benefit from free education and wraparound disability and careers support so they can find a new path in life. Roger is now enjoying studying for a BSc in Psychology with the OU, combined with his work as a Veterans Service Manager for peer mentors at Adferiad Recovery.

### **Finola Pickwell, Veterans' Service Manager, Adferiad Recovery**

Finola Pickwell is one of the Adferiad Veterans' Service Managers with responsibility and oversight of partnerships. Finola has a vast amount of experience working with veterans and a background in developing, delivering, and managing services in a military community. Finola has joined Adferiad from the legacy organisation Hafal, where she established Hafal's veterans'

services, supporting and mentoring other organisations providing activities to support veterans with mental health issues throughout Wales. Finola now oversees the veterans partnership projects that guide, support, and mentor organisations in a number of fields that are offering support to veterans.

Finola sits on 14 armed forces forums throughout Wales, the Veterans Third Sector Group, several steering groups within the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (AFCFT) network and the Veterans Advice & Pensions Committee in Wales.

Finola is also the Wales Portfolio Lead for the AFCFT Veterans, Places, Pathways and People Programme working closely with twelve portfolio partners, along with other third sector and statutory organisations to establish a network of safe spaces for veterans throughout Wales.

### **Dr David Trotman, Chair, Woody's Lodge**

Graduating in Clinical Bacteriology and Biochemistry at Cardiff, David gained his PhD in Pulmonary Medicine whilst conducting research with the Medical Research Council and NHS. Following closure of Research facilities David has since worked in the Voluntary sector, working in senior management roles with a range of agencies supporting Children's welfare, to Medical Research to UK and International Environmental Issues.

Looking closer to home, and focussing on local community, in 2013 he undertook the role of Director at Penarth Pier Pavilion, whereon he was introduced to groups of Armed Forces Veterans, he established a meeting place for Veterans at the Pier Pavilion, and on meeting like-minded people, became a Co-Founder of Woody's Lodge and helped it develop into the current Welsh Veterans' Charity. Woody's has 3 rural Farm based hubs and manages urban sited 12 drop In Centres. David now acts as Chair to Woody's Board of Trustees as well as Chair of UK Charity ASDIC, representing Veteran Drop In Centres across the UK.

### **Simon Frith, Social Enterprise Manager - Wales, Alabaré**

Simon's role within Social Enterprise is intended to connect beneficiaries with opportunities to re-establish social mobility whilst aiding Alabaré's financial sustainability and growth. Social Enterprise incorporates lifelong wellbeing, financial prosperity and taking part in societal change.

Having delivered front line support to the ex-forces community since 2014, Simon remains fascinated by the potential for recovery and what the Third Sector can collectively offer as part of that process. Simon is highly invested in ensuring that support is equitable and gives service users agency of their recovery. The Veterans' community being important to Simon, as he

served with the Royal Navy, firstly on destroyers and later on mine warfare vessels.

**Roy Brown, Director of Governance Support, Cobseo - Confederation of Service Charities**

Roy Brown is a former MOD Civil Servant who has supported the Armed Forces in a series of appointments including: the Royal Navy, as Deputy Head of the Naval Staff and Secretary to the Navy Board; the Army as a Civil Advisor to the GOC in HQ Northern Ireland; and the RAF as Private Secretary to the Chief of the Air Staff. He is now drawing on this experience to support the Service Charity Sector; first as Chief of Staff to the Controller SSAFA from April 2017 until February 2019; and then with Cobseo as Director of Governance Support; a role which subsequently evolved to include additional responsibilities such as the Veterans Mental Health IS Scoping Study.

**Debra Elliott, Director of Transformation, Armed Forces Health England, NHS England & NHS Improvement**

Debra Elliott is Director of Transformation, Armed Forces Health England at NHS England & NHS Improvement. She has a clinical background and trained as a Nurse and Midwife. Debra has worked in a variety of clinical settings including acute, community and primary care services. She completed an MSc in Healthcare Management in 1999.

As an Executive Director since 2001, she has extensive experience at board level and in all aspects of commissioning including: primary, secondary, specialised, CHC and FNC, mental health, offender health, Primary Care, capital planning and service redesign. Over the years she has worked closely with Local Authorities in both unitary and two tier Government organisations through joint commissioning of services and major service redesign.

Debra has worked as a Director in the NHS England Armed Forces commissioning team for the past 9 Years - initially in the South West Regional Office and for the past 3 years in the National NHS England Armed Forces Team. Debra recently returned to the South West Regional Office in 2020 to lead the COVID 19 vaccination programme and successfully established the vaccination programme at multiple sites across the region before returning to the National Armed Forces Team.

**Tammy Cheng, Assistant Head for Data and Analysis, Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA)**

Tammy Cheng is Assistant Head for Data and Analysis at the Office for Veterans' Affairs and her team at OVA leads on the Contact Group quarterly data reporting by collating and analysing



data from the Ministry of Defence, the NHS and service charities. Her career so far has seen her apply data to deliver high quality research, strategic planning and impact evaluation where data is used to identify trends or discover new insights and underlying mechanisms. She champions effective decision making based on data and is keen to promote data usage and sharing using digital applications.

**Liz Brown, Head, Northern Ireland Veterans' Support Office (NIVSO)**

Lt Col (Ret'd) Liz Brown served for some 20 years in Germany, Canada, Bosnia and UK within MoD Headquarters, retiring in 2009. After a short break, she went back to work part time with the NI office of ABF The Soldiers' Charity for 7 years, before taking up a new post in April 2018 with Cobseo/RFCA NI as Head of the NI Veterans' Support Office with the core role of developing the capacity to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant in NI. The NI Veterans' Support Office (NI VSO) is responsible for building capacity to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant in Northern Ireland and for providing support to veterans where the latter's needs are not met through statutory bodies and/or the charitable sector. The office has a nationally recognised mandate and delivery targets which are reported to the OVA and has formal, embedded links to the Veterans' Champions in each local authority in NI as well as Other Government Departments, other stakeholders and the third sector. The office works closely with that of the Veterans' Commissioner for NI.

**Cherie Armour, Professor of Psychological Trauma and Mental Health, Queen's University Belfast**

Cherie Armour is a Professor of Psychological Trauma and Mental Health in the School of Psychology at Queen's University Belfast. Professor Armour is the Director of the QUB Research Centre for Stress Trauma and Related Conditions (STARC). Cherie has published extensively in the field of Psychotraumatology and Mental Health. Cherie has a particular interest in occupational groups that are at increased risk of experiencing trauma and traumatic stress outcomes due to their occupational roles, for example, military, police, and emergency service workers. Cherie has also published on the nosology, comorbidity, and longitudinal course of disorders such as PTSD, dissociation, anxiety, and depression. Cherie is past President of the UK Psychological Trauma Society, a current member of the board of directors for the International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies, and an Associate Editor of the European Journal of Psychotraumatology. Current funded programmes of research include a FiMT funded investigation of the psychological well-being of veteran families in the UK and a UKRI funded longitudinal study of biological, psychological and social predictors of PTSD in response to Armed Conflict in Colombia.

**Hannah Lucas-Motley, Head of Quality and Accreditation, Royal College of Psychiatrists**

Hannah began her career as an assistant psychologist in a specialist forensic unit for adults with autism, before joining the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Centre for Quality Improvement in 2015. Since then, she has worked across a broad spectrum of quality improvement programmes, ranging from perinatal mental health to prisons, supporting services to improve the standard of care they provide. She has also been involved in the conducting of research, such as LP-MAESTRO: the evaluation of liaison psychiatry provision across the country, and national audits including the 2016-17 CQUIN, aiming to improve physical health monitoring for patients with first episode psychosis.

Between 2017 and 2018, Hannah spent a year leading the Royal College of Physicians and Faculty of Occupational Medicine's joint occupational health accreditation scheme, SEQOHS, before returning to RCPsych and her love of mental health. She took up the role of Head of Quality and Accreditation in early 2021, and she currently oversees 11 quality and accreditation programmes, including the Quality Network for Veterans' Mental Health Services (QNVMS).

**Jemini Jethwa, Programme Manager, Quality Network for Veteran Mental Health Services (QNVMS), Royal College of Psychiatrists**

Jem is a Programme Manager at the Royal College of Psychiatrists within the College Centre for Quality Improvement (CCQI). Jem manages four quality network and accreditation programmes which cover veteran mental health, psychological therapies services, memory services and serious incident review processes across mental health organisations. Jem has led on the development of the QNVMS in terms of developing quality improvement review processes for veteran mental health services. Jem joined the College in 2017 working in quality improvement of forensic and prison mental health services. Prior to this, Jem has an academic background in Psychology (BSc and MSc) and research.

**Felix Davies, Director of Operations, Combat Stress**

Dr Felix Davies has been Director of Operations at Combat Stress since 2019. He is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist by background and has held senior operational, clinical and commercial roles in the NHS, charity and private sector across all mental health settings. In the NHS he led inpatient psychological services for serving personnel as part of a UK-wide contract with the MoD and was a member of a quality assurance team which visited mental health services supporting serving personnel in Germany. At Combat Stress, Dr Davies leads operations across the UK, as well as a number of the charity's collaborations with the NHS and charity sector.

**Rachel Price, Programme and Cluster Manager, Cobseo - Confederation of Service Charities**

Rachel joined Cobseo in September 2019 as the Positive Pathways Programme Coordinator supporting the coordination and delivery of the Positive Pathways Programme, working closely with the AFCFT team and providing a focus for applicants where needed, and became the Programme and Cluster Manager in August 2021. Rachel supports and helps coordinate the work of Cobseo Clusters, providing a single focus to encourage improved collaboration and to ensure the integration into Cluster business of key AFCFT and other sector programmes in order to improve members' services for those in need across the Armed Forces Community. Rachel also assists in the ongoing development of common assessment and case management frameworks between charities and other providers; and supports the Service Charities Sector's work to improve the local, regional and national provision of services and wider pathways to recovery for veterans facing mental health challenges. Following on from a career in the cosmetic industry, Rachel has lived and worked in the military community for over 26 years, most recently at The Warrior Programme and previously to that at The Poppy Factory.

**Nick Grace, Veterans Mental Health Awareness Standard Project Manager, Cobseo - Confederation of Service Charities**

Nick Grace OBE is the Project Manager responsible for developing and implementing the Veterans Mental Health Awareness Standard. As part of the Veterans Places Pathways and People (VPPP) programme, when implemented, the Awareness Standard will provide reassurance to those seeking help, and to other service providers, that the organisation being approached, or sign posted, incorporates best practice in its provision of safe and sustainable non-clinical services, and places of support. Previously, Nick had a 35-year career in the Royal Marines Band Service, ultimately becoming the Principal Director of Music for his final 8 years of service. Since then, Nick has enjoyed various freelance roles in the creative arts prior to joining Cobseo in October 2021.

**Dr Marie-Louise Sharp, Research Fellow, King's Centre for Military Health Research, King's College London**

Dr Marie-Louise Sharp is a Research Fellow at the King's Centre for Military Health Research (KCMHR) at King's College London. Marie-Louise is a mixed methods researcher and has research expertise in psychological medicine and epidemiology. Her research interests include military mental health and help-seeking behaviours, the health and wellbeing of Emergency Responders and has a focus on methods to extend research impact. She is currently the academic lead on Phase Four of the UK Armed Forces Health and Wellbeing Cohort Study funded by the Office for Veterans' Affairs.

Marie-Louise previously worked in the non-profit sector specialising in Armed Forces healthcare policy. She is a member of the Five Eyes Mental Health Research and Innovation Collaborative focused on improving international research and mental health outcomes for the Armed Forces community. Marie-Louise also has a background in political science having trained at post-graduate level at Oxford University. Her current published papers include pre-incident training in Emergency Responders to build resilience, impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the health and wellbeing of the veteran community, help-seeking behaviours of UK military, LGBTQ health and wellbeing in Armed Forces, suicide and self-harm in UK military, physical health conditions associated with PTSD in UK veterans, and treatment of military related PTSD.

## **Delegate organisations**

Over 70 delegates are registered to attend the event, representing a range of organisations, including:

3 R WELSH

Aberystwyth University

Adferiad Recovery

Alabaré

Army

Army Welfare Service

Blesma the Limbless Veterans

Blind Veterans UK

Broughton House

Cabinet Office

Cardiff Council

Care After Combat

Cobseo - Confederation of Service Charities

Combat Stress

Contact Group

Defence Medical Services

Defence Medical Welfare Service

DWP

Forces in Mind Trust

Help for Heroes

HQ 160th (Welsh) Bde

Icarus

Invictus Games Foundation

King Edward Vii's Hospital, London

King's College London

NHS England and NHS Improvement  
Office for Veterans' Affairs  
PTSD Resolution  
QUB  
RAF Association  
RNRMC  
Rock2Recovery  
Royal British Legion  
South Glamorgan Community Health Council  
Sporting Force  
SSAFA  
The Armed Forces Equine Charity  
The Poppy Factory  
The VC Gallery  
Togetherall  
Veterans HQ Liverpool  
Veterans' NHS Wales  
Veterans Scotland  
Veterans UK  
Walking With The Wounded  
We Are With You  
Welsh Government  
Who Dares Cares  
Woody's Lodge